

THE CULT OF ST ERIK
IN MEDIEVAL SWEDEN

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THE CULT OF ST ERIK IN MEDIEVAL SWEDEN

Veneration of a Royal Saint,
Twelfth–Sixteenth Centuries

by

Christian Oertel



BREPOLS

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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D/2016/0095/43

ISBN 978-2-503-55507-2

e-ISBN: 978-2-503-56474-6

DOI 10.1484/M.AS-EB.5.107423

Printed on acid-free paper

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FOREWORD

The present study is the result of several years of research on Medieval Scandinavia and was in the winter semester of 2013/14 accepted by the Faculty of Philosophy of the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena as a doctoral thesis. When I started my doctoral studies in 2008, it was with the intention of conducting research into the different historiographic traditions of France, the British Isles, and Iceland/Norway concerning the Scandinavians of the Viking Age. Late in 2009, a book was published that covered large parts of my intended study and so, after some contemplation, I changed the subject of my dissertation project early in 2010 to that reflected by the title of the present volume. Work on this project has brought me into contact with many researchers in Sweden as well as in other European countries, and most of them have a part in the genesis of the present book by supporting me in various ways.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the members of the medievalist community of Stockholm who created surroundings most congenial for the intensive study of the history of St Erik. Among many, I would like to name Prof. Olle Ferm (who was so kind as to invite me to work at the Centre for Medieval Studies and was a great help in administrative as well as professional matters), and the members of the editorial staff of the *Svenskt Diplomatarium* within the Swedish National Archive, Doc. Claes Gejrot, Dr Ingela Hedström-Bolton, Doc. Sara Risberg, and Dr Peter Ståhl, who were always ready to help and whose quiet and excellent library became my office for months on end. Doc. Claes Gejrot also kindly agreed to act as the Swedish supervisor of my thesis. I am also much obliged to my German supervisor, Prof. Dr Helmuth G. Walther, for his patient support throughout the complicated stages of my PhD studies. Through the generous sharing of her transcriptions of sermons on St Erik, Maria Berggren has saved me some months of work.

I was given the opportunity to present parts of my thesis at the medieval seminars of the universities of Jena, Dresden, Stockholm, and Göteborg and at

conferences in Dubrovnik, Weingarten, and Mannheim. Many of the participants of those seminars and conferences gave valuable feedback on my work. My greatest thanks in this respect are directed to Dr Christa Ackermann and Dr Sara E. Ellis Nilsson, who commented on large parts of my thesis in their capacities both as medievalists and as native English speakers. I also received valuable feedback on my book from Prof. Thomas Lindkvist, the anonymous peer reviewer of *Acta Scandinavica* and Dr Rosie Bonté, my publishing manager at Brepols Publishers. The index has kindly been prepared by Anne Weinbrecht. I thank Prof. Stefan Brink for accepting my thesis for publication within the *Acta Scandinavica* series.

Scholarships of the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), the SFB 804 'Transzendenz und Gemeinsinn' at the Technical University of Dresden, and the Swedish Institute gave me the opportunity to finish my thesis and I would like to express my thanks to those institutions.

Christian Oertel
Dresden, March 2014/Erfurt, November 2015

ABBREVIATIONS

Abs	Archbishop
BSH	Styffe, Bidrag till Skandinaviens historia ur utländska arkiver
DD	Diplomatarium Danicum
DN	Diplomatarium Norvegicum < http://www.dokpro.uio.no/dipl_norv/diplom_felt.html >
DS	Diplomatarium Suecanum
FMU	Finlands medeltidsurkunder < http://extranet.narc.fi/DF/df.php >
FS	Festschrift
Hd	Härad (=Hundred, administrative unit)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
MPO	Medeltida Pergaments Omslag
OFM	Ordo fratrum minorum
OP	Ordo praedicatorum
Or. perg. (RA 0101)	Original parchment kept in the Riksarkiv, Stockholm
RGA	Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde
SBL	Svensk biografiskt lexikon
SD	Svenskt Diplomatarium
SDHK	Svenskt Diplomatariums Huvudkartotek över Medeltidsbrev http://www.nad.riksarkivet.se/sdhk
Sn	Socken (=Parish)
UUB	Uppsala Universitets Bibliotek

RELIGION, POLITICS, AND THE CULT OF SAINTS

When we hear or read about the combination of religion and politics today, it is often in a negative context. We hear of fundamentalist Muslims fighting the mighty ‘Western civilization’ through methods often deployed by a militarily inferior side — terrorist attacks. On the other hand, a former president of the United States frequently labelled his military ventures against these fundamentalists as a ‘crusade’ against an ‘axis of evil’, with both ‘crusade’ and ‘evil’ being words with strongly religious connotations.¹ The connection between religion and political conflicts has a history which — according to Jan Assmann — goes back to the rise of monotheism.² The Middle Ages were strongly affected by this connection, with the best known examples probably being the sword-mission of the Frankish/German kings and emperors in Saxony and among the Slavonic peoples, and the crusades in Palestine, Egypt, and in several regions of Europe.

While the connection between religion and politics in conflicts between states and cultures obviously still exists, the situation within Western society is apparently different. Here, the two spheres of religion and politics are theoretically separated and (since the Enlightenment) the state claims superiority

¹ The ‘Axis-of-Evil-Speech’ was made by George W. Bush on 29 January 2002: <<http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/bush.speech.txt/>> [accessed 30 March 2016].

² Assmann, *Herrschaft und Heil*, pp. 262–63; discussed in more detail in Assmann, ‘Gesetz, Gewalt und Monotheismus’.



Map 1. The counties (*landskap*) of Sweden. Skåne, Blekinge, Halland, and Bohuslän were not part of medieval Sweden and are therefore left white. Map by the author.

over religion in the public sphere.³ As a result, conflicts between the secular state and religious communities primarily arise when the latter seek to challenge this claim. Two recent examples of such conflicts in Germany were first, the decision of the *Bundesverwaltungsgericht* that Muslim girls had to participate in swimming lessons, if necessary, dressed in a *burkini* (a swimsuit which covers the whole body);⁴ secondly, in a dispute with a Christian sect, the *Zwölf Stämme*, all forty children who belonged to the sect's community were rescued by the police and taken to asylums or foster families due to strong suspicions that their fundamentalist Christian parents had beaten them on a regular basis in accordance with biblical texts such as: 'He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.' (Proverbs 13. 24).⁵

The connection between religion and politics on which the present study will focus is, however, not that of (monotheistic) religion and political violence. It therefore excludes the discussion of 'political theology', introduced by Carl Schmitt in the 1920s and still carried on today in lively fashion.⁶ Nor is my focus on the points of conflict between religious communities and the secular power within a given society. Rather, the connection between religion and politics that will be discussed here involves cults that venerate saints and the possible utilization of such cults in (internal and external) politics, with particular focus on the example of medieval Sweden and St Erik. It is obvious that such a connection could not exist in a society in which worldly and spiritual spheres were separated. However, in medieval societies they worked together (and against each other) in a common system, and in medieval European societies the veneration of saints took a central role in connecting the two spheres of influence.

A saint was believed, whether through their saintly life or their martyrdom on behalf of the Christian faith, to have earned a place at the side of God with-

³ Outram, *The Enlightenment*, p. 3: 'Enlightenment was a desire for human affairs to be guided by rationality rather than by faith, superstition, or revelation'.

⁴ <<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/bundesverwaltungsgericht-schwimmunterricht-in-burkini-fuer-muslimische-maedchen-zumutbar-12569208.html>> article from 11 September 2013 [accessed 30 March 2016].

⁵ <<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/bayern/glaubensgemeinschaft-zwoelf-staemme-wer-seine-rute-schont-der-hasst-seinen-sohn-1.1768495>> article from 11 September 2013 [accessed 30 March 2016].

⁶ Schmitt, *Politische Theologie*. Later contributors to the subject include, for example, Leo Strauss, Johann Baptist Metz, and Jan Assmann. On recent developments within Political Theology see the anthology ed. by Palaver, Oberprantacher, and Regensburger, *Politische Philosophie versus Politische Theologie?*,

out having to wait for Judgement Day to ascend to heaven. There, he or she could approach God on behalf of those who prayed for intercession. Therefore, one of the principal functions of saints was their patronage of churches, towns, kingdoms, professions, guilds, and individuals — to name but a few — meaning that those communities or individuals were held to be the saint's primary object of intercession.⁷ Furthermore, the example of the saints served as a model for those still alive. Whether as a patron or as an exemplary Christian, a saint could be used for a political purpose. They were the patrons of political entities and also they acted as exemplars upon which political dignitaries were expected to model themselves.⁸ Royal saints like St Erik were particularly well suited to the role of 'political saint' since they themselves had led their respective political communities during their lifetime and could therefore serve as an example for their contemporary successors.

In analysing the veneration of the Swedish royal saint, the present study seeks to achieve several goals. Firstly, a historical and ideological background will be provided in order to show the prerequisites for the veneration of St Erik. The second chapter, which constitutes the main part of the study, will give an account of the spatial and ideal development of his veneration, starting in the late twelfth century and tracing the evolution of his cult up to the early 1520s when the rise of Gustav Vasa and the impact of the Reformation largely led to its decline. Throughout this study, it will become apparent that the veneration of St Erik took different forms and was carried out in varying intensity at every stage of Swedish history. While exploring those developments, a particular focus will be placed on the sociohistorical aspects of the cult, that is, to the different ways it was utilized by individuals, groups of people, and institutions across the time frame outlined here. As Susan J. Ridyard rightly stated, 'A saint did not perform miracles unless a substantial body of opinion was predisposed to believe in those miracles. Cults did not simply develop: they were developed'.⁹ It is this active development of the cult, carried out by members of medieval society, which will be traced in the present study. Whenever possible or reasonable, questions will be posed about how and to what end people furthered the cult of St Erik. Answers to these questions will provide examples of

⁷ On this aspect of medieval saints, see for example Borst, 'Schutzheilige mittelalterlicher Gemeinwesen', pp. 289–311; Graus, 'Der Heilige als Schlachtenhelfer'.

⁸ This second aspect becomes particularly clear in the sermons on 'political saints'; see chap. 7.

⁹ Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 5.



Map 2. The bishoprics of medieval Sweden and their diocesan towns. Map by the author.

the alignment between religion and politics in the Swedish Middle Ages that occurred through the veneration of that saint and its utilization.

The development of the veneration of St Erik was not linear. Times of slow evolution, stagnation, and even regression, alternated with times during which the cult prospered and quickly won new supporters and/or spread to new regions. At times, new ways of promoting or using the cult were developed while at other times no such data could be discovered. As a result, the density of this account of the cult's development will necessarily appear uneven. Times during which Erik was more widely venerated are likely to supply a greater number of sources, and the discussion of those times will naturally take up more space than times when sources were absent or near-absent — when no individuals or institutions appear to have actively promoted the cult of St Erik. In spite of this uneven density of source material, the main part of this study will be written as a chronological narrative in order to provide an easy-to-trace account of the relevant developments. In the concluding chapter those developments will be re-evaluated in a systematic way, focusing on certain central aspects of the cult.

Narratives, including those by modern historians, are always constructions rather than reconstructions of historical developments. On the one hand, it is, of course, desirable to relate the history of a time period from which only a few sources have survived as stringently and consistently as possible. On the other hand, however, it is necessary to remember that when studying the medieval period we have access to only a small part of the once extant source material. We thus have to interpolate, argue *ex silentio*, and use all the methods of interpreting sources that are available to us in order to arrive at an acceptably consistent account of the past. In the case of the present investigation, this is especially relevant for the early years of the cult of St Erik, during which contemporary written records are almost nonexistent. It is for this reason, too, that in some places I will challenge the earlier research of other scholars. In such cases I do not seek to question the plausibility of earlier suggested interpretations. Rather, what I want to do is to supply alternative interpretations and make them as credible as I can. This, I believe, is all that a (self)-critical historian can do, knowing that future generations of historians will do the same in their turn.¹⁰

¹⁰ On the general approach see the essay Landwehr, 'Die Kunst, sich nicht allzu sicher zu sein — Möglichkeiten kritischer Geschichtsschreibung', on: <http://www.werkstattgeschichte.de/werkstatt_site/archiv/WG61_007-014_LANDWEHR_KUNST.pdf> [accessed 30 March 2016].

In order to pre-empt unnecessary discord, it is important to explain some debatable terms that I have chosen to use in the present study. To start with, there can be no doubt that using the term 'Sweden' for the geographical area of investigation is problematic up to the fourteenth century. Thomas Lindkvist states that the foundation of the kingdom of Sweden was completed around the time at which Magnus Eriksson was elected king in 1319.¹¹ In line with this view, the term 'Sweden' begins to take on a political slant during the second half of the thirteenth century, when the new royal dynasty of Bjälbo started its attempts to unify its sphere of control into an actual kingdom. When the name Sweden is used in relation to times before this period, however, it does not refer to any sort of political entity but only to the geographical area that was incorporated into the later medieval kingdom of Sweden. Secondly, whenever a term like 'national veneration' or 'veneration on a national level' is used, it should be clear that the notion of 'nation' that is applied here is not equivalent to that used by the nation states of the nineteenth century but rather refers to the medieval term *natio*, meaning a social construct on an (actual or imagined) ethnic basis. Similarly, the nineteenth-century connotation of the term 'Germanic' should not be applied wherever it is used in the present study. Obviously, this term remains problematic even when any nationalistic ballast is removed, since, although it may refer to a group of speakers of similar languages, this does mean that there was a sense of common identity among those speakers. They identified more with smaller face-to-face groups than with the abstract entity of the 'Germanic peoples'. As in the case of the term 'Swedish', in this volume the term 'Germanic' will be used to refer to a region of Europe where the speakers of the 'Germanic' languages used to live and where they (consciously or not) shared a number of cultural aspects.

Finally, the question of the spellings of Viking Age and medieval names has to be addressed. For people who are only mentioned in the Old Norse sagas, the Old Norse written version of their names will be used (e.g. Einarr þambarskelfir). Also, the titles of works in Old Norse or Latin will be given in their original form (e.g. *Gesta Hammurgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, *Glelognskviða*). All non-English names and terms are printed in italics, except for personal names and longer quotations. For the two saints most frequently referred to in the present study, St Erik and St Olaf, the name form that appears most frequently in the Swedish source material is used. In those cases where it was rather ambiguous

¹¹ Lindkvist, 'Att skapa ett kungarike'.

as to what form of a name should be used, the Swedish form has been preferred (e.g. St Lars instead of St Laurentius, King Albrekt instead of King Albrecht).

* * *

The first scholars to explore the concept of sacral rulership — a term introduced by Sir James Frazer in 1890 — with regard to the Middle Ages were Fritz Kern and Marc Bloch.¹² Kern introduced the idea of the *Königsheil* (king's luck), a magical form of luck (*felicitas*) into the discussion. His argument was that this *Königsheil* had its source in a divine ancestor, was handed down within a royal dynasty, and thereby made its members the only fit rulers for their kingdom. In Kern's view, the *Königsheil* as a form of supernatural legitimation was accompanied by two further aspects. Firstly, the consecration of the ruler and the elements of the classical ruler cult were kept alive in medieval society by revivals of classical writings (for example the Carolingian reforms during the reign of Charlemagne and the reception of Aristotle starting in the twelfth century); secondly, the Byzantine emperor served as a constant reminder of classical traditions for those living in Latin Europe. With his notion of the *Königsheil*, Kern introduced a paradigm that had the greatest influence on pre-occupations with sacral kingship up to the mid-twentieth century. Marc Bloch applied the theories of Frazer and Kern to the French and English kings and concentrated on their assumed ability to magically heal scrofula by their touch. Bloch showed that this miraculous ability of the French kings was introduced by the Capetians in order to have their own form of sacral legitimation of royal power. The claim of the founder of the dynasty of the Capetians, Hugh Capet, to the French throne had been made and enforced in the face of the stronger hereditary claims of Charles, Duke of Lower Lorraine. The new supernatural legitimation thus bolstered Hugh's comparatively weak claim to the throne.

Research on 'Germanic royal kingship' acquired especial political delicacy during the 1930s and 1940s.¹³ Otto Höfler most prominently promoted the idea of a Germanic sacral kingship as a Wodan/Odin kingship.¹⁴ According to him, Wodan/Odin was the god of the 'political' and 'state-building' German and, above all, the god of the military leader, in whom some essence of the

¹² Frazer, *The Golden Bough*; Kern, *Gottesgnadentum und Widerstandsrecht im früheren Mittelalter*; Bloch, *Les Rois thaumaturges*.

¹³ Picard, *Germanisches Sakralkönigtum?*, pp. 15–30.

¹⁴ Höfler, *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen*; Höfler, 'Der Sakralcharakter des germanischen Königtums'.

god was to be found. He believed that this 'wodanistic' structure of the warrior tribes had been adopted by the 'Germanic' kingdoms of the Early Middle Ages and had become the rationale underlying the idea of Germanic sacral kingship. For Höfler, the *Königsheil* represented the godly part of the king. What made his ideas exploitable in Nazi Germany was the fact that Höfler combined his theory with the claim that a 'Germanic continuity' from prehistoric times up to the 1930s, was influencing contemporary German and Scandinavian society.¹⁵ Otto Höfler was a member of several National Socialist organizations ('Ordnertruppe O.T.', 'SS-Ahnenerbe') and his ideas about land-conquering warrior tribes with divinely inspired leaders were drawn on in the training of the SS troops, providing a certain ideological and pseudo-historical context for their actions.¹⁶ After the Second World War, the idea of the *Königsheil* was transformed by Karl Hauck into the notion of *Geblütsheiligkeit* (blood-sanctity) and was attacked by Walter Baetke and František Graus, among others.¹⁷ Thanks to their criticism, research into sacral kingship left the purely 'Germanic' sphere and broadened out into a far more comparative approach.¹⁸

Whereas Karl Hauck widened the concept of the pagan origin of sacral legitimation from medieval ruling dynasties to aristocratic families in general, František Graus challenged the notion of a continuation of ruler cults from pagan to Christian times on the grounds that the Christian authors of legends of royal saints in Merovingian times were generally disapproving of pagan traditions — despite the fact that such traditions were still included in saints' legends — and that royal rank was not important in gaining the status of a saint. Indeed, Graus has argued that the royal saints of the Merovingian period gained their saintly status in spite of, rather than because of their royal rank by

¹⁵ Höfler, 'Das germanische Kontinuitätsproblem'.

¹⁶ On Otto Höfler as a researcher in Nazi Germany, see Klee, *Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich. Wer war was vor und nach 1945*, p. 261; Hausmann, *Auch im Krieg schweigen die Musen nicht*, p. 184; Beck, 'Otto Höfler'.

¹⁷ Hauck, 'Geblütsheiligkeit'; Baetke, *Yngvi und die Ynglinger*; Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger*. Some researchers simply ignored this discussion and continued to use the term in uncritical fashion for several decades, e.g. Eichhorn, *Das Heilige und das Königsheil*.

¹⁸ Due to the misapplication of the notion of sacral kingship, the discussion is at times still loaded with ideological ballast. To be absolutely clear on this point, I want to state here that — while I accept the view that a ruler's sacral status paved the way for the acceptance of royal saints — I do not share Höfler's ideas about 'Germanic continuity' and Wodan/Odin kingship.

becoming martyrs.¹⁹ This view was further developed by Peter Brown who, in his book about the cult of saints in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, showed that in ancient tradition, saints and secular rulers were depicted as diametric opposites. It was for this reason, he has suggested, that hagiographers very often stayed aloof from royal saints.²⁰ With regard to the special group of Anglo-Saxon royal saints, William A. Chaney has upheld the theory of continuity from pagan to Christian times in the face of Graus's arguments.²¹

Incorporating Chaney's claims and comparatively analysing hagiographic writings from England and the Scandinavian kingdoms, Erich Hoffmann has convincingly shown in his habilitation treatise that the concept of the royal saint was exported via Anglo-Saxon missionaries from England to Norway and Denmark.²² Furthermore, he has pointed to the importance of a saintly royal ancestor for claims to rulership among later members of the dynasty. In addition, Hoffman has demonstrated how some of those members actively engaged in promoting the cult of their respective ancestor.

The first synthetic treatment of the European royal saints of the Middle Ages was accomplished by Robert Folz in 1984.²³ In his book he discussed twenty-eight European dynastic saints, classifying them into three categories: martyrs, confessors, and miracle workers. Using mainly hagiographical accounts as his sources, he provided a superb overview of the motifs used in the legends of the European royal saints and how they found their way into hagiography. He also included the Scandinavian royal saints, all of whom fit into his category of *Le roi massacré*. His account of St Erik, however, drew solely on two sources: the two versions of his legend (known as the 'short legend' and the 'standard legend', see Chapter 5 below) and the account of St Erik in Ericus Olai's *Chronica regni Gothorum*.²⁴ With regard to the Swedish royal saint, therefore, Folz's treatment necessarily appears sketchy. A synthesis with a central European focus was produced by the Hungarian scholar Gábor Klaniczay in 2002.²⁵ Since then, Klaniczay's book represents the state-of-the-art concerning research on royal saints in Europe and in many respects has been of great value for the

¹⁹ Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger*, p. 398.

²⁰ Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*.

²¹ Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England*.

²² Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*.

²³ Folz, *Les Saints rois du moyen âge en occident (VI^e–XIII^e siècles)*.

²⁴ Folz, *Les Saints rois du moyen âge en occident (VI^e–XIII^e siècles)*, p. 42, n. 70.

²⁵ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*.

present study. His successful attempt 'to provide a comparative analysis of the royal cults of Hungary and Europe',²⁶ based on historical as well as art/historical sources, made it possible to embed the results of the present detailed study on St Erik into a broader European framework.

Research studies of St Erik up to the end of the nineteenth century invariably took the contents of the legend of St Erik, which was composed in the late thirteenth century — more than a century after his death — at face value. The first researcher to cast doubt on the value of the legend as source material was Knut Stjerna in 1898.²⁷ Influenced by a source-critical trend in French and German historical research at the end of the nineteenth century, Stjerna examined the legend of St Erik under the presupposition that no statement was to be believed that was not backed by a second tradition, and he therefore dismissed the trustworthiness of the entire legend. However, Stjerna hypothesized that Erik as a saint replaced the Old Norse god Freyr as the supernatural power responsible for good harvests. Stjerna's claims were vigorously attacked by large elements of the Swedish and Finnish communities of medievalists, and were labelled 'hypercritical' by many.²⁸ Stjerna received the only backing of his source-critical method from Lauritz Weibull in 1917. Weibull stated that the legend was 'a work of compilation in the spirit of its time, a work which [...], sentence by sentence, reveals its template-like nature'.²⁹ Because of the great influence exercised by the brothers Lauritz and Curt Weibull on Swedish medieval research from the 1920s onwards, it was Lauritz Weibull's work on St Erik that set a new standard on the subject up until the 1940s. Thereafter, however, the pendulum swung back and historians like Sven Tunberg and Einar Carlsson started to reintroduce the legend of St Erik as a trustworthy source. Moreover,

²⁶ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 16.

²⁷ Stjerna, *Erik den helige*.

²⁸ The most vigorous criticism probably came from Carl M. Kjellberg ('Erik den helige i historien och legenden') with whom Stjerna exchanged a number of polemical papers. See, for example, Stjerna, 'Påfvebrevet om Sankt Eriks korståg'; Kjellberg, "Genmäle"; Stjerna, 'Påfvebrevet om Sankt Eriks korståg, II'; Kjellberg, 'S. Erikslegendens författare och autograf af honom'. Other reactions were less polemical but still refuted most of Stjerna's findings, e.g. Janse, 'De nyaste åsikterna om Erik den helige'; Ahnfeldt, 'Ännu ett bidrag till tolkningen af påfvebrevet om S:t Eriks korståg'; Westman, *Den svenska kyrkans utveckling*, pp. 67–100. The vigorous nature of the debate shows the position that St Erik held as a national symbol in the nineteenth-century nationalistic movement in Sweden. On this debate see Oertel, 'St Erik and the Swedish Nationalism'.

²⁹ Weibull, 'Erik den helige', p. 29: 'legenden [...] är ett lärt kompilationsarbete i sin tids anda, ett arbete, som [...] avslöjar sats för sats sin schablonmässigheten'.

the latter postulated an earlier origin of the legend, dating it to the twelfth century, and thus making it almost contemporary with the life of St Erik. In addition, attempts were made to connect other sources to this unknown earlier legend.³⁰ These attempts have been continued by some medievalists up to the present day.³¹

Scholarship on St Erik reached its climax in the large volume edited by Bengt Thordeman in 1954, in which a number of the most established Swedish medievalists and hagiography specialists threw light on the saint and his time, his veneration, and associated liturgy.³² In this book, the focus was for the first time not only on the early veneration of St Erik and the account of his legend, but also on his veneration up to the time of the Kalmar Union and the Reformation.³³ This approach was later continued, particularly by Thomas Lindkvist, who published a number of articles in which he followed one particular feature of the utilization of St Erik's cult throughout the Middle Ages.³⁴ Nevertheless, the paradoxical situation remains that at least ninety per cent of research on St Erik is preoccupied with his early veneration up to the end of the thirteenth century, despite the fact that only a handful of sources exist for this period. The time of the Kalmar Union, during which the veneration of St Erik flourished and historical sources flow far more abundantly, has, however, been the object of very few studies, most of which focused on a different topic and only incorporated a chapter on St Erik incidentally.³⁵ A renewed preoccupation with St Erik in the last few years has resulted in a number of articles on several aspects of his veneration.³⁶

³⁰ Tunberg, 'Erik den helige, Sveriges helgonkonung'; Carlsson, *Translacio archiepiscoporum*. For further discussion of other twelfth-century sources that refer to St Erik see chap. 4.

³¹ Sjöberg, 'Rex Upsalie et vicarius'; Hernfjäll, 'Via Regia — Kungsvägen — Eriksgatan'.

³² Thordeman, *Erik den helige. Historia — Kult — Reliker*.

³³ See in particular the articles by Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten' and Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst'.

³⁴ Lindkvist, 'Med Sankt Erik konung mot hedningar och schismatiker'; Lindkvist, 'Erik den helige och det Svenska kungadömet framväxt'.

³⁵ Reinholdsson, *Uppror eller resningar?*, pp. 51–64; Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsala-liturgin*, pp. 263–72; Sundqvist, *Freyr's Offspring*, pp. 348–64; Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, pp. 80–122.

³⁶ Fröjmark, 'De nordiska helgonkungarna och deras kult intill år 1248'; Gassowska, 'Der Kult des heiligen Erich im Gdansk des 15. Jahrhunderts'; *St. Eriks historia = The Historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson; Nilsson, 'St. Erik's Two Bodies and Chants'; Lovén, 'Erikskulten i Uppsala'; Lovén and Bengtsson, 'Spår av den äldre Erikslegenden'; Sands, 'The Cult of St Eric,

This renewed interest in St Erik has focused not only on the Middle Ages but has also extended to the Early Modern period.³⁷

King and Marty in Medieval Sweden'; Skórzewska, 'Family Matters?'; Bengtsson, 'Från statisk till dramatisk'; Oertel, 'Heiliger Vorfahr und rex perpetuus?.'

³⁷ Ågren, *Erik den helige — landsfader eller beläte?*; Oertel, 'St Erik and Swedish Nationalism'.

THE SOURCES

The present investigation follows the aim of providing a picture of the cult of St Erik which is as complete as possible concerning its spatial and social dispersal and concerning its supporters and their strategies of promoting the cult. To achieve this, all edited and a number of non-edited sources that deal with St Erik, especially the supporters of his cult and their strategies in furthering his veneration, have to be discussed. Since the Swedish royal saint was never canonized by a pope, no canonization records exist which could show how he was conceptualized as a saint by those who furthered his canonization.¹ Therefore, the present study has to rely on a number of alternative sources.

Naturally, the present author is not an expert in all of the research branches associated with the different types of sources investigated in this study. Yet, an interdisciplinary approach is vital in order to create a comprehensive description of the cult of St Erik. Of course, basic knowledge of the utilized disciplines is necessary, but interdisciplinarity as I see it does not presuppose that the researcher who intends to carry out such a study has to be an expert in all the related disciplines. Instead, intense discussions with experts are necessary, as well as a basic trust in the scientific standards of research publications. When questions arose while researching the present study, they were discussed with specialists of the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Stockholm, the Swedish *Riksarkiv* (the National Archive, Stockholm), the University

¹ Studies which included such inquiries into canonization records have frequently been conducted. Two recent examples are Heß, *Heilige machen im spätmittelalterlichen Ostseeraum* and Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis*.

Library of Uppsala and the *Kungliga Bibliotek* (the Royal Library, Stockholm). The rewards of this approach were significant. To name only one example, it would have been impossible to discover the multimedia strategy employed by Sten Sture the Elder to fuel the anti-Danish feelings of his subjects by making use of the cults of St Erik and St George without taking into account all the remaining sources and discussing their value with colleagues working in different research disciplines.

The paucity of written sources relevant for the study of the cult of St Erik — particularly during the early period of his veneration — makes it indispensable to use all extant sources that can contribute to as complete a picture as possible. This includes, in addition to the written accounts in charters, historiography, and hagiography, liturgical literature (sermons, offices) and several types of sources showing pictures of the saint (coins, seals, church paintings, sculptures, embroideries, carvings). The scarcity of sources is at the same time an advantage and a disadvantage: on the one hand, it makes it difficult to construct a consistent account of what happened during the development of the cult of St Erik. On the other hand, it gives the scholar the opportunity to set out on a challenging investigation. A study that aimed at considering all existing sources about a saint would be a life-long enterprise if the topic were a royal saint such as St Louis, St Wenceslas, or St Stephan.

Each of the various source types has its special characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. The Swedish medieval charters, which are collected in the *Svenskt Diplomatarium*, amount to around 40,000 items (approximately half of them in originals and the other half in medieval copies). Up to the year 1378 and for the years 1401 to 1420, the charters are edited in the *Diplomatarium Suecanum* (DS) and the *Svenskt Diplomatarium* (SD). They are also published online in the *Svenskt Diplomatariums huvudkartotek* (SDHK).² All these charters have been searched for entries concerning St Erik. These entries can be classified into four main categories: donations, datings, *apprecatio*-formulae (in letters) and further (miscellaneous) subjects (e.g. relics, pilgrimages). Of these categories, the datings and *apprecatio*-formulae probably need some explanation. Numerous dating methods are used in medieval charters to record both the year and the day when each charter was issued.³ The focus of the present

² On the edition of the Swedish medieval charters, see Gejrot, 'Medeltiden i dataåldern'. The database is accessible via <<http://www.nad.riksarkivet.se/sdhk>> [accessed 30 March 2016]. On the Swedish medieval charters in general see Larsson, *Svenska medeltidsbrev*.

³ For the various means of dating a charter, see von Brandt, *Werkzeug des Historikers*, pp. 29–38.

study lies in the dating of days by the feast day of St Erik, since the use of the saint's feast day for the dating of a charter suggests that his existence was known to all of those who had a part in the charter and that he may even have been venerated by them. What is more, the usage of this dating habit suggests, that the saint's day was by that time included in the saint's calendar of the bishopric in which the charter was issued.⁴

The first Swedish charter in which the date of issue is mentioned was issued by King Erik Eriksson on 3 June 1224.⁵ There, the Roman dating *III° nonas iunij* is used. In the following year we find the first charter that uses a saint's feast day for this purpose.⁶ However, the habit of dating charters did not become predominant before the 1250s and the usage of the Roman style was only gradually replaced with the usage of the saint's calendar by the end of the thirteenth century.⁷ Thus, we cannot find any datings using St Erik's feast day before 1291, when the archbishop elect, Magnus Johansson, dated his testament *Datum Siktunie, Anno Domini Millesimo Ducentesimo Nonagesimo Primo jn Crastino Beati Eriki Regis Et Martyris*.⁸

How the dating after St Erik's feast day(s) developed and spread will be followed up in chapters four to seven of the present study. The assumption that he was known as a saint and may also have been venerated in those regions where charters were dated using St Erik's feast, applies — independently of the place of issue — to the charters of the Swedish kings who issued them all over the country and who were familiar with St Erik. The only thorough attempt at an overview of the dispersal of St Erik's cult was that made by Birgitta Fritz in an unpublished term paper from 1956.⁹ However, the tradition of the charters cannot be regarded as an actual mirror of the diffusion of the veneration of St Erik, since the material is far from being comprehensive. Regions in which a high number of charters were issued due to a higher density of population stand side-

⁴ On the usage of saints' feast days for dating purposes in Scandinavian charters, see Jexlev, 'Lokalhelgener og middelalderlige nordiske brevdateringer'; Jexlev, 'Om Knud den Hellige som dateringshelgon i Danmark'.

⁵ SDHK, 431.

⁶ SDHK, 440: 'in uigilia assumptionis sancte marie' (at the vigil [the day before] of the ascension of St Mary).

⁷ Ljungfors, *Bidrag till svensk diplomatik före 1350*, pp. 151, 160.

⁸ SDHK, 1522: 'Given in Sigtuna in the year of the Lord one thousand two hundred ninety one on the day before [the feast of] saint Erik king and martyr'.

⁹ Fritz, *Eriksdateringar i medeltida urkunder*. [The author has kindly lent this work to me.]

by-side with rural and sparsely inhabited areas. In such regions, the chance of having an extant charter from the two weeks around the feast day of St Erik is much smaller than in the central regions. The picture gets even more distorted by the fact that half of the known Swedish medieval charters are known through copy-books, which only document charters connected to specific institutions. Therefore, the evidence of the charters cannot stand alone, but must be complemented by other sources, particularly pictorial references to St Erik and the distribution of liturgical books in which texts for his veneration were included.¹⁰

A unique collection of letters, mostly written by or directed to one of the *riksföreståndare* of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, is known as the *Sturearkiv*. The collection consists of about 1900 documents, most of which were written during the rules of the two *riksföreståndare*, Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger.¹¹ The *Sturearkiv* has, however, never been systematically edited. Approximately 1300 of the letters have been edited in almost sixty different publications and it is those published letters which form the basis for the analysis of the *apprecatio*-formulae discussed in Chapter 7 below. In a surprisingly high number of those formulae, it is St Erik who is invoked to protect the recipient's soul.¹² I intend to show that the choice of the invoked saint depended both on the social position of the sender and on that of the recipient, and that this choice can be used to determine for which group or person a certain saint was particularly 'responsible'.

Many of the writings about St Erik were created during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. During that time, the legend, the miracle collection, and the office of the saint were compiled. Whereas earlier research considered such liturgical and hagiographical writings as being of very low value as historical sources, this evaluation has been reconsidered in the last few decades.¹³ Although the mistake of nineteenth-century historians to regard every

¹⁰ Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten', pp. 141–42.

¹¹ The collection has been considered from the angle of archive sciences in Retsö, 'Sturearkivet: En senmedeltida brevsamling'.

¹² For example SDHK, 42. 646: 'Her med kereste moder böfaler Jak ider then alzmectigeste Gud och sancte Eric konungh til ewiik tidh' (Hereby, most beloved mother, do I commend you to the almighty God and King St Erik for eternal times).

¹³ Weibull, 'Erik den helige', p. 14: 'Man gör sig en fullständigt falsk bild av de medeltida legenderna, om man dessa, såsom in i senaste tid skett och sker, ser historiska källor av värde för kännedomen om händelseförloppen och de skildrade personerna'. (One would judge the medieval legends completely wrongly if one would, as has in the most recent times been and is still done, see them as historical sources with any value for the knowledge about [historical])

description in St Erik's legend as 'historical truth' should be avoided, it can still give important insights into the motivation of its author(s) and the standing of the cult of St Erik at the time of its composition in the late thirteenth century. The same is true for the miracle collection and the saint's office, both of which were written down around the same time. By analysing the geographical spread of the miracles it is, in addition, possible to complement the charters and the art-historical sources in determining the spread of St Erik's cult at the time when the miracle collection was composed. With regard to the Swedish medieval parchment fragments, a project called 'Medeltida Pergaments Omslag' (MPO) was conducted at the *Riksarkiv* in Stockholm during the years 1995 to 2004.¹⁴ It had the goal of cataloguing around 25,000 parchment fragments that had been reused as book covers. For the present study, those fragments are particularly valuable in regard to the early veneration of St Erik in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, since they add some material to the very scarce source bank for this time.

Whereas sermons were only held inside churches during mass on Sundays and consisted mostly of the explanation and interpretation of the Gospel (homilies) up to the early thirteenth century, mendicants used the medium of the sermon in order to spread their new way of living the Christian faith, by preaching not only on Sundays but on every occasion and at every place that seemed appropriate.¹⁵ From the early thirteenth century onwards, the strongly intensified preaching of the mendicants made it one of the most important means of transporting ideas from the intellectual elite, who wrote the sermons,

proceedings and the [therein] described persons). An example for the reconsideration of the value of hagiographical sources is Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 30: 'Numera har man erkänt hagiografen som en väsentlig och utomordentligt representativ del av den medeltida historieskrivningen'; (Now, one has recognised hagiography as an important and extraordinarily representative part of medieval historiography). See also Schmale, *Funktion und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung*, pp. 113–14, 143–64.

¹⁴ The catalogue of the project has recently been published online: <<http://www.nad.riksarkivet.se/MPO>> [accessed 30 March 2016]. On the project see also Brunius, *From Manuscripts to Wrappers*. Since work on these fragments started, three monographs have been published in connection with them: Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*; Brunius, *Atque Olavi*; Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*.

¹⁵ Roberts, 'The *ars praedicandi* and the Medieval Sermon', p. 43: 'The history of medieval preaching may be seen as the transition from the simple patristic homily to the more complex sermon of the high and later Middle Ages'. On the development of preaching sermons during the Middle Ages, see Roth, *Die mittelalterliche Predigttheorie*, pp. 15–149; Hill, 'Reform and Resistance'.

to those who listened to their preaching. 'Preaching was not a mass medium in the strict sense, but it was arguably the nearest thing to mass communication to be found in the thirteenth century',¹⁶ as, to some extent, it 'fulfilled the function of the daily press in the age of oral culture'.¹⁷ Although numerous sermon manuscripts are extant, the 'preaching event', which included personal emphasis, gesture, and facial expression, as well as allusions to depictions inside the respective church and day-to-day political issues, can be reconstructed in only very few cases.¹⁸ The present study will, however, not ask for the strategies of visualization, which is one of the focal points of the latest research on sermons,¹⁹ but will rather analyse which characteristics were ascribed to St Erik in the sermon manuscripts and how the royal saint was juxtaposed with contemporary rulers as an ideal they should live up to.

In Sweden, almost all extant medieval sermon manuscripts derive from the monastery of Vadstena.²⁰ They are included in the C-collection of the Uppsala University Library, most of them being parts of codices in which sermons for a large number of saints and/or occasions were collected. In Vadstena, preaching in the vernacular was prescribed by the *regula* of the monastery, while in the *Revelationes extravagantes* of St Birgitta, it is stated that sermons should be intelligible to all.²¹ Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of the sermons included in the sermon collections are written in Latin. 'Model sermons were written in Latin and turned into the vernacular when the preacher addressed a lay audience'.²²

¹⁶ D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars*, p. 4. On the new way of mendicants' preaching, see D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars*, pp. 13–43; Bériou, 'Les Sermons latins après 1200', pp. 363–65. The function of the Birgittine monks as preachers is discussed by Andersson, *De birgittinska ordensprästerne som traditionsförmedlare och folksöstrare*.

¹⁷ Šmahel, Krzenk, and Patschovsky, *Die hussitische Revolution*, I, 408: 'das im Zeitalter der oralen Kultur die Funktion der Tagespresse erfüllte'.

¹⁸ For the distinction between the 'written text' and the 'preaching event', see Mayne Kienzle, 'The Typology of the Medieval Sermon and its Development in the Middle Ages', pp. 84, 87; Thompson, 'From Texts to Preaching'.

¹⁹ See, for example, the articles in the two anthologies: Wetzel and Flückiger, *Die Predigt im Mittelalter zwischen Mündlichkeit, Bildlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit*, and Muessig, *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience in the Middle Ages*. See also Amos, 'Early Medieval Sermons and their Audience'.

²⁰ Andersson, 'Att predika och berätta historier', p. 156.

²¹ *Sancta Birgitta: opera minora*, ed. by Eklund, I: *Regula Salvatoris* (1975), 15.121; *Den heliga Birgittas reuelaciones extravagantes*, ed. by Hollmann, 23.

²² Mayne Kienzle, 'The Typology of the Medieval Sermon and its Development in the Middle Ages', p. 87.

In this material, there are thirty sermons that were to be given on the feast day of St Erik. Eleven of them have been transcribed by Maria Berggren, who has kindly provided me with transcriptions. These eleven sermons represent a cross-section from the late fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries and thus reflect the attitude of the preachers of Vadstena throughout the time of the Kalmar Union.

The chronicles written in Sweden during the Middle Ages were in most cases verse chronicles. The first of them, the *Erikskrönika*, was written in the 1330s and focuses on the events that happened during the time from the middle of the thirteenth century up to the time of its composition. The name '*Erikskrönika*' derives from the name of Duke Erik (not from St Erik), who is one of the protagonists of the chronicle and was the father of Magnus Eriksson, king during the time of the chronicle's creation. In this first Swedish chronicle, St Erik is not mentioned. More than a century later, in the second half of the fifteenth century, the *Karlskrönika* and the *Sturekrönika* were composed as a means of propaganda for the two eponymous men, King Karl Knutsson (Bonde) and Sten Sture the Elder. In these two chronicles, the cult of St Erik is used to support the proto-nationalistic policy of the Swedish rulers of the time, as will be discussed in Chapter 7 below. Finally, in Ericus Olai's *Chronica regni Gothorum* from c. 1470 — which is, in contrast to the three chronicles mentioned above, written in Latin and not in verse — St Erik and St Henrik are chosen to represent the well-governing king and bishop.²³ In this chronicle, St Erik is portrayed as a model king according to his legend and as the founder of the only true bloodline of Swedish kings.

The relationship between theologians and images has always been slightly strained, particularly in situations when pictures were venerated in a way that theologians thought was due only to God. This resulted in a number of attempts to either abolish entirely the use of pictures by the church (Albigenses, Hussites, some branches of the Lutheran Reformation) or at least to limit the pomp used in their production and/or reduce their cultic importance (Cistercians). All of those movements had to fight the human desire to physically see the objects of veneration, and consequently the use of pictures has never been limited to any great extent inside the medieval Roman Catholic Church. On the contrary, after the Middle Ages, in the Early Modern era of Baroque, the pomp and wealth that was displayed in cultic images reached a new climax.

²³ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg; on the chronicle see Tjällén, *Church and Nation*.

In most cases, cultic images represented a local cult or the authority of a local ecclesiastical institution, whereby the picture of a saint was used to remind the viewer of what the saint, according to his or her legend, had accomplished.²⁴ Episodes from the saint's legend were either explicitly depicted or saints were referred to by objects that were connected to them (attributes). Illustrations of the saint's behaviour are displayed in order to serve as examples to which viewers should aspire. The purpose of saints therefore, besides their function as protecting patrons, is an educational one.²⁵ Although in some instances the tradition of depicting a saint in a special way will be traced, it is generally not the intention of the present study to treat the figural sources in an art-historical way. The intention is rather to evaluate the pictorial expressions as a means of representation of the person or persons issuing or producing the respective depiction. Therefore, the analysis of all the depictions treated hereafter will be of an iconographic nature. For this treatment, the method suggested by Roelof van Straten will be applied.²⁶ This method includes an approach to the respective picture in three steps: the pre-iconographical description as a description of the depicted images, the iconographical description as a description of the depicted motives and, on the basis of these two descriptive stages, the iconographical interpretation, which aims to clarify the connection of the image under discussion to other relevant figural and textual accounts and to give an interpretation of the intended message of the picture.²⁷

A large number of depicted saints can usually be found inside churches, and so the special importance of any of them can only be assumed when he or she is depicted in an unusual way or at an important position inside the church space; for example, close to the main altar. The general occurrence of the depictions of St Erik in Swedish churches can, however, help to localize the regions of his veneration and the way he is depicted can give some clues as to how the saint was imagined by contemporaries (for example, as a knight-king and protector (in armour with sword) or as a wise king, a *rex iustus* (in plain clothes with sceptre and globe)). His depiction, whether alone or with saintly company (in most cases with either one or both of the two other Scandinavian royal saints or with St Henrik), can give further information about the intended statement that the artist or issuer of the picture wanted to communicate. Most probably,

²⁴ Belting, *Bild und Kult*, pp. 14–18.

²⁵ On the didactical uses of saints see Ellis Nilsson, 'Political Pawns or Holy Paragons'.

²⁶ Van Straten, *An Introduction to Iconography*.

²⁷ Van Straten, *An Introduction to Iconography*, pp. 4–24.

there existed a close connection between wall paintings and sermons, since stories from the Bible and from saints' legends were narrated via both media. In this way, they complemented one another. 'The high level of didactic material found in wall paintings suggests that they were a favoured medium for religious instruction. Like sermons, they addressed a large and diverse audience, transcending the barriers between illiterate and literate.'²⁸

Depictions of St Erik are often hard to distinguish from those of St Olaf and of St Knut.²⁹ That is because both the depictions of St Erik and of St Knut have their model in those of St Olaf. During the study of the pictures of the three holy kings in the iconographical catalogue of *Riksantikvarieämbete* and *Vitterhetsakademien* in Stockholm — which was my primary source for depictions of St Erik — it became obvious that a number of the depictions ascribed to one of the saints could almost equally refer to one of the others, particularly when the exclusive defining attribute (St Olaf: axe, St Knut: spear, St Erik: sword) was missing. Since the present study is not of an art-historical nature, no attempts at identification have been made — the identification recorded in the iconographical catalogue has generally been adopted. However, in some cases there remains a certain degree of uncertainty, particularly when the depicted saint either had no attribute at all or bore one of the ambiguous attributes (globe, sceptre) which can be linked to all of the royal saints. This is particularly the case when no other saint traditionally associated with St Erik (St Lars, St Henrik, St Olaf) is depicted together with the saint who is understood to represent St Erik. Such uncertain depictions are not included in the maps that represent the distribution of images of St Erik.

In contrast to the two-dimensional pictures with cultic content, 'medieval sculpture was not developed on the soil of the Roman Empire but in areas in which the former Barbarians had assimilated to Roman civilization'.³⁰ Sculptures were developed from reliquaries with which they shared a three-dimensional appearance, applications of precious stones and metals, and their position at the altar. Both were demonstrations of the physical presence of a saint. In medieval Sweden, sculptures, either in the form of reliefs on altar-pieces or of (mostly wooden) statues were placed somewhere in the church.

²⁸ Gill, 'Preaching and Image', p. 155. On the connection between sermon and wall painting in the Swedish context, see Nilsén, 'Man and Picture'.

²⁹ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, p. 36; Jacobsson, *Beställare och finansiärer*, pp. 287, 292–314; Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltida bildkonst', pp. 174–78.

³⁰ Belting, *Bild und Kult*, p. 331.

A large number of those statues have nowadays lost their arms, which involves the loss of the attributes by which the saint could be identified conclusively.

The custom of striking coins was transferred from Anglo-Saxon England to Scandinavia. They represent the second ‘mass medium’ of the Middle Ages next to sermons since they were produced by the thousands and the textual and figural messages on them reached people from all social strata. Precious metals had been used on the Scandinavian Peninsula for economic transactions before the introduction of coins, but during this period the metal (mostly silver) was measured by its weight.³¹ In Sweden, minting was first introduced at around the turn of the first millennium by King Olaf Skötkonung. This first attempt to establish a monetary economy, however, failed and minting was, after a long interval, resumed around 1140 on the island of Gotland, around 1150 in Västergötland, and in the 1180s in Svealand, under the reign of King Knut Eriksson (1167–96).³² The depiction of holy kings on coins occurred first in Viking Age Britain and was probably — together with the coins — imported from there into Scandinavia.³³ Although earlier research assumed otherwise, I will argue in chapters 4 and 7 that in Sweden the first coins depicting St Erik originate only from the fifteenth century.

Medieval seals are naturally very close to two of the above-mentioned source types. On the one hand, they always appear attached to charters and are exclusively used to certify the validity of them.³⁴ Authorization was thus one reason for attaching one or several seals to a charter. On the other hand, however, each seal also served as a medium through which the person for whom it was made could show his or her affiliation to a social group. Seals were a medium used to communicate a message to a specific public through pictures and texts, and the composition of this message invariably cost the issuer a good deal of money and

³¹ Brather, ‘Frühmittelalterliche Dirham-Schatzfunde in Europa’; Steuer, Stern, and Goldenberg, ‘Der Wechsel von der Münzgeld- zur Gewichtsgeldwirtschaft in Haithabu’.

³² Malmer, ‘Münzprägung und frühe Stadtentwicklung in Nordeuropa’; Jonsson, ‘Från utländsk metall till inhemsk mynt’; Jonsson, ‘Fynd med Sigtunamynt från Knut Erikssons tid’; Jonsson and Lagerqvist, ‘Den tidigaste medeltida myntningen i Svealand’.

³³ Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, pp. 610–11 (St Edmund memorial coinage of the Vikings of East Anglia).

³⁴ For an elementary overview of seals, see Kittel, *Siegel*; Ewald, *Siegelkunde*. A more recent overview is given by Stieldorf, *Siegelkunde: Basiswissen* and Vahl, ‘Beschreibung und Auswertung mittelalterlicher Siegel’. The function of seals as signs of rulership has for a long time dominated research in this field. See for example, Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik*.

effort. A further characteristic shared by both seals and coins is that they are carved only once but used several times. Both seals and coins were the two most prominent carriers of human images since the Early Middle Ages.³⁵ Moreover, in both cases, people were not depicted individually but according to schemes showing them as holding a special position. However, coins were issued in medieval Sweden by kings and *riksföreståndare* only, whereas seals were used by larger sections of medieval society. They are thus useful in broadening our view concerning the figurative self-representation of different social groups. Of course, seals showing St Erik are of particular interest in this study. On the European level, it has been stated that 'from a social viewpoint, post-millennial seals, no longer a royal and male prerogative, were used within a gendered and broader, albeit still elite, spectrum of society'.³⁶ While only kings, bishops, and a small number of abbots used seals in twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Sweden, their usage had spread to both male and female members of the aristocracy as well as to ecclesiastic corporations by the latter half of the thirteenth century, and to townspeople in the fourteenth century.³⁷

Seals showing a saint were a further development of the portrait seals of the Early Middle Ages, and the saint was most important for the creation of an identity of a cathedral chapter as a corporation of its own right.³⁸ It is no accident that the oldest known seal of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala sported its main saint, St Lars, and the (smaller) counter-seal its second saint, St Erik. Seals adorned with coats of arms became the most common type used by Swedish aristocratic men in the latter half of the thirteenth century, while aristocratic women maintained seals showing a person or persons. In many of the seals, the owner of the seal is depicted kneeling before the saint that he or she venerated most.³⁹

The situation concerning the cataloguing of Swedish medieval seals is unfortunately very unsatisfactory. The royal seals are edited for the whole span of the Middle Ages, but aristocratic and ecclesiastic seals are covered in an incomplete nineteenth-century edition that only goes as far as 1350.⁴⁰ A continuation of this work would be most desirable. Therefore, all statements about seals after 1350 will most probably be subject to additions made by future research.

³⁵ Kahsnitz, 'Historische Hilfswissenschaften und Kunstgeschichte', p. 179.

³⁶ Bedos-Rezak, 'Ego, Ordo, Communitas', p. 49.

³⁷ *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, p. iv.

³⁸ Groten, 'Vom Bild zum Zeichen', pp. 69–71; Späth, 'Siegelbild und Kathedralgotik', p. 47.

³⁹ For examples, see *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, 3rd series, PL 10.

⁴⁰ *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand.

ROYAL SAINTS AND THE SHIFT OF FAITH

Having discussed the sources used for the present study, we will now look at the role which the royal saints played in the Christianization process in Scandinavia, following the route of the royal saints from early medieval Burgundy and Franconia via England to Scandinavia; we will analyse the ways in which the role of the royal saint changed, both geographically as this route traversed Northern Europe and also over time. This will be accompanied by some deliberations on sacral kingship and the dynastic legitimation of rulership.

According to Gábor Klaniczay, the medieval cult around saintly rulers had three components: the Christianized version of the ancient ruler cult, the Christian saint's cult and pagan notions of the ruler's sacral status.¹ One could, however, consider the ancient ruler cult as one particular form of pagan notions of the ruler's sacral status and thus reduce the interplaying elements to the remaining two. The development of the cult of the Christian saint has been treated in numerous research accounts and it can be summed up briefly.² It had its roots in antiquity, and Jesus Christ himself has to be seen as the archetype of every Christian saint. The *imitatio Christi* is thus the most prevalent feature that characterizes — in one form or another — every medieval saint.³

¹ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 63.

² See for example Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien*; Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 11–22; Speyer, 'Der kirchliche Heilige als religiöses Leitbild in der Kirchengeschichte'; Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*.

³ Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien*, pp. 30–32.

The highest form of the emulation of Christ was to follow his example and to die for one's faith. Thus, the first type of saint was the Christian martyr, and in the old Roman Empire with its waves of persecutions of Christians up to the fourth century, there were numerous possibilities of suffering martyrdom and ascending directly into the company of God.⁴ After the acceptance of Christianity by Constantine in AD 313, these possibilities dwindled and other ways of imitating Christ had to be found. Ascetics, who mortified their flesh as quasi-martyrdom in life, and confessors, who confessed their faith under the threat of death, became the predominant types of saints.⁵ The main feature that characterized a saint was (and still is), however, the working of miracles after death, thus proving the presence of the saint at God's side and their ability to intercede for those who had requested their help. In later historical periods, when the mission of the 'Germanic' kingdoms started, martyrdom was again possible and the different saintly qualities also appeared combined in most of the new missionary saints.

Another possible grouping of the saints concerns the extent of the area in which they were venerated. At either end of this spectrum we have the universally venerated saint and the locally venerated saint. Within the spectrum all sorts of spatial spread were possible. The first group of universally venerated saints consisted mainly of biblical saints, such as Mary or the apostles, or of early martyrs like St Stephan. By the fourth century, however, the *inventiones* of local saints had started.⁶ 'The crucial factor in all these *inventiones* was clearly "a desire for special local patrons", the need for a community to demonstrate

⁴ This may sound cynical but it does indeed seem to have been the attitude of ancient Christians, for whom martyrdom was not a sacrifice but a victory over evil and the necessary foundation for a better future. See Tertullianus, *Apologeticum*, ed. by Becker, 13.222: 'Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitior quaeque crudelitas vestra; illecebra est magis sectae. Plures efficimur, quotiens metimur a vobis: semen est sanguis Christianorum' (And yet does every cruelty of yours, however exquisite, come to nothing: It is rather a bait for our community. We become more numerous whenever we are mowed down by you. A seed [of new life] is the blood of the Christians), or Augustine of Hippo's Sermon 286 'In natali martyrum Protasii et Gervasii: 'quasi semine sanguinis impleta est martyribus terra, et de illo semine seges surrexit Ecclesiae' (The earth has been filled with the blood of martyrs as with the seed and from that seed have sprung the crops of the Church) quoted after: <<http://www.augustinus.it/latino/discorsi/index2.htm>> [accessed 30 March 2016].

⁵ Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien*, p. 55.

⁶ Thacker, 'Loca sanctorum', p. 5. The different contributions in the anthology *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. by Thacker and Sharpe, give an overview of the development of local saints in Italy, Spain, Gaul, Britain and Ireland.

that its church was ‘the heir of its own martyrs’.⁷ It is this second category of saints, venerated in a restricted area, which is of most interest in the present study, since it is they who mainly contribute to the formation of an identity.⁸ Thacker distinguishes further between uni-local and multi-local saints, meaning respectively saints who were venerated in one diocese only or else those whose cult spread to other dioceses.

The second element, the pagan notions of sacral rulership, is harder to summarize.⁹ The fact that a sacral legitimation of rulership was used in numerous civilizations all around the globe and in all periods of time has led to the conclusion that the Christian way of legitimating rulership through religion was ‘nothing but the special type of a general phenomenon’ and that the desire to do so could be seen as an anthropological constant.¹⁰ It has even been assumed that the structural logic of human societies almost enforced such sacral legitimization in order to integrate the order of these societies into the cosmic order.¹¹ Therefore, we subsume the ruler cult of classic antiquity (Egyptian, Hellenistic, and Roman) under this general phenomenon; another special case, that of the ‘Germanic’ sacral rulership, will be discussed below.

⁷ Thacker, ‘*Loca sanctorum*’, p. 6. The quotes inside the quotation are taken by Thacker from Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, p. 144.

⁸ The (in all probability) first work of Danish literature, the *Passio sancti Kanuti*, begins by stating exactly this issue: ‘Licet per totius orbis ecclesias conueniat omni populo christiano festa sanctorum celebrare, uictorias martirum laudare uitamque istorum imitari, in singulis tamen locis propter familiaritatem cohabitantium et propter sanctorum presentiam reliquiarum, que in solacium istis uel illis habitatoribus condonate sunt, ueneratione (inquam) speciali apud ciues populosue suos digni habentur atque honorantur’ (Throughout the churches of the entire world it is customary for every Christian people to celebrate the feasts of the saints, to praise the victories of the martyrs and to imitate their lives. But in each place some saints are held, I think, in special honour and veneration by their kinsmen and people because of their familiarity with them and because of the presence of the holy relics which have been handed over to the inhabitants of this or that place for their consolation). ‘*Passio sancti Kanuti*’, p. 62; translation: Mortensen, ‘Sanctified Beginnings and Mythopoietic Moments’, p. 247.

⁹ For the general discussion of the intertwinement of religion and politics, see chap. 1 above.

¹⁰ See the articles on African, Chinese, and European civilizations in *Die Sakralität von Herrschaft*, ed. by Erkins. Quote from Erkins: ‘Sakral legitimierte Herrschaft im Wechsel der Zeiten und Räume. Versuch eines Überblicks’, p. 21: ‘nichts als die spezielle Ausformung eines allgemeinen Phänomens’. For the ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean, see Edelmann, *Religiöse Herrschaftslegitimation in der Antike*.

¹¹ Dux, ‘Die Genese der Sakralität von Herrschaft’.

The first royal saints appeared in Merovingian central Europe. At this early stage, the royalty of the individual saint was rather a by-product of his or her saintly life.¹² The first of the medieval royal saints was St Sigismund of Burgundy († 523/24) who converted his kingdom from Arianism to the orthodoxy of the Church of Rome and whose death, effected by the Frank Chlodomer, was interpreted as martyrdom.¹³ But it was the female saints of the Early Middle Ages — starting with the Thuringian St Radegund — who achieved the reconciliation of royal dignity with sanctity and who thus further developed the royal type of saints.¹⁴ It was, however, not in central Europe but in early medieval England that the cult of the royal saint had its most numerous representatives,¹⁵ and here a new aspect was added to the characteristics of the saintly kings, namely the inclusion of the virtues of the *reges iusti* into the canon of their qualities.¹⁶ The Anglo-Saxon notion of the *rex iustus* as the ideal Christian king had its roots in the writings of Augustine (Bishop of Hippo 394–430) and of Pseudo-Cyprian (an unknown South-Irish writer of the seventh century).¹⁷ The qualities of a *rex iustus*, according to these two authors, include ruling justly, protecting and furthering the church, punishing leniently, protecting the weak and the poor, and protecting the kingdom.

¹² Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger*, p. 398: 'Die königliche Herrschaft [...] dient dem Hagiographen zur Steigerung des Ruhmes seines Heiligen, sie ist absolut nicht der Grund für die Heiligkeit'.

¹³ On Sigismund, see Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger*, pp. 397–98; Folz, 'Zur Frage der heiligen Könige'; Folz, *Les Saints rois du moyen âge en occident*, pp. 23–27; Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 67; Paxton, 'Power and the Power to heal'.

¹⁴ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 77.

¹⁵ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, pp. 78–79 provides the following impressive list for the seventh and eighth centuries: Cadwalla (Wessex, 685–88), Ini (Wessex, 688–726), Sebbi (Essex, 675?–692/93), Ethelred (Mercia, 675–704), Coenred (Northumbria, 704–09), Offa (Essex?–709), Oswin (Deira, 642–51), Sigbert the Good (Essex, † 660), Alfwold (Northumbria, 778–89), and Ethelbert (East Anglia, † 794). This could be further extended for subsequent centuries. See also Johanek, 'Politische Heilige auf den britischen Inseln'.

¹⁶ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, p. 23.

¹⁷ Editions: Pseudo-Cyprianus, *De XII abusivis saeculi*, ed. by Hellmann, pp. 32–60; Augustinus, *De civitate dei*, ed. by Dombart and Kalb, 1.24. For the *rex iustus*-notion in medieval times see Szurawitzki, *Contra den rex iustus/rex iniquus?*, pp. 29–37; Anton, 'Pseudo-Cyprian'.

It was this *rex iustus*-type of royal saint that travelled with the Anglo-Saxon missionaries to Norway and Denmark and thus we find the same qualities in the *legendae* and *vitae* of the saintly kings of Scandinavia.¹⁸ The proto-martyr of Scandinavia was Olaf 'the Holy' Haraldsson of Norway, who died in the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030 in an attempt to regain his throne. His veneration started directly after his death and was promoted both by his followers and his former enemies. Among the first were the Anglo-Saxon Grimkjell (who used to be Olaf's *hirð*-bishop), Olaf's half-brother Harald Hardrada, and his son Magnus.¹⁹ Supporters of Olaf's cult who had numbered among the king's former enemies included Einarr þambarskelfir, a Norwegian noble, as well as Knut the Great, represented in Norway by his son Sven. They all consented to the veneration of Olaf; probably, as Erich Hoffmann assumes, in order to strengthen the institution of kingship in Norway.²⁰

The early sources for the cult of St Olaf are the following: the poem *Glælognskviða*, composed by Sven Knutsson's court skald, Þorarin, which probably originated from 1031/32 and already contained important elements of the later hagiography; and the poem *Erfidrapa*, composed a few years later by the skald Sigvat Þorðarson.²¹ In 1031 the body of St Olaf was exhumed and enshrined in Christ Church in Niðarós, which became the centre of the cult of the saint and in 1153 the seat of the archbishop for the islands of the North Atlantic and Norway. The early veneration of St Olaf in England is witnessed by an office dedicated to him in the *Leofric Collectar* and by the Abingdon text (C) of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which records St Olaf's death.²² Both were written around 1050. The sources of the eleventh century are complemented by the

¹⁸ It was Erich Hoffmann who first demonstrated this itinerary in 1975 and whom the research community has widely followed. See Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 79–80 (Olaf of Norway), pp. 103–23 (Knut Konung), pp. 167–68 (Knut Lavard), pp. 182–84 (Erik Plovpenning), pp. 200–01 (Erik Jedvardsson).

¹⁹ Skórzewska, 'Family Matters?', pp. 348–49, 351–53.

²⁰ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 80–81; On Knut's motives to support the cult of St Olaf see also Townend, 'Knútr and the Cult of St Ólaf'.

²¹ *Glælognskviða av Toraren Loutunge*, ed. by Magerøy; 'Erfidrapa', in *Den norsk-islendiske Skjaldedigtning*, ed. by Jónsson.

²² *The Leofric Collectar*, ed. by Dewick and Frere, I, (1915), ed. by Dewick; *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. by Whitelock, p. 101: '1030: In this year King Olaf was killed by his own people, and was afterwards holy'.

report of Adam of Bremen (c. 1075), who gives several (contradictory) versions of King Olaf's death and the events preceding it. He also states that St Olaf was venerated in all regions bordering the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.²³

In the year 1153, the skald Einar Skúlason wrote the poem *Geisli*, into which he added some further aspects to the cult,²⁴ and finally St Olaf and his cult were treated thoroughly in Old Norse literature (starting c. 1170) which includes a variety of sagas dealing with St Olaf's life and miracles. There is, for example, the 'oldest saga of St Olaf' (*Olaf den Helliges Saga*), of which only fragments remain.²⁵ Accounts of St Olaf can also be found in *Fagrskinna* and *Morkinskinna*.²⁶ Snorri Sturlusson wrote a saga about St Olaf in the 1220s, of which he included an updated version in his *Heimskringla*, written c. 1230.²⁷ The work of Theodoricus Monachus,²⁸ the *Historia Norvegiae*,²⁹ and the *Ágrip af Noregs konunga sögum*³⁰ contain accounts of St Olaf, and in around 1200 the *Passio et Miracula Beati Olavi*³¹ was written.

St Knut konung became St Olaf's counterpart in Denmark. He was one of the sixteen sons of the Danish king Sven Estridsson (r. 1047–74) and followed his older brother Harald to the Danish throne in 1080. The succession

²³ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.61 (with Scholion 41 (42)), p. 122: 'Agitur festivitas [passionis] eius IIII kal. Augusti, omnibus septentrionalis oceani populis Nortmannorum, Sueonum, Gothorum, [Semborum], Danorum, atque Sclavorum aeterno cultu memorabilis.' (His [Olaf's] feast day is celebrated on 29 July and it is worthy of eternal remembrance by all peoples at the Northern Sea, by the Norwegians, Swedes, Goths, Sami, Danes, and Slavs.)

²⁴ *Einarr Skúlason's Geisli*, ed. by Chase.

²⁵ The fragments are printed as an appendix in: *Ólafs saga hins Helga*, ed. by Keyser and Unger, pp. 90–95.

²⁶ *Ágrip af Noregskonunga sögum*, ed. by Einarsson; *Fagrskinna*, transl. by Finlay; *Morkinskinna*, ed. by Jakobsson and Guðjónsson; *Morkinskinna*, trans. by Andersson and Gade.

²⁷ *Saga Olafs Konungs ens helga*, ed. by Munch and Unger; Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánisdóttir; Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. and transl. by Monsen and Smith. On Snorri and the *Heimskringla* see Whaley, *Heimskringla*.

²⁸ Theodoricus Monachus, 'Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium', ed. by Storm; Theodoricus Monachus, *An Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*, trans. by McDougal and McDougal.

²⁹ *A History of Norway*, ed. by Phelpstead.

³⁰ *Ágrip af Noregskonunga sögum*, ed. by Einarsson.

³¹ Jiroušková, *Der heilige Wikingerkönig Olav Haraldsson*, II: *Edition und Bildmaterial*; *A History of Norway*, ed. by Phelpstead. The early hagiography of St Olaf has recently been analysed by Jiroušková, *Der heilige Wikingerkönig Olav Haraldsson*, I: *Untersuchung*.

plan of Sven Estridssen had envisaged that the oldest of his living sons should accede to the throne after him and that he in his turn should be acceded by the next oldest son of Sven and not by a son of his own.³² After Knut had taken his turn in this succession, he married Adele, daughter of the Count of Flanders. They gave their son the name Karl. With the use of this Carolingian royal name, Knut emphasized the connection that his and Adele's descendants had with Charlemagne. It has been suggested that Knut thereby tried to raise the reputation of his own branch of the royal family, with the aim of excluding his younger brothers from the royal succession and having his own son follow him onto the throne instead of his brother Olaf.³³ In 1085 Knut planned an invasion of England, a country which he saw as his heritage since it had been ruled by Danish kings between 1013 and 1042. The assembled fleet never left Denmark. Instead, an uprising against Knut broke out, which ended with Knut's death in 1086 in the church of St Alban at Odense.³⁴ His brother Olaf was next in the line of succession, but his reign was overshadowed by long periods of starvation, which earned him the nickname of Olaf 'Hunger'. Some contemporaries assumed that the series of bad harvests was a divine punishment for his part in the murder of his brother Knut. Olaf died childless in 1095 and the next-youngest brother, Erik, came to the throne. As a result of the good harvests during his reign he was given the nickname of 'Ejegod' ('always good'). Erik was a great promoter of the cult of his brother Knut. He applied for and received the papal canonization of Knut. The official *translatio* of his relics took place on 19 April 1100.³⁵ It has been assumed that Erik intended to keep the offspring of his brothers from the Danish throne by connecting his own line closely to his saintly brother.³⁶

In addition to an inscription on his tomb, where his sanctity is stated for the first time, the earliest narrative source for St Knut is the *Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martiris*. This work has been dated to 1095–1101 and most probably

³² Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, p. 94.

³³ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 95–96.

³⁴ The sources give different reasons for the uprising. While Sven Aggesen, Saxo and *Knytlinga Saga* connect it with the military expedition to England, Ælnoth gives Knut's tax collection as the reason.

³⁵ Skórzewska, 'Family Matters?', p. 337. Gazzoli, 'Anglo-Danish Connections and the Origins of the Cult of Knud', pp. 72–74.

³⁶ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 127–33; Gazzoli, 'Anglo-Danish Connections and the Origins of the Cult of Knud', p. 70.

had an English author.³⁷ The narrative depicts Knut as an exemplary Christian king who first of all furthered and protected the church and who also tried to educate his subjects in Christian virtues. Betrayed by his brother Olaf, he fell victim to an uprising of his subjects, which ended in his being killed along with his brother Benedict and his last seventeen followers in the church of St Alban in Odense. St Knut is said not to have taken part in the final battle, but instead to have disposed of his weapons and prepared for death by confessing. He was then hit by a spear and fell with arms wide open in front of the altar of the church. The most elaborate narration among the early sources about St Knut is the *Gesta Swenomagni et filiorum eius et Passio gloriorissimi Canuti regis et martyris* by the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine monk Ælnoth.³⁸ In his *Gesta* Ælnoth extended the account given in the *Passio*, elaborating particularly on Knut's *humilitas* and his strict observance of a simple lifestyle. The date of composition is given as being twenty-four years after Ælnoth's arrival in Denmark. Depending on the (uncertain) date of this arrival, he thus probably authored the *Gesta* between 1109 and 1122 during the reign of King Niels, to whom the work is dedicated.³⁹ Niels was one of the brothers of Knut and must be counted among the supporters of his cult.⁴⁰

If we compare the early promoters of the cults of St Olaf and St Knut, it is clear that for both saints it was members of their families who were among the most active promoters of their cults. In the case of St Olaf, his half-brother Harald and his son Magnus can be named. St Knut's cult was furthered by his brothers Erik and — to a minor degree — Niels. In the case of both cults, it was also necessary to be supported by the local clergy of the places where their relics rested. In Norway it was Bishop Grimkjell who was the major clerical promoter of the cult of St Olaf, while in Denmark it was the Benedictine monks of Odense who engaged in furthering the cult of St Knut. We should keep this situation in mind when analysing the early veneration of St Erik below.

³⁷ 'Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martiris', ed. by Gertz; Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, p. 104.

³⁸ 'Gesta Swenomagni regis', ed. by Gertz. Jonathan Grove is currently preparing a new edition of the major texts on St Knut.

³⁹ On the question of dating the *Gesta*, see Weibull, *Saxo*, pp. 66–68; Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, p. 110.

⁴⁰ He also donated goods to the Benedictine abbey of Odense, see DD, I, Række, 2. Bind, nos 32, 34, and 35. On the further history of the early cult of St Knut see most recently Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 73–75, 124–29.

In contrast to St Knut of Denmark, all other Scandinavian royal saints — and most of the saints in general — were not canonized by a pope; instead their veneration started as a local cult and was approved by the local bishop.⁴¹ Such approbation by the local bishop had been the usual procedure since Late Antiquity: *'vox populi, vox dei'*. No hierarchical intervention was necessary to ratify what was public knowledge.⁴² The earliest attempts to centralize the canonization of saints in the hands of the pope were only undertaken in the late tenth century. St Ulrich of Augsburg was, most probably, the first saint canonized by a pope in 993. Yet, by far the majority of eleventh-century canonizations were carried out by local prelates without requesting papal authorization. The efforts to centralize the Catholic Church were generally intensified during the church reform movement, which reached its climax under Pope Gregory VII (r. 1073–85), and the canonization of saints was no exception. The twelfth century was in this respect a time of transition.⁴³ The *Audivimus* papal bull of Pope Alexander III from the year 1171 or 1172 to 'K., illustrious king of the Swedes and the Goths' marks a milestone in this development.⁴⁴ At this point in time, it was obviously 'L'opinion largement répandue que le pape devait être consulté et qu'il lui appartenait d'exercer un certain contrôle sur les canonizations'.⁴⁵ However, it was only in 1234 that the respective passage from *Audivimus* was included in the Decretals of Gregory IX, which meant that the 'pontifical reservation of the right to canonize saints was included in the legislation of the church and the excuse of ignorance was no longer acceptable'.⁴⁶

The Conversion of Scandinavia

The first recorded missionary contact with Scandinavia was made by the Anglo-Saxon missionary Willibrord who — following a period of minor success with the Frisians — paid a short visit to Denmark.⁴⁷ His offers were, how-

⁴¹ The account of the development of the canonization process is based on Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 13–57.

⁴² Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 13.

⁴³ Schwarz, 'Die Heiligsprechung im 12. Jahrhundert'.

⁴⁴ For a more thorough information on the bull, see chap. 4 below.

⁴⁵ Grosjean, 'Review of: Eric W. Kemp, Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of saints'.

⁴⁶ Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 30.

⁴⁷ Recently, a number of overviews on the Christianization of Scandinavia have been published. See, for example, Garipzanov, *Conversion and Identity in the Viking Age*; Brink,

ever, rejected by the Danish leader and his followers.⁴⁸ He thus had to content himself with buying a number of Danish boys, whom he sent into a monastery to be educated as Christians, that they might serve in later efforts of evangelization as native-language missionaries.⁴⁹ Although this was the first missionary contact, the cultural contacts between Scandinavia and the rest of Europe had been flourishing since ancient times.⁵⁰ However, around 560/570, the historic trade connections between Byzantium and Eastern Middle Europe collapsed and this played a part in the isolation of the Baltic region.⁵¹ The only trade connection between the Mediterranean and Scandinavia now led through the Franconian kingdom and was extended to the north by Frisian merchants, who played a part in the foundation of the large trading points of the time: Haithabu and Ribe in Denmark, as well as Birka in the Lake Mälaren region (close to present-day Stockholm).⁵² It was not accidental that it was along these lines of cultural contact that the first missionary stations were established from 829/30 onwards by Franconian missionaries.

These first missionary attempts of the ninth century in Scandinavia had their source in the East Franconian Empire and were (at least partly) influenced by the foreign interests of Emperor Ludwig I ('the Pious', r. 814–40). One of the pretenders for power in the region north of the Franconian Empire, Harald ('Klak'), had himself and his retinue baptized in 826 with the Franconian

'Die Christianisierung Skandinaviens'; Winroth, *The Conversion of Scandinavia*; Berend, *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy*; Sanmark, *Power and Conversion*; Simek and Meurer *Scandinavia and Christian Europe in the Middle Ages*; Carver, *The Cross Goes North*; Kaufhold, *Europas Norden im Mittelalter*.

⁴⁸ Willibrord, *Apostel der Friesen*, ed. and trans. by Reischmann, 9; Ziegler, 'The Ripon Connection?'

⁴⁹ This method was a pattern widely followed by missionaries. We meet it also with Ansgar in Denmark (Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, ed. by Waitz, 15: 'Interim quoque dominus et pastor noster in dioecesi sibi commissa et in partibus Danorum strenue suum implebat officium et exemplo bonae conversationis multos ad fidei gratiam provocabat. Coepit quoque ex gente Danorum atque Slavorum nonnullos emere pueros, aliquos etiam ex captivitate redimere, quos ad servitium Dei educaret' (In the meantime our lord and shepherd administered faithfully his office in the diocese entrusted to him and in Denmark; through his exemplary lifestyle he converted many to the grace of the faith. He now started to buy young Danes and Slavs and to redeem slaves in order to educate them to serve God)).

⁵⁰ For a detailed discussion of the Roman Iron Age, see Lund Hansen, *Römischer Import im Norden*.

⁵¹ Ellmers, 'Die Bedeutung der Friesen', pp. 7–9; Jankuhn, *Haithabu*, p. 19.

⁵² Sawyer, *Kings and Vikings*, p. 70; Ellmers, 'Die Bedeutung der Friesen', pp. 42–44.

Emperor Ludwig I as his godfather.⁵³ After his baptism Harald took residence in the county of Rüstingen, a border region of the empire to the north, where he waited for his chance to seize power in what was to become the kingdom of Denmark. The monk Ansgar was asked to accompany him in order to convert the Danes. But since Harald (as far as is known) never recrossed the northern border of the empire, it was impossible for Ansgar to accomplish his mission. However, some years later, in 829/30, the same monk undertook a missionary journey to Birka.⁵⁴ He was welcomed there and started to gather a congregation.⁵⁵ Some years later, according to his *vita*, he also founded missionary stations in Haithabu and Ribe (both in Denmark).⁵⁶ A long research debate that began in the second half of the twentieth century, and which has recently gained momentum, has focused on the foundation of Frankish missionary efforts in the north, and in particular on the foundation of, and the role played by, the (arch)bishopric of Hamburg-Bremen.⁵⁷ There is no need to engage in this dispute here since the missionary efforts of Ansgar were not successful in the long run. The archbishopric, however, remained and so did its claim of supremacy over all Christians in the north.

⁵³ *Annales regni francorum*, ed. by Pertz and Kurze, anno 826. With his godparenthood Ludwig intended to gain supremacy over Denmark. See Kaufhold, *Europas Norden im Mittelalter*, p. 18; Padberg, *Christianisierung im Mittelalter*, p. 93.

⁵⁴ Ambrosiani, 'Specialization and Urbanization in the Mälaren Valley', pp. 107–10; Capelle, *Heidenchristen im Norden*, p. 23.

⁵⁵ Hallencreutz, 'Rimbert, Sverige och religionsmöte'.

⁵⁶ Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, ed. by Waitz, 10–11 (Birka), 24 (Haithabu), 32 (Ribe). On the early churches in Birka see recently Zachrisson, 'Arkeologin bakom Rimbert'.

⁵⁷ In general, medievalists have adopted one of two positions. According to the first, the account of the *Vita Anskarii* can generally be trusted and a bishopric (if not an archbishopric) was founded in 831. On this position see for example, Seegrün, *Das Erzbistum Hamburg in seinen älteren Papsturkunden*; Seegrün, *Das Papsttum und Skandinavien bis zur Vollendung der nordischen Kirchenorganisation (1164)*; Klapheck, *Der heilige Ansgar und die karolingische Nordmission*, pp. 72–83; Janson, 'Ansgar und die frühe Geschichte des Erzbistums Hamburg'. The second position holds that the charters reporting the foundation of the (arch)bishopric are forgeries and that Ansgar was a mere missionary legate who later became the bishop of Bremen. On this position see, for example, Drögereit, 'Erzbistum Hamburg, Hamburg-Bremen oder Erzbistum Bremen?'; Theuerkauf, 'Urkundenfälschungen des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen'; Knibbs, *Ansgar, Rimbert and the Forged Foundations of Hamburg-Bremen*; Kölzer, 'Ludwigs des Frommen "Gründungsurkunde" für das Erzbistum Hamburg'.

Denmark

After this Franconian missionary episode, the initiative to evangelize Scandinavia was largely taken up by Anglo-Saxon missionaries. While the late Carolingian and Ottonian kings and emperors concentrated their missionary energies eastwards towards the Slavonic peoples south of the Baltic, the islands of the North Sea became strongly intermingled with Scandinavian affairs. The first part of Scandinavia that adopted Christianity was the developing kingdom of Denmark. Under the reigns of Harald Blátǫnn ('Bluetooth', r. 958–85/86), Svein Tjúguskegg ('Forkbeard', r. 986–1014), and Knut I ('the Great', r. 1018–35), the kingdom started to become a single political entity and to become involved in Western Christian civilization.⁵⁸ The role played by the East Franconian/German Empire in this process is disputed among scholars. Although the proximity of the empire must have accelerated the development and the Danish bishoprics were suffragan to the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, the introduction of Christian culture should be seen as an effort made by the local peoples themselves and approved of by the Danish kings.⁵⁹ The desire of the kings to emancipate Denmark from the empire and the contact between Danes and Anglo-Saxon Christians in England makes it more likely that missionary influences came from the west as well as from the south.⁶⁰ This must particularly be taken into account since Danish settlements in England existed before the reign of Harald Bluetooth and personal contacts between

⁵⁸ On the Christianization of Denmark, see Oertel, 'Die Christianisierung Skandinaviens und die Rolle des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen'; Gelting, 'The Kingdom of Denmark'; Kraack, 'Aus einer Urkunde wird Geschichte'; Kaufhold, *Europas Norden im Mittelalter*, pp. 54–57.

⁵⁹ In this point, I follow the argumentation of Kraack, 'Aus einer Urkunde wird Geschichte'. See also the more recent individualistic approach to the Christianization of Scandinavia by Rüdiger and Foerster, 'Aemulatio — Recusatio'.

⁶⁰ Olsen, 'Der lange Weg des Nordens zum Christentum', p. 254. A similar argument has already been put forward by Jørgensen, 'Fremmed indflydelse under den danske kirkes tidligste udvikling'. In this context of royal approval for Christianization standing alongside attempts at emancipation from the East Franconian/German Empire, the inscription on the Jelling rune-stone in Denmark has often been discussed. Harald Blátǫnn's claim that he 'made the Danes Christian' has been interpreted by some as a way of undermining Ottonian claims to rule in Denmark following a forced conversion. See Gelting, 'The Kingdom of Denmark', p. 81; Weber, 'Irreligiosität und Heldenzeitalter'; Weber, *Intellegere historiam*. Recently conducted excavations have revealed new features of the large site and are altering our understanding of Denmark in the time of Harald Blátǫnn. See Pedersen, 'Jelling im 10. Jahrhundert'; Staecker, 'Der Glaubenswechsel im Norden'; Price and others, 'Who was in Harald Bluetooth's Army?'; Oertel, 'Die Christianisierung Skandinaviens und die Rolle des Erzbistums Hamburg-Bremen'.

Denmark and England must, therefore, have been frequent. Harald Bluetooth created the foundation for both the acceptance of Christianity among the Danes and the politics of expansion that allowed his successors to conquer large parts of Britain. These politics culminated in the fact that Svein Forkbeard and Knut the Great were not only kings of Denmark but also of England and Norway.

Given his attempts to emancipate himself from the East Franconian/German Empire, it is already plausible in the time of Harald Bluetooth to direct one's view to England in search of the missionaries who supported him in the organization of his kingdom. It becomes even more so in the times of his two successors, mentioned above, both of whom were kings of England and thus had the possibility of furthering the development of Christianity in their home country by sending Anglo-Saxon clerics there to preach. Adam of Bremen relates that Svein invited the English bishop Gotebald to preach in Skåne and Norway, and that Knut, 'after his victorious return from England [...] brought numerous bishops with him from England to Denmark'.⁶¹ One of those bishops, Gerbrand, who had been consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury, was captured by Archbishop Unwan of Hamburg-Bremen and was only released after acknowledging the supremacy of the German archbishop.⁶² This highlights the conflict between the Anglo-Saxon bishops in Denmark and the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen and gives an idea of the ongoing tension between the two missionary churches of England and Germany.⁶³ The foundation of the first archbishopric for Scandinavia in Lund 1103/04 happened in the face of resolute opposition from the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen, who feared the loss of their supremacy over the Scandinavian countries.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.41 (Svein); Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.55: 'Victor Chnud ab Anglie rediens [...] episcopos ab Anglie multos adduxit in Daniam'.

⁶² Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.55: 'Zelatus est hoc noster archiepiscopus Unwan. Et dicitur Gerbrandum redeuntem ab Anglia cepisse, quem ab Elnodo Anglorum archiepiscopo cognovit esse ordinatum. Ille, quod necessitas persuasit, satisfaciens, fidelitatem Hammaburgensi cathedrae cum subiectione debitam spondens familiarissimus deinceps archiepiscopo effectus est'. (About this our Archbishop Unwan was outraged. And he is said to have captured the named Gerbrand on his journey back from England, because he knew of his consecration by Archbishop Ælnod of England. He had to submit to him — he could not do anything else — vow his submission and the obedience due to the cathedral of Hamburg, and further remain in close contact with the archbishop.)

⁶³ The existence of such a conflict is further suggested by evidence for Skåne, which indicates that at some time in the middle of the eleventh century this region had two bishops, an English one in Lund and a German in Dalby. See Nilsson, *Sveriges Kyrkohistoria*. 1, p. 72.

⁶⁴ On this subject see passim Seegrün, *Das Papsttum und Skandinavien bis zur Vollendung*

Norway and Iceland

Adam of Bremen also mentions Englishmen being sent to Norway as missionaries and this comes as no surprise since Norwegian and Danish Vikings had been acting side-by-side in the British Isles for a long period of time. During this time they came into close contact with the Christian British population and when the latter gained the upper hand in the constant conflict with the Northmen, the number of converted Scandinavians increased. These converted Scandinavians living in England interacted with their homelands and it is this interaction, along with the already existing cultural contacts with Christian regions, which prepared the way for the missionary kings of the sagas.⁶⁵ Many Norwegians were probably baptized on journeys abroad and influenced their social surroundings back home with the new religion. This is suggested by a large amount of archaeological evidence, although this evidence is hard to interpret.⁶⁶ The process of Christianization in all likelihood took much longer than the sagas suggest. The peaceful grass-roots work of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries was not as exciting to narrate as the violent missionary actions of the kings on which the saga authors concentrated.⁶⁷ Furthermore, when consider-

der nordischen Kirchenorganisation (1164), pp. 108–22; Kaufhold, *Europas Norden im Mittelalter*, pp. 99–135.

⁶⁵ Bagge, 'Christianization and State Formation in Early Medieval Norway'; Birkeli, *Norske steinkors i tidlig middelalder*, p. 21: 'For kristne impulse strømmet tilbake til gamlelandet fra plyndrede klostre, fra norske vikinger som mer eller mindre helhjertet gikk over til kristendomen eller let seg primsigne, fra kristne nordmenn som hadde slat seg ner i vikingrikene i vest, og fra handelsfolk [...] Selv slaveene kan vel regnes til dem som representerte kristne impulse' (Christian impulses streamed back to the old land from plundered monasteries, from Norwegian vikings who more or less wholeheartedly went over to Christianity or let themselves be 'prime signed', to Christian Northmen who had settled down in the Viking kingdoms of the west, and merchants [...] Even slaves can be counted among those who represented the Christian impulse).

⁶⁶ For a recent discussion on this subject, see Walaker Nordeide, *The Christianization of Norway*.

⁶⁷ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: 'Saga of Olaf Haraldsson', 62, admits however: 'Ólafur konungur lét bjóða um Víkina kristin lög með sama hætti sem norður í landi og gekk vel fram því að Víkverjum voru miklu kunnari kristnir siðir en mönnum norður í landið því að þar var bæði vetur og sumar fjölmennt af kaupmönnum, bæði dönskum og saxneskum. Víkverjar höfðust og mjög í kaupferðum til Englands og Saxlands eða Flæmingjlands eða Danmerkur en sumir voru í víking og höfðu vetursetu á kristnum löndum' (King Olaf made Christian law to be proclaimed in Viken, in the same way as in the North country. It succeeded well, because the people of Viken were better acquainted with the Christian customs than the

ing the actions of the missionary kings, we should keep in mind that it is only the Icelandic sagas of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that emphasize the missionary work of those kings. Earlier sources from the eleventh century only briefly refer to such missionary activities.⁶⁸

Two kings in particular, Olaf Trygvason and Olaf 'the Holy' Haraldsson, are given the credit for converting the people of Norway by the authors of the sagas. Their missionary methods were less peaceful than those of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries and included torture, hall-burning, and murder by various methods.⁶⁹ Since Olaf Haraldsson is going to play a significant role further below, I will briefly summarize his life here. He was the son of Harald Grenske, a petty king in southern Norway.⁷⁰ His father had been killed before his birth and subsequently his mother Asta married another petty king, Sigurd Syr, at whose court Olaf was brought up.⁷¹ He set out on his first Viking journey in the year 1007 at the age of twelve and carried out raids in England and France until 1013/1014. Thereafter, he stayed in Normandy in the company of the exiled

people in the north; for in both winter and summer, there were many merchants in Viken, both Danish and Saxon. The people of Viken also had much trading intercourse with England, and Saxony, and Flanders, and Denmark; and some had been on Viking expeditions, and had had their winter abode in Christian lands); Sturlusson, *Heimskringla, or The Lives of the Norse kings*, ed. by Monsen and Smith).

⁶⁸ Antonsson, 'The Early Cult of Saints in Scandinavia and the Conversion', p. 19.

⁶⁹ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, 'King Olaf Trygvason's Saga', 69, 83, 87. A summary of his character is given at 92: 'þá er hann var reiðr, ok kvaldi úvini sína mjök, suma brendi hann í eldi, suma lét hann ólma hunda rífa í sundr, suma lemja eða kasta fyrir há björg.' (He was distinguished for cruelty when he was enraged, and tortured many of his enemies. Some he burnt in fire; some he had torn in pieces by mad dogs; some he had mutilated, or cast down from high precipices.); Sturlusson, *Heimskringla, or The Lives of the Norse Kings*, ed. and trans. by Monsen and Smith. On the missionary methods of Olaf 'the Holy' Haraldsson see Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: 'Saga of Olaf Haraldsson', 58, 72, 74, 111, 115, 117; see also Timonen, 'Saint Olaf's "cruelty"':

⁷⁰ Those who are referred to by the sagas as 'king' are very numerous and the areas over which they ruled were normally rather small. Such 'kings' are, therefore, referred to as 'petty kings' in opposition to 'kings' who ruled over kingdoms comparable to those of continental Europe. Which of the Norwegian kings is first supposed to have ruled over the 'whole of Norway' has been viewed differently. While the sagas ascribe this first rule to Harald Hårfagre (late ninth/early tenth centuries), modern research tends to consider Olaf Haraldsson as the first king to rule over considerable parts of later medieval Norway. See Bagge, 'Mellom kildekritikk og historisk antropologi'.

⁷¹ On the life of Olaf Haraldsson see Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom*, pp. 29–32.

English king Æthelred II ('the Unready') during which time he received baptism.⁷² After his conversion he returned to Norway and succeeded in gathering a large retinue around him, an enterprise that was probably supported by the money he had gained on his Viking voyages. He was followed — like Håkan Æthelstanfostre and Olaf Tryggvason before him — by Anglo-Saxon clerics, including Grimkjell, whom he named the first bishop of Niðarós (Trondheim). Olaf had to leave the country in 1028 or 1029, when Knut 'the Great', king of England and Denmark, renewed his claim of supremacy over Norway. Olaf went to Sweden and Kiev and returned in 1030 to win his crown back. During this attempt, he met his death in the Battle of Stiklestad.

The introduction of Christianity to Iceland followed a rather different pattern. While the missionary kings of Norway did not hesitate to use force in order to enforce the conversion, the decision to adopt the Christian faith was made uniquely peaceful and in accordance with Icelandic law on that island.

The conversion of the Icelanders is one of the really strange events in the history of Christian missions. Without much coercion or help from outside, the Icelanders decided at their annual assembly, the Alþing, to become Christian in the year 999 or 1000.⁷³

Of course, various sorts of contacts with Christians had preceded this event, as had been the case in all the other regions of the North. Although some pagan

⁷² *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumiègue*, ed. and transl. by van Hout, I, 5.12: 'Rex etiam Olafus super Christiana religiositate oblectatus, spreto idolorum cultu, tum cum nonnullis suorum, hortante archiepiscopo Rodberto, ad Christi fidem est conversus' (But King Olaf, delighted over the Christian religion, left the cult of the idols, as did some of his followers and through the exhortations of Archbishop Robert they converted to the Christian faith); Theodoricus Monachus, 'Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium', 13 mentions another version that was common in the Icelandic tradition and which holds that Olaf Haraldsson had been baptized by Olaf Tryggvason at the age of three. See also *Saga Ólafs Tryggvasonar af odr Snorrason, munk*, ed. by Jónsson, Prologue; Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánssdóttir, ('King Olaf Tryggvason's Saga', II, 67). It has, however, been suggested that this version aims at creating an analogy between the two Olafs and the biblical story of John the Baptist and Christ. Olaf Tryggvason would thus have prepared the way for St Olaf as John the Baptist had done for Christ: Bagge and Walaker Nordeide, 'The Kingdom of Norway', p. 135. The baptism had furthermore created a spiritual kinship between the two Olafs, thus enabling the inclusion of Olaf Tryggvason in the dynasty of Saint Olaf. For further discussion of this theory see Zernack, 'Vorläufer und Vollender'.

⁷³ Vésteinnsson, *The Christianization of Iceland*, p. 17. The account of the events is given by Þorgilsson, *Íslendingabók*, 7, and this text is the only source for Icelandic history in the early twelfth century.

practices were still permitted in private, the *de jure* conversion happened surprisingly quickly. Taking into account that Icelandic society was at this time exclusively led by aristocrats, this quick transition shows that it did not always require a strong royal power to introduce Christianity into a Nordic society.

After the decision at the Alþingi to convert the whole population of the island, it must have taken some time to build up the basic Christian institutions within Iceland. At the beginning, there is said to have been only one priest, Þormóðr, who was to baptize all the Icelanders and, after the fall of Olaf Tryggvason in September 1000, it probably became difficult to attract priests to Iceland until Olaf 'the Holy' Haraldsson took the throne in Norway and re-established a positive attitude towards Christianity by the Norwegian kings.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, it is reported for the year 1056 that the Icelandic Isleif Gizurarson came to Hamburg and was consecrated bishop by the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, a statement that also provides us with the earliest evidence for regular services in churches on Iceland.⁷⁵ Isleif's son Gizurr (bishop 1082–1118) is credited with having founded the two Icelandic bishoprics of Skáholt and Hólar.

Sweden

After Ansgar's missionary station in Birka was abandoned (probably in the late 860s) and following the account about this in Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, there is a long gap in which we have no written evidence for the conversion history of Sweden. It seems that around the year 1000, the Swedish king Olaf Skötkonung (r. c. 995–1022) was baptized, probably by the English bishop Sigfrid.⁷⁶ It was during the reign of Olaf and his son, Anund-Jakob (r. 1022–50), that the first domestic coinage, following the paradigm of English coins, was introduced in Sweden.⁷⁷ Coin minting stopped around 1030 and was only revived in the

⁷⁴ Vésteinsson, *The Christianization of Iceland*, pp. 24–37.

⁷⁵ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 4.36.

⁷⁶ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.64; 4.34 with Scholion 148; Blomkvist, Brink, and Lindkvist, 'The Kingdom of Sweden', p. 182. The transmission of the events of the tenth and eleventh centuries is, however, highly dubious. What is given in this chapter is the course of events as it is traditionally reconstructed from the extant sources. The actual existence of many of the named persons, however, cannot be stated with any certainty, and different interpretations of the sparse source material are possible.

⁷⁷ Malmer, *The Sigtuna Coinage c. 995–1005*; Malmer, 'Sigtunamyntningen som källa till Sveriges kristnande'. On the phenomenon of the early Scandinavian coinage in the tenth and

middle of the twelfth century.⁷⁸ Adam of Bremen relates that Olaf Skötkonung tried to destroy the 'heathen temple that was situated in the middle of Sweden, at Uppsala' but that he could not win support for this plan at the Thing-assembly.⁷⁹ Thus, a compromise was made that Olaf could erect a bishopric 'in the best region of Sweden' ('*optimam Suediae regionem*') but would not be allowed to force his subjects to convert. This is why the first Swedish bishopric was founded in Skara in Västergötland and Bishop Thurgot was ordained there by Archbishop Unwan of Hamburg-Bremen around 1020.

Most likely due to the absence of a strong royal power, missionary efforts did not lead to quick results in all regions of Sweden as they did in Denmark and Norway. The course of Swedish Christianization is — due to the lack of written sources — hard to follow. The evidence of rune-stones suggests that the south-west (Västergötland) was Christianized relatively early on and that the new religion moved from there to the north-east, since the habit of erecting rune-stones started earlier in Västergötland than further north and east.⁸⁰ The evidence of newly discovered graves seems to point in the same direction.⁸¹ Rumours about a heathen reaction in Uppland up to the 1120s are, however, based on late and legendary evidence.⁸² It has been suggested that those 'heathen people' in Uppland were Christians who did not answer to the supremacy of Hamburg-Bremen and were, therefore, labelled 'heathen' by Adam of Bremen.⁸³ In any case, there must have been a strong Christian element in the Uppland region from at least the eleventh century, when the erection of rune-

early eleventh centuries, see Malmer, 'Münzprägung und frühe Stadtentwicklung in Nordeuropa'.

⁷⁸ Jonsson, 'Från utländsk metall till inhemsk mynt', pp. 43, 51–56.

⁷⁹ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.58: 'ut templum ydolorum, quod in medio Sueoniae situm est, Ubsola destrueretur'. Henrik Janson rejected the actual existence of that temple and interpreted Adam's account of it as an allegory of the state of the Roman church under the 'antichrist' Gregory VII. See Janson, *Templum nobilissimum*.

⁸⁰ Sawyer, *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones*, p. 146: 'This remarkable uniformity [in formulation] justifies treating these monuments as the result of a fashion that began in Denmark and spread to Västergötland and Norway before the end of the tenth century, and — at the latest — by 1020 had reached what is now eastern Sweden'; Gräslund, 'Runestones and the Christian mission'; Lager, 'Runestones and the Conversion of Sweden', pp. 504–05.

⁸¹ Gräslund, 'Religionsskiftet speglar i gravskicket'; Theliander, 'Gravskicket och Västergötlands kristnande'.

⁸² In the legends of Botvid and Eskil. See Schmid, 'Eskil, Botvid och David', p. 109.

⁸³ Janson, *Templum nobilissimum*, pp. 276, 300.

stones featuring Christian inscriptions or a dominating image of a cross reached its climax. This evidence seems to suggest that parts of what later became the Swedish kingdom were Christianized at a later date than neighbouring parts of Denmark and Norway. The contemporary view that some Swedish regions were not infiltrated by Christianity until later is supported by some Norwegian and Danish sources that seem to regard their inhabitants as being still partly heathen in the twelfth century.⁸⁴

After the foundation of the diocese of Skara in 1020, Adam of Bremen mentioned a second bishopric in Sigtuna in the 1060s. The bishop's see at Sigtuna was, however, vacant for certain periods of time due to pagan resistance.⁸⁵ A list of Swedish dioceses from 1120 — the so-called 'Florence list' — names as bishoprics '*Scara. Liunga. Kaupinga. Tuna. Stringines. Sigituna. Arosa*'.⁸⁶ This would suggest that Linköping, [Eskils]Tuna, Strängnäs, and [Västra] Aros (=Västerås) should be added to the list of places we know to have been bishoprics. The bishop's see of Sigtuna was moved to Gamla Uppsala between 1140 and 1164, maybe in order to show the victory of the Christian faith over the old religion, and this intention might also have been one of the reasons for the selection of Uppsala as the Swedish archbishop's seat in 1164.⁸⁷ The last bishopric of Sweden proper was erected in Växjö probably in the late 1160s. In Finland, which became part of the Swedish kingdom in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a bishopric was erected in Nousis in the late twelfth century. There, the grave of St Henrik — former bishop of Uppsala and missionary saint in Finland — was situated. The see was finally transferred to Turku (Åbo) in approximately 1220.⁸⁸

Monasticism came to Sweden in the shape of the Cistercians in 1143 when the monasteries of Alvastra and Nydala were founded.⁸⁹ They were both situ-

⁸⁴ See, for example, *Sverris saga: Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed. by Indrebø, 12: 'Járnberaland er undir Svíakonúngi, ok var Þá enn heiðit' (Jarnberaland is under the rule of the King of the Swedes, and was at that time [i.e. the 1170s] a heathen land); see Lindkvist, 'Kungamakt, kristnande, statsbildning', p. 222.

⁸⁵ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 3.76, 4.23, Scholion 136.

⁸⁶ Bäärnhielm, 'Florensdokumentet, c. 1120'; Nyberg, 'Adam av Bremen och Florenslistan' (p. 153) holds that the list was already produced in the context of the erection of the archbishopric of Lund in the first years of the twelfth century.

⁸⁷ Sundqvist, *Freyr's Offspring*, p. 302; Nilsson, 'Birka — Sigtuna — Uppsala', p. 427.

⁸⁸ Lindkvist, 'Kungamakt, kristnande, statsbildning', p. 227.

⁸⁹ See France, *The Cistercians in Scandinavia*, pp. 27–42; Karlsson, 'De svenska cister-

ated in the diocese of Linköping. Thus Bishop Gislo of Linköping most likely played a part in the invitation of the white monks to Sweden, for which the sources credit only Queen Ulfhild and King Sverker I.⁹⁰ Although other monastic orders had already founded abbeys in Denmark and Norway, Sweden was the first country with a Cistercian monastery. Unlike the other two Scandinavian kingdoms, they would be the only order with foundations in Sweden for about forty years, building a total of five abbeys between 1143 and 1164.⁹¹ Their close connections with the two competing dynasties of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the Sverker and the Erik-dynasty, are illustrated by the fact that both dynasties chose their family graveyards in Cistercian monasteries, Alvastra and Varnhem, respectively.

The Role of Saints in the Conversion

Lars Boje Mortensen claimed that during the first wave of historiographical and hagiographical writing in Norway, Denmark, and Hungary, Christian myths narrating the beginnings of Christianity in the respective regions were created.⁹²

cienserklöstren'. There is the possibility that King Inge the Elder and his wife Helena founded a Benedictine nunnery in Vreta around 1100. The tradition is, however, very dubious. See Nilsson, *Sveriges Kyrkohistoria*, I, 93.

⁹⁰ *Exordium magnum Cisterciense sive Narratio de initio Cisterciensis ordinis*, ed. by Griesser, 28.282 (Gr+258): 'Volens autem isdem venerabilis pater in populis aquilonarum partium sicut et in ceteris entibus aliquem fructum habere petente religiosa femina, regina Sueciae [=Ulfhild], conventum fratrum ad partes illas direxit' (But this venerable father saw with pleasure the fruits [of the faith] with the peoples of the northern and other peoples' lands and directed — at the request of the religious woman, the Queen of Sweden [=Ulfhild] — the convent of the brothers to her lands); 'Narratiuncula de Fundatione Monasterij Vitæscholæ in Cimbria', ed. by Gertz, p. 138: 'Swereco, rex Swecie, et Wluildis regina, duos conventus monachorum temporibus beati Bernhardi ex Claravalle, eiusdem patris monasterio, assumentes, duas ex eis abbatias in regno Swecie et patrimonio fundaverunt' (Sverker, king of Sweden, and Queen Ulfhild, receiving two convents of monks during the time of St Bernhard of Clairvaux, himself the father of the monastery, founded two monasteries from this abbey in the kingdom of Sweden and on their property.) On these foundations, see Nyberg, 'Early Monasticism in Scandinavia'.

⁹¹ It has been claimed that a Benedictine chapter existed in Gamla Uppsala until 1207: Gallén, 'De engelska munkarna i Uppsala'. This has been convincingly contradicted by Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 66–70.

⁹² Mortensen, 'Sanctified Beginnings and Mythopoietic Moments'.

These myths were sanctified by saintly protagonists, put into writing by early hagiographers, and were used as

the means of shaping, channeling and negotiating local group identities in a changing world [...]. The local saints' lives became foundational stories or myths for each country. When other historical works of a non-biographical design began to appear not long after this first burst of legend writing, the importance and sanctity of the royal saints was not only not questioned, but to a large degree further emphasized.⁹³

In Norway and Denmark the two royal saints, St Olaf and St Knut, were the objects of the earliest hagiography. Thus, the conversion history of these two regions was closely connected with those two saints. In Norway the hegemony of St Olaf was never contested and only two more native saints were venerated on a local level, St Sunniva and St Hallvard.

When comparing Norway and Denmark, it is interesting to note that in the first kingdom it was the two Olafs, Olaf Tryggvason and Olaf 'the Holy' Haraldsson, who — paralleling St John the Baptist and Jesus — were credited by hagiographers and historiographers with converting their subjects, as related above. For Denmark, however, different accounts of the 'conversion moment' existed.⁹⁴ The German historiographers, Widukind of Corvey, who wrote his *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres* between 967 and 973, Thietmar of Merseburg, who authored his *Chronicon* between 1011 and 1018, and Adam of Bremen all focus on Harald Bluetooth as the first Christian king of Denmark.⁹⁵ Adam even reports miracles worked through Harald, thereby giving him the appearance of holiness.⁹⁶ Another person connected to the conversion of the Danes is the missionary Poppo. Widukind, Thietmar, and Adam report him to be the missionary who persuaded Harald Bluetooth of the superiority of Christianity.⁹⁷ He is also mentioned in Ælnoth's *Gesta* but without being con-

⁹³ Mortensen, 'Sanctified Beginnings and Mythopoietic Moments', pp. 269, 258.

⁹⁴ On the different conversion traditions in Scandinavia see: Antonsson, 'The Traditions of Conversion in Medieval Scandinavia'.

⁹⁵ Widukind of Corvey, *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri III*, ed. by Hirsch and Lohmann, 3.64–65; Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, ed. by Holtzmann, 1.17; Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.3, 2.24.

⁹⁶ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.27.

⁹⁷ Widukind of Corvey, *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*, ed. by Hirsch and Lohmann, 3.64–65; Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, ed. by Holtzmann, 2.14; Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.25, Scholion 20.

nected to King Harald, who plays no crucial role in the Danish historiographical tradition concerning the conversion of the Danes.⁹⁸ Moreover, Adam of Bremen calls Poppo ‘*sanctus dei*’, the saint of God.⁹⁹

The connection between native saints and the progress of Christianity in newly converted societies has recently been discussed *in extenso* by Sara E. Ellis Nilsson.¹⁰⁰ She focused particularly on the native saints of the church provinces of Lund and Uppsala and their connection with the bishoprics in which their cult commenced. The importance of sacred places, *loca sanctorum*, for the identification of newly converted peoples with the new faith has already been emphasized by Alan Thacker.¹⁰¹ It was obviously important for converts — not only in Scandinavia — to be able to venerate a saintly person who could connect the new faith to the daily environment of the neophytes and give them cohesion as a group of believers, with both of these functions (probably extending far into the Middle Ages) serving to contrast them with non-believers and with Christians from other regions of the *orbis Christianus*. These groups have been labelled ‘Micro-Christendoms’ by Peter Brown.¹⁰² Uni-local and universal saints, on the other hand, served to connect these ‘Micro-Christendoms’ with each other.

Both in Denmark and Sweden, a great number of native saints arose whose importance in stabilizing the early Christian communities has been demonstrated by Nilsson and others. Since a Swedish saint forms the main focus of the present study, the native saints of the church province of Uppsala will be represented only very briefly in what follows.

The English bishop Sigfrid is generally assumed to have been the person who baptized King Olaf Skötkonung in the early eleventh century.¹⁰³ Sigfrid’s legend also names three of his relatives, Unaman, Sunaman, and Vinaman, who are said to have supported him in his missionary work in Sweden but whose

⁹⁸ ‘Gesta Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius passio gloriosissimi Canuti regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant pp. 77–85.

⁹⁹ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 2.35.

¹⁰⁰ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*.

¹⁰¹ Thacker, ‘*Loca sanctorum*’.

¹⁰² Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, particularly pp. 216–32.

¹⁰³ ‘Catalogus Regum Sveciae ab Olafo Skötkonung ad Ericum Läspe’, ed. by Fant, p. 8; ‘Saga Ólafs konungs Tryggvasonar’, ed. by Oldskrift-Selskab; ‘Historia sancti Sigfridi episcopi et confessoris’, ed. by Fant, p. 356; on St Sigfrid, see Schmid, *Den helige Sigfrid*; Larsson, *Det medeltida Värend*, pp. 27–49.

historicity has been doubted.¹⁰⁴ The first version of St Sigfrid's legend was probably written in the 1160s in Växjö, where the new and very small bishopric had just been founded and had to struggle to legitimize its existence against the older and larger bishoprics of Skara and Linköping. It succeeded in this struggle by claiming that it was originally founded by St Sigfrid, thus making it approximately as old as the oldest Swedish bishopric, Skara. Liturgical fragments prove the existence of Sigfrid's cult from around the year 1200.¹⁰⁵

Further north in Södermanland, it was another Englishman who became venerated as a saint, the martyr-bishop Eskil. He is first named as a martyr in Ælnoth's *Gesta*. He is said to have originally founded his bishopric at Tuna (later: Eskilstuna) but after his death in Strängnäs, the bishop's see was moved there. Although the first surviving version of his legend was written only in the 1280s his cult must already have gained importance by the late twelfth century. His feast day is the only day of a Nordic saint to be written in red ink (marking it as a high feast grade) in the *Calendarium Vallentunense* from 1198. In a letter from Pope Gregory IX from 1231, a church of St Eskil is mentioned that must have been built before the Order of St John founded its monastery in Eskilstuna in 1185.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, Eskil's name has been found on an eleventh-century fragment.¹⁰⁷

Another saint who is named on that fragment is Botvid, who is thought to have been active in Södermanland in the twelfth-century. The bishops Henry of Uppsala and Gerder of Strängnäs are said to have participated in the *elevatio* of his relics in 1129 and he is also named in the *Calendarium Vallentunense*. The cult of Botvid seems to have had the greatest importance for the bishopric of Strängnäs where his body rested in Botkyrka church. He gave the name both to church and parish and was venerated alongside Eskil as the patron saint of Södermanland.¹⁰⁸ The earliest preserved version of his legend derives from the beginning of the thirteenth century.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Fröjmark, 'Från Erik pilgrim till Erik konung', p. 398.

¹⁰⁵ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 61–65, 139–43.

¹⁰⁶ SDHK, 473. On the order of St John and its role in Scandinavia see Nyberg, 'Zur Rolle der Johanniter in Skandinavien', pp. 131–32, 138–41.

¹⁰⁷ Fr 9635 of the MPO database, see Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, p. 82. On the MPO database, see chap. 1 above.

¹⁰⁸ Schmid, 'Eskil, Botvid och David', pp. 107–08; Pernler, *S:ta Elin av Skövde*.

¹⁰⁹ Fröjmark, 'Från Erik pilgrim till Erik konung', p. 405.

The earliest evidence we have for the cult of St Elin of Skövde dates from the early 1200s and has its basis in the diocese of Skara.¹¹⁰ Bishop Brynolf Algotsson (bishop 1267–1317) is supposed to have been the author of her legend in the 1280s. Some liturgical fragments that mention her are extant from the thirteenth century.¹¹¹ Before that she was probably locally venerated at the church of Skövde, to which Elin is said to have donated goods.¹¹² In addition to her importance as a conversion-era saint it is worth noting that through Elin, the saintly type of the holy widow was introduced into Sweden. She thereby paved the way for St Birgitta, who started her active religious life only after having been married and who became by far the most famous and most popular Swedish saint of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The legends of another two saints were also written in the late thirteenth century; those of St Erik and St Henrik, the latter being bishop of Uppsala and missionary saint of Finland. The two saints, as well as their legends, are closely connected to one another. In both legends it is stated that they went together on a crusade to Finland. While St Erik returned to Sweden, and was martyred there, St Henrik stayed in Finland and suffered his martyrdom at the hands of a pagan Finn. He thus became the saint of the diocese of Åbo (Turku) and (later) the national saint of Finland, while St Erik became the saint of the archbishopric of Uppsala where he was martyred and where his relics were (and still are) kept. Both saints will be discussed in greater detail below.

David of Munkatorp in Västmanland is described in his legend as a monk who came from England to Sweden after having heard of St Sigfrid's martyrdom, looking for martyrdom himself. The legend was created at a very late date (in the 1460s) and it is highly schematic.¹¹³ In two liturgical fragments his name was added in the thirteenth century and in another fragment, it was added in the late thirteenth or fourteenth centuries.¹¹⁴ There are no sources that support the claim, included in the legend, that St David was active in the conversion period; his historicity must therefore be doubted.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Fr 1504 of the MPO database was part of a breviary, written in Sweden (or used there) in the beginning of the thirteenth century and contains a *collecta*-prayer to Elin. See Pernler, *S:ta Elin av Skövde*, p. 44.

¹¹¹ See Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 85, 314.

¹¹² Pernler, *S:ta Elin av Skövde. Kulten, källorna, kvinnan*, pp. 35–39.

¹¹³ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 77–80, 157–59.

¹¹⁴ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, p. 313.

¹¹⁵ Schmid, 'Eskil, Borvid och David', pp. 110–14.

Considering all these different accounts of conversion period saints in all three Scandinavian kingdoms, their important role in introducing Christianity into this region is obvious. One of those saints — and one who, in this early period, was no more popular than the others — was St Erik, the main object of the present study. In order to better understand why royal saints were so predominant in the conversion tales and why they remained so important in later times, the cult of St Olaf, the most intensely venerated royal saint of the North, will be explored in the next section.

St Olaf — Scandinavian Proto-Martyr and Holy Ancestor

The Scandinavian royal saints, foremost among them St Olaf of Norway, have all played their part in the conversion of the North. Recently, Gro Steinsland made an attempt to reinforce the idea of a continuing notion of sacral kingship from pagan to Christian times.¹¹⁶ She describes the Nordic pagan religion and Christianity as different in so many aspects that the transition from one to the other could only take place through a cultural clash. The only 'bridge' that allowed for a transition between the two religions was, she argues, the idea of sacred kingship. One could, of course, question the exclusiveness of this bridge and it has been pointed out that the repeated evangelization of 'Germanic' peoples did have a retroactive effect on the proselytizing religion.¹¹⁷ James C. Russell names the *Eigenkirchenwesen*, feudalism, and the crusade-ideology as relics of the pagan world view that persisted in the Christian Middle Ages.¹¹⁸ Medieval Christianity was thus influenced by former pagan notions.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, it has been stated that the paganism of regions which were in close contact with the Roman world 'was already modelled in part on Christianity', even before the actual mission began.¹²⁰ There therefore seems to be justification for doubting if the clash would be as strong as Steinsland suggests.

¹¹⁶ Steinsland, *Den hellige kongen*.

¹¹⁷ This is the basic assumption in Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity*.

¹¹⁸ Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity*, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Concerning the survival of Old Norse mythological figures, the *landvættir*, and the *fylgjur* in medieval Christian Scandinavia, see most recently Mundal, 'Remnants of Old Norse Heathendom in Popular Religion in Christian Times'.

¹²⁰ Wood, 'Some Historical Re-Identifications and the Christianization of Kent', p. 30. While Ian N. Wood was in fact referring with these words to England, it has been shown above

Nevertheless, the idea of sacred kingship certainly presented an additional way to ease the passage from one religion to another for the proselytes of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries working in Scandinavia. What is more, an evangelizing-scheme had emerged during the times of Pope Gregory I (r. 590–604), which was based on exactly these ‘bridges’ and their application in areas not yet familiar with the Christian faith. One letter in particular, by Gregory I, written to the missionary bishop Augustinus who was preaching in England, should be mentioned in this context:

Howbeit, when almighty God has led you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have long been considering in my own mind concerning the matter of the English people; to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let water be consecrated and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed there. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they are used to slaughter many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity must be given them in exchange for this [...] no more offer animals to the Devil, but kill cattle and glorify God in their feast, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance; to the end that, while some outward gratifications are retained, they may the more easily consent to the inward joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off every thing at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. [...] and although the animals were the same as those which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to the true God, and not to idols; and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices.¹²¹

that close contacts also existed between Scandinavia and the Roman Empire and this thesis could equally be applied there.

¹²¹ Cited after *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England*, ed. and trans. by Sellar, 1.30; the Latin text reads: ‘Cum ergo Deus omnipotens uos ad reuerentissimum uirum fratrem nostrum Augustinum episcopum perduxerit, dicite ei, quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractaui; uidelicet, quia fana idolorum destrui in eadem gente minime debeant; sed ipsa, quae in eis sunt, idola destruantur; aqua benedicta fiat, in eisdem fanis aspergatur, altaria construantur, reliquiae ponantur. Quia, si fana eadem bene constructa sunt, necesse est, ut a cultu daemonum in obsequio ueri Dei debeant commutari; ut dum gens ipsa eadem fana sua non uidet destrui, de corde errorem deponat, et Deum uerum cognoscens ac adorans, ad loca, quae consueuit, familiarius concurrat. Et quia boues solent in sacrificio daemonum multos occidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollempnitas immutari; [...] nec diabolo iam animalia immolent, et ad

This approach to evangelization became the common policy adopted by Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries as is suggested both by a sentence of the Irish monk Aidan and by the discontent expressed towards Charlemagne's missionary politics by his foremost counsellor, the Anglo-Saxon Alcuin.¹²² The missionary scheme was thus based on a method of evangelization that tried to make the adjustment to the new religion as smooth and easy for the converts as possible. Already existing cult sites and customs were allowed to endure but reinterpreted in a Christian way. This pragmatic approach to evangelization turned out to be much more effective (and much less bloody) than the convert-or-die method utilized by Frankish/German kings and later by the Teutonic Order on the continent as well as by crusaders all over Europe.

Following the Gregorian tradition of evangelization, the Anglo-Saxon missionaries were ready to re-interpret and import pagan elements into the concept of Christianity that they preached in Scandinavia. They must even have been on the lookout for some 'retained outward gratifications' because of which 'they [the converts] may the more easily consent to the inward joys'. Evidence that the Anglo-Saxon scheme described above was still in use is given in Oddr Snorrasson's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*. In Chapter 27 of this saga, Olaf Tryggvason has a vision of St Martin, who addressed him as follows:

Here in this country there has been the custom to celebrate drinking feasts for Thor, Odin and the other Æsir. But now I wish you to make a change in such a way that the drinking feast is for me and that the previous custom is abandoned.¹²³

The view that this method of evangelizing pagan peoples was the most effective prevailed also at the papal curia. In a letter to Archbishop Heriveus of Reims (r. 900–22), Pope John IX (r. 898–900) wrote the following lines:

laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidunt, et donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant; ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reseruantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius ualeant. Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is, qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus uel passibus, non autem saltibus eleuatur. [...] ut etsi ipsa essent animalia, quae offerre consueuerant, uero tamen Deo haec et non idolis immolantes, iam sacrificia ipsa non essent'. Cited after Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum*, ed. by Plummer.

¹²² Aidan: Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England*, ed. and trans. by Sellar, 3.5; Alcuin: *Epistolae karolini aevi*, ed. by Dümmler, no. 111.

¹²³ Oddr Snorrason, *The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason*, trans. by Andersson, p. 75: 'oc un natt þa vitraðiz honum hinn helgi martinus byscup. Oc mælti við hann. Þat hefir her verit fiðr i þeslu landi at gepa þor eþa oðni eða aþrum asum minni at ueizlum. En nu uil ec at þu skiptir hinn ueg til at mer se minning ger at ueizlum. En hit 'tal li niðr er aðr hefir verit' cited after Oddr Snorrason, *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar afodr Snorrason, munk*, ed. by Jónsson.

Truly, if they had not been newcomers to the faith, they should have been exposed to canonical judgement. But because they are unused to the faith, we will leave to your balanced view and your consideration whether they should be exposed to canonical judgement or not, because you have this race living near your region, and you more than anybody else are capable of studying them closely and understanding all their acts and how they live together. And your diligence has well enough learned that it is better to act more leniently with them than the holy regulations of canon law prescribe, so that they should not, when they are carrying burdens to which they are unaccustomed, find it insupportable and — heaven forbid! — relapse into the old person of their former life whom they have now robbed from the ambush of the old enemy.¹²⁴

Motifs from pagan mythology were also taken over. The saga about Sigurd and his killing of the dragon Fafnir frequently occurs in medieval churches and can be seen on an early dated rune stone in Södermanland. According to Birgit Sawyer, in the Christian interpretation of this tale, Fafnir symbolized Evil and Sigurd the triumphant Christ. A similar example given by Sawyer is the use of the episode in which Thor caught the Midgard-snake using the head of an ox. This scene features on a rune stone in Uppland symbolizing God and showing Christ catching Leviathan.¹²⁵

In addition to the continued use and reinterpretation of pagan cult sites (for example, the renaming of holy wells after Christian saints or the erection of churches next to pagan *bauda* stones and other cult sites), they may have found that the concept of the holy king was one that could be adapted to Scandinavian traditions. We learn from Rimbert (whose writings predate the life and early cult of St Olaf by about 150 years) of a post-mortal elevation of a *Svear*-king into the ranks of the gods.¹²⁶ According to the poem *Ynglingatal*, the gods (Odin, Frigg, Freyr, Freya, and others) are believed to be human

¹²⁴ 'Epistola ad Heriveum', cols 27–29: 'equidem si tirones ad fidem non forent, canonica experirentur iudicia. Unde quia ad fidem rudes sunt, vestro utique libramini vestraeque censurae committimus experiendos, qui illam gentem vestris confiniis vicinam habentes, studiose advertere, et illius mores, actusque omnes pariter et conversationem agnoscere prae caeteris valeatis. Quod enim mitius agendum sit cum eis quam sacri censeant canones vestra satis cognoscit industria, ne forte insueta onera portantes, importabilia illis fore, quod absit, videantur, et ad prioris vitae veterem quem exspoliaverunt hominem, antiquo insidiante adversario, relabuntur'; trans. by Villads Jensen in 'Martyrs, Total War and Heavenly Horses', p. 115.

¹²⁵ Sawyer, *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones*, p. 126.

¹²⁶ Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, ed. by Waitz, 26: 'Porro, si etiam plures deos habere desideratis, et nos vobis non sufficimus, Ericum quondam regem vestrum nos unanimes in collegium nostrum asciscimus, ut sit unus de numero deorum' (But if you wish to have a greater number

kings who ruled, fought, and died.¹²⁷ Finally, the widespread habit of tracing the origin of royal dynasties back to a god as divine ancestor was known in Scandinavia as well as in continental Europe and in the British Isles.¹²⁸ These two pagan traditions — the deification of dead kings and the construction of genealogies that led back to a god — may have been considered by the Anglo-Saxon missionaries who were prominent among those who promoted the cult of St Olaf and may have led to the addition of a new aspect to the characteristics of the Christian royal saints: being a holy ancestor for the ruling dynasty. In other words, we do not need to speak of a development with unknown and numerous agents,¹²⁹ but we can assume that the Anglo-Saxon missionaries were actively introducing this modified type of royal saint in order to build one more 'bridge' for the conversion of Scandinavia to the new faith.

Having accepted the idea that these 'bridges' were not only tolerated but actively sought by missionaries, we should no longer be surprised by archaeological finds of pendants that could be interpreted as both Thor's hammer, Mjölnir, and as a Christian cross;¹³⁰ nor by the idea of St Olaf with his axe, giving his relatives victory in battle; nor by the renaming of the 'Thorsåker' in Torstuna (Uppland) to 'S:t Olafsåker';¹³¹ nor by the miracle of St Erik that ensured good harvests for the people in Bälunge, Pickaby, and Åkerby.¹³² Occurrences like

of Gods and we do not suffice for you we will unanimously include your former king Erik into our council; he will be one among the numbers of the Gods).

¹²⁷ A number of further examples are provided by Faulkes, 'Descent from the Gods'. In contrast to the view of the present author, he interprets the phenomenon as coming from ancient Greek and Roman tradition to the (Christian) Nordic writers and not as being a legacy from pagan traditions. The view supported in the present study is also taken by Drobin, 'Mjödets och offersymbolik i fornnordisk religion'.

¹²⁸ The divine (or at least supernatural) origins of ruling dynasties are on the Continent claimed by a number of *Origines gentium* from the Migration Period e.g. Fredegar's account of the procreation of Merovech by a 'Quinotaurus' in his 'Chronicarum quae dicuntur Fredegarii Scholastici, libri IV' ed. by Krusch, p. 95; For England, Bede writes in his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum*, ed. by Plummer, 1.15: 'Woden, de cuius stirpe multarum provinciarum regum genus originem duxit' (Woden, from whose stock the royal families of many provinces trace their descent) (trans. from *Bede's Ecclesiastical history of England*, ed. and trans. by Sellar). In Scandinavia, the most famous example is Snorri's *Ynglinga saga* at the beginning of his *Heimskringla* that claims the origin of the dynasty of Harald Hårfagr from the god Freyr.

¹²⁹ Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom*, pp. 165–66.

¹³⁰ Capelle, *Heidenchristen im Norden*, pp. 42–52.

¹³¹ Vikstrand, *Gudarnas Platser*, pp. 151–52.

¹³² 'Vita et miracula S. Eriici regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 41.

these do not mean that elements of the pagan faith were included in Christian teachings in the North, but rather that a number of pagan symbols and rituals were reinterpreted and reused in a Christian sense in order to smooth the process of transition and to satisfy the demands people made of their religion (for example, the divine guarantee of a good harvest). So much for the ‘pagan side of the bridge’. In addition to the importance of royal saints in the introduction of Christianity, as discussed above, another element to the importance of these saints, namely their use in dynastic politics, needs to be addressed in order to give the later examination of the cult of St Erik some historical depth and to provide a number of parallels and models for the political utilization of the cult of the Swedish royal saint.

It was common belief in the Middle Ages that personal qualities were handed down within a family.¹³³ Thus it was important for the legitimation of a dynasty and its ruling claim to have as noble an ancestry as possible. Two examples from the German royal dynasty of Hohenstaufen may serve to illustrate the importance of having the right predecessors: Godfrey of Viterbo, court chaplain and historiographer at the court of Fredrick I Barbarossa (r. 1152–90) wrote his *Speculum regum*, (a mirror for kings), in about 1183.¹³⁴ He included a royal genealogy that centred around Aeneas, the legendary founder of Rome. His ancestors are traced back to the Greek god Jupiter, whom Godfrey describes as a ruler — an outstanding human but no god. This dramaturgic trick makes it possible for him to include the Trojan kings in the Christian genealogical tree and to construct a Trojan pedigree for the German kings through *Priamos iun-*

¹³³ That this was even considered true for the quasi-dynastic line of the holder of a bishop’s office, emanates from sentence 23 of Gregory VII’s *dictatus papae*: ‘Quod Romanus pontifex, si canonice fuerit ordinatus, meritis beati Petri indubitanter efficitur sanctus testante sancto Ennodio Papiensi episcopo ei multis sanctis patribus faventibus, sicut in decretis beati Symachi papae continetur’. (That the Roman pontifex, if he has been canonically ordained, is undoubtedly made holy by the merits of St. Peter, St. Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, bearing witness, and many holy fathers agreeing with him. As is contained in the decrees of St. Symmachus the pope), cited after *Das Register Gregors VII*, ed. by Kaspar, I, 201–08. Elementary on the subject both: Melville, ‘Vorfahren und Vorgänger’ and Vauchez, “Beata Stirps”. That this sort of legitimation became almost mandatory in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries has recently been shown by Führer, ‘Gegenwart der Vorgänger und genealogisches Bewusstsein bei den Kapetingern’, p. 166. For the later Middle Ages, see Kovács, ‘Die Heiligen und heiligen Könige der frühen Habsburger’.

¹³⁴ Dorninger, ‘Abstammung und politische Macht’.

ior, a nephew of King Priam and — according to Godfrey — the progenitor of the Merovingian kings.¹³⁵

Strategies of royal legitimation were — naturally — most important in cases where the succession to a throne was contested. One example of such a scenario is the case of the kingdom of Sicily after the death of Emperor Frederick II (r. 1212–50) in 1250. His son Manfred on one side, and Karl of Anjou with the papacy on the other side, quarrelled over the succession. We are in the lucky position of having accounts about the dispute from both sides. After what has been said above, it will come as no surprise that Manfred's advocates stress his kinship to the deceased emperor. What makes this case particularly interesting is the fact that the genealogical argument was not only used by the supporters of Manfred but also by the opposing party.¹³⁶ Emperor Frederick II used to be in almost constant conflict with the papacy and was excommunicated twice, in 1227 and 1239.¹³⁷ Writers who were close to the papacy inverted the genealogical argument and claimed that Manfred, because of the *atrocitas sanguinum* of Frederick II, was *praedestinatus ad malum*.¹³⁸ Thus the genealogical argument seems to have been considered to be most central when discussing the ability to rule, the *idoneitas*, of a royal candidate.

It is a small step from this general genealogical way of thinking to the assumption that the special attribute of saintliness could be inherited. The idea that being the heir of a venerated ruler was a virtue in itself is expressed for the first time in the *Gesta Ottonis* by Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim from the second half of the tenth century. There, Empress Edith is described as having 'descended of the blessed stock of King Oswald with whose praise the universe resounds'.¹³⁹ Early examples of repeated saintliness in one family can be found in the cults of St Ludmila, the mother of St Wenceslas of Bohemia, and of St Olga, the mother of St Vladimir of Kiev who, in turn, was father of the saints Boris and Gleb.¹⁴⁰ However, although the idea of the holy ancestor was

¹³⁵ Dorninger, 'Abstammung und politische Macht', pp. 97–101.

¹³⁶ Andenna, 'Wer ist zur Herrschaft geeignet?'.

¹³⁷ Out of the vast number of works on Emperor Frederick II see most recently: Gramsch, *Das Reich als Netzwerk der Fürsten*; Hechelhammer, *Kreuzzug und Herrschaft unter Friedrich II*; Stürner, *Friedrich II*.

¹³⁸ Malaspina, *Die Chronik des Saba Malaspina*, ed. by Koller and Nitschke, pp. 112, 160, 172.

¹³⁹ Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim, 'Gesta Ottonis', ed. by Winterfield, p. 207: 'Hanc tradunt ergo natam de stirpe beata/Oswaldi regis, laudem cuius canit orbis'.

¹⁴⁰ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 227.

known in central Europe from the late tenth century, it had a political impact only from the late twelfth century onwards. For example, only in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries did the strategy of strengthening the ruling claim of a person by referring to his holy ancestry become an important element in the legitimation of Angevin rulership in South Italy and Hungary.¹⁴¹

In the North, the political usage of the holy ancestor was a different one. Ancestors were not believed to hand down their saintliness within their respective dynasties but to protect and support their relatives and thus — if those relatives were kings — also the respective kingdom. Thereby, they also increased the *idoneitas* of their relatives, although in a slightly different way from the holy ancestors of southern and central Europe. In the case of St Olaf of Norway ‘there is [...] no doubt that Olav’s holiness was significant for the dynasty and the monarchy’¹⁴² We are, for example, told by medieval Norse historiographers that St Olaf’s son Magnus won a battle against the Wends near Hedeby in 1043. After having had a vision of St Olaf, he fought under the flag of his father using his father’s battle-axe. Theodoricus Monachus wrote: ‘And so, strengthened by this vision, the following day King Magnus proceeded bravely into combat. He marched under the standard which had been his father’s, and carried in his hand Olaf’s double-bladed battle-axe’.¹⁴³ Snorri Sturlusson added: ‘and it was the common saying of the people that no man could venture to fight against King Magnus Olafsson, for his father, Saint Olaf, stood so near to him that his enemies, on that account, never could do him harm’.¹⁴⁴ The same source explicitly states ‘that his father King Olaf’s sanctity and miracles were becoming celebrated in all countries’, and that this fact contributed to Magnus’s

¹⁴¹ Vauchez, “Beata Stirps”, p. 403.

¹⁴² Bagge, *From Viking Stronghold to Christian Kingdom*, p. 166; the importance of the relatives of St Olaf in promoting his cult is exaggerated by Hoffmann, ‘König Olav Haraldsson als Heiliger des norwegischen Königshauses’ but has recently been re-evaluated by Skórzewska, ‘Family Matters?’.

¹⁴³ Theodoricus Monachus, *An Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*, trans. by McDougal and McDougal, 24. Latin text in: Theodoricus Monachus, ‘Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium’: ‘Hac ergo visione confortatus rex Magnus in crastinum viriliter processit ad proelium, subsequens vexillum, quod patris ejus fuerat, tenens manu bipennem ejusdem’.

¹⁴⁴ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: ‘Saga of Magnus the Good’, 28: ‘og var það alþýðu mál að engi maður mundi þurfa að berjast við Magnús konung Ólafsson og Ólafur konungur faðir hans væri honum svo nákvæmur að óvinir hans mættu enga mótstöðu veita honum fyrir þá sök’.

royal election in Denmark in 1041 or 1042.¹⁴⁵ But it was not only St Olaf's son Magnus who is said to have profited from the saint's aid — Olaf's half-brother Harald (Hardrada) did so also. Harald, who is reported to have fought 'for Olaf's sake' in the Battle of Stiklestad,¹⁴⁶ received in return the help of his holy relative when he needed to escape from a prison in Constantinople.¹⁴⁷ Thus, in the Nordic sources, it is not assumed that being related to St Olaf caused the holiness of his heirs but rather that the help and protection of the saint made them superior to their adversaries.

This concept of St Olaf as a protecting and aiding saint of his heirs, the Norwegian kings, was already so firmly established by the middle of the twelfth century that it was extended to the notion of St Olaf being the protecting saint of the kingdom of Norway and the eternal king (*rex perpetuus*) of the realm. In order to understand how this development proceeded, we need to take a short look at the political history of Norway in the first half of the twelfth century.

The death of St Olaf was followed by a century of relative internal peace. After the death of King Sigurd Jórsalafari in 1130, however, Norwegian history entered into a phase that modern historians have labelled 'the Civil Wars'.¹⁴⁸ It was characterized by conflicts between different pretenders to the throne who were supported by different factions within the aristocracy. These conflicts led

¹⁴⁵ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: 'Saga of Magnus the Good', 21: 'Hinn þriðji hlutur að þá var alkunnig orðin helgi Ólafs konungs um öll lönd og jartegnagerð hans'.

¹⁴⁶ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: 'Saga of Harald Hardrada', 1.

¹⁴⁷ Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: 'Saga of Harald Hardrada', 14: 'En er Haraldur kom mjög svo til dýflissunnar þá sýndist honum hinn helgi Ólafur konungur og segir að hann mundi hjálpa honum. [...] Næstu nótt eftir kom ein rík kona ofan á dýflissuna og hafði gengið upp með stigum nokkurum og þjónustumenn hennar tveir. Þau létu síga ofan streng nokkurn í dýflissuna og drógu þá upp. Þessari konu hafði hinn helgi Ólafur konungur unnið bót fyrr og hafði þá vitrast henni að hún skyldi leysa bróður hans úr þrísund'. (When Harald drew near to the prison King Olaf the Saint stood before him and said he would assist him. On that spot of the street a chapel has since been built and consecrated to Saint Olaf and which chapel has stood there ever since. [...] Next night a lady of distinction with two servants came, by the help of ladders, to the top of the tower, let down a rope into the prison and hauled them [Harald and two companions] up. Saint Olaf had formerly cured this lady of a sickness and he had appeared to her in a vision and told her to deliver his brother from the prison). Cited after Sturlusson, *Heimskringla, or The Lives of the Norse Kings*, ed. and transl. by Monsen and Smith).

¹⁴⁸ In this summary of the political history, I follow Helle, 'The Norwegian Kingdom' and Bagge, 'The Structure of the Political Factions in the Internal Struggles of the Scandinavian Countries during the High Middle Ages'.

to worse living conditions among the lower social strata of Norwegian society. Thus a longing for the bygone peaceful times, symbolized by the 'just law of St Olaf', would have contributed to the rising prestige of the royal saint.

After having eliminated the two brothers of King Inge, and after the death of Inge himself in 1161, one powerful aristocratic faction, led by Erling Skakke, a west Norwegian nobleman, supported the succession of Erling's son Magnus (r. 1161–84) to the Norwegian throne. The success of this undertaking was partly due to the support of Valdemar I of Denmark (the cousin of Magnus' mother Kristin) but more importantly, it was due to the alliance of Erling and Magnus with the Norwegian church and Archbishop Eystein Erlendsson (r. 1161–88). Magnus was descended from Sigurd Jórsalafari only through the female line, with his mother being Sigurd's daughter. Thus he was in need of further legitimation for his claim to rulership. This need led to the first royal coronation in Scandinavia in 1163 or 1164, which provided Magnus with a divine (or rather ecclesiastical) legitimation in compensation for his weak hereditary rights. The price for the support of the church was a number of concessions concerning the election of bishops, the appointment of priests, the jurisdiction over the clergy, and the financial control over church property. On the occasion of his coronation, Magnus issued a charter that included the following passage:

At this glorious day of resurrection, I assign myself and my kingdom for all times to God and I assign the kingdom of Norway to the glorious martyr King Olaf in complete and special devotion second after God; and I will preside over this kingdom, so long as it pleases God, as the glorious martyr's heir, under his fiefdom and as his deputy and vassal.¹⁴⁹

In this charter Magnus Erlingsson presents God and St Olaf with the crown of Norway and takes the kingdom back from them as a fief, in which he himself is to rule only as the vassal of the saint. The endowment of the crown was also expressed in physical form: Magnus decreed in the same charter that, after the coronation, the (physical) royal crown was to be presented to the altar in the cathedral of Niðarós (Trondheim), i.e. to the church of St Olaf.¹⁵⁰ Although

¹⁴⁹ Vandvik, *Magnus Erlingssons privilegiebrev og kongevigslé*, p. 13: 'Deo namque in hac die resurrectionis me cum regno in perpetuum et glorioso martyri regi Olauo [cui] integraliter speciali deuocione secundo post dominum regnum assigno Norwegie, et huic regno, quantum deo placuerit, uelut eiusdem gloriosi martyris possessioni hereditarie sub eius dominio tamquam suus uiacarius et ab eo tenens presidebo'.

¹⁵⁰ Vandvik, *Magnus Erlingssons privilegiebrev og kongevigslé*, p. 14: 'In perpetue quoque subieccionis testimonium hoc pro me et pro omnibus meis catholicis successoribus priuilegium

the words *rex perpetuus* are not used in this charter, the notion of St Olaf as the eternal king of Norway who is deputized by the present king is very clear. The only place where this exact term is used is in the contemporary *Historia Norvegiae*.¹⁵¹ There are several examples from the Middle Ages showing that Christian European rulers presented their kingdoms to God and St Peter and thus became (more or less ideally) vassals of the pope.¹⁵² The subordination under the symbolic rulership of a local saint is, however, unique. The position of St Olaf in the Norwegian 'pantheon' of saints is thereby demonstrably exceptional and the importance of St Olaf in the Norwegian concept of the legitimization of royal power can hardly be overstated.

Yet another aspect of this development should be pointed out: the archbishopric of Niðarós (Trondheim) was only established in 1153, a decade before the coronation of Magnus Erlingsson, and St Olaf was the patron saint of the cathedral church and thus of the archbishopric. The enfeoffment of Magnus with the kingdom of Norway by St Olaf (and God) not only gave Magnus the required sacral legitimization of his ruling claim, but at the same time raised the prestige of the saint and made the centre of the new archbishopric, the cathedral of

huic metropolitane ecclesie concedo et literis meis sigillatis confirmo, ut post uocationem meam regale diadema et meum, quod hodierna die sacro altari in confinacionem offerro, et omnium mihi succedencium presenti delegetur ecclesie.' (And as a sign of permanent subjection, I give for myself and for all my catholic successors this privilege to this archbishop's church and I confirm [with] my sealed letter that after my death the king's crown shall be given to that church, both mine, which I offer today to the holy altar at the enshrinement, and those of all my successors).

¹⁵¹ *Historia Norvegie*, ed. by Ekrem and Mortensen, p. 110: 'Iste duxit uxorem ualde elegantem nomine Asta filiam Cudbrandi culu, que sibi peperit Olauum perpetuum regem Norwegie'. (He married a superlative wife called Åsta, daughter of Gudbrand Kula, who bore Olav, everlasting king of Norway) Translation taken from *Historia Norvegie*, p. 87. The exact date of composition of the *Historia Norvegiae* is still contested. It was believed to have been produced in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. See Phelpstead, 'Introduction'; Bagge, 'Between Ancient Myth and the History of Salvation', pp. 142–43. However, the most recent research has narrowed the assumed time frame to 1160–1175; see Mortensen, 'Introduction', pp. 23–24, 44; Ekrem, 'Essay on Date and Purpose'.

¹⁵² For example **Poland** (991), see Hoensch, *Geschichte Polens*, p. 16; **Hungary** (before 1074), see the letter from Gregory VII to King Solomon of Hungary in Gregory VII, *Ausgewählte Briefe Papst Gregors VII*, ed. by Buchner and Schmale, no. 33; **Sicily** (1130), see Houben, *Roger II. Von Sizilien*, pp. 54–55; **Scotland** (1192), see Barrell, 'The Background to *cum unversis*'; **Aragon** (1204), see Herbers, *Geschichte Spaniens im Mittelalter*, p. 193; **England and Ireland** (1213), see Krieger, *Geschichte Englands von den Anfängen bis zum 15. Jahrhundert*, pp. 145–46.

Niðarós, an even more desirable destination for pilgrims. Thus the archbishop and the king both profited from the furthering of the cult of the royal saint.

It was Archbishop Eystein, the second archbishop of Niðarós, who is credited with having built up and designed the structure of the new church province.¹⁵³ In this design, St Olaf took a leading role as the ideal as well as the cultic centre of the province. Under the rule of Archbishop Eystein, a new concept for the building of the cathedral was applied, in which the whole building was centred on St Olaf, whose shrine was placed in the octagon at the centre of the church. This octagon had its model in the octagonal layout of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and thereby accentuated the Christological allusions in some of the miracles of the saint.¹⁵⁴ Archbishop Eystein developed the cult of St Olaf not only in architecture but also in liturgy and music, as well as in literature and historiography.¹⁵⁵ This cooperation between a new royal dynasty and a newly established cathedral church in promoting the cult of a royal saint appears to have served as example for later developments in Sweden, and we should bear this in mind when considering such developments in the next chapter. In the case of twelfth-century Norway, we can identify Archbishop Eystein and Magnus Erlingsson promoting the cult of St Olaf, while in thirteenth-century Sweden, the archbishops of the new cathedral in Östra Aros, together with Birger Jarl and his sons, all played a role in promoting the cult of St Erik.

After the displacement of Magnus Erlingsson in 1184, the charter of 1163/64, discussed above, was not renewed but St Olaf did not lose his position as patron saint of the kingdom of Norway. The rule of Magnus Erlingsson was challenged by Sverrir Sigurdsson, who in 1177 became the leader of the faction of the *Birkibeinar* ('Birchlegs') party. Sverrir's challenge led to the death of Magnus in 1184 at the Battle of Fimreite. The new king, Sverrir, did not intend to adhere to the arrangements made between Magnus and the church in the early 1160s. The 'Speech against the bishops', written by an unknown author and issued by Sverrir, defended the authority of the king over the church of his realm and argued for a withdrawal of the concessions made towards the church. However, what was never challenged — either by Sverrir, or any of his

¹⁵³ Duggan, 'Eystein, Thomas Beckett and the wider Christian world', p. 37.

¹⁵⁴ Ekroll, 'Erkebiskop Eystein, Oktogonen i Kristkyrkia og Kristi Gravkyrkje i Jerusalem', p. 71.

¹⁵⁵ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, p. 19. On the question of Eystein's authorship for *Passio Olavi* see: Mortensen, 'Eystein and Passio Olavi'.

successors — was the position of St Olaf. On the contrary, Sverrir established a close connection to the saint,¹⁵⁶ promoting himself as the saint's champion¹⁵⁷ and binding himself to the law of St Olaf by declaring 'that Erling Skakke ought not to have broken the laws of King Olaf the Holy by having his son anointed king'.¹⁵⁸ It is evident that Sverrir preferred to 'always appeal to the law of the land, ordained by King Olaf the Holy'.¹⁵⁹

For the later discussion of the cult of St Erik in Sweden, these two steps of the development of the cult of St Olaf should be kept in mind. He started off as a dynastic saint, legitimating the rules of his direct kinsmen and being credited for protecting them. This concept of the protecting royal saint was extended to the whole kingdom of Norway when it started to unite in the twelfth century. The development of the notion of the *rex perpetuus* thus apparently needed some more historical distance to come into effect than those of the royal saint as an ideal king (*rex iustus*) and as a royal ancestor. Alongside the sacral legitimation of kingship, the notion of a *rex perpetuus* had a second function: it furthered the development of the concept of kingship from a personal achievement towards a transpersonalized presupposition of the royal office beyond the physical person of the king. The problem of the king's office and the king's person was solved in the political thought of continental medieval Europe by the teaching of the king's two bodies (one natural and one political).¹⁶⁰ In some respects, the actual and the eternal king took these positions in Scandinavian political thought, thereby serving as a vehicle for the enforcement of a new social order in Scandinavian societies.

The cult of St Olaf spread very quickly to all regions of the North. It has been estimated that approximately 400 Norwegian and Swedish churches have been dedicated to the saint, in addition to those churches established in

¹⁵⁶ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed by Indrebø, 15, 20, 32, 49, 52, 80, 163. The first part of *Sverris Saga* is generally believed to have been dictated by Sverrir himself. See the note by the author of this part, Abbot Karl Jónsson, in the prologue: 'Þerri bók, er fyrst ritaði Karl ábóti Jónnson, en yfirsat sjálfr Sverrir konúgr, ok [réð fyrir hvat rita skyldi] (the book that Abbot Karl Jónsson first wrote when King Sverrir himself sat over him and settled what he should write).

¹⁵⁷ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed by Indrebø, 5.

¹⁵⁸ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed by Indrebø, 112: 'ok talði at Erlíng skakki myndi eigi eiga at brjóta lög hins helga Ólafs konúgs, til þess at son hans væri vígðr til konúgs'.

¹⁵⁹ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed by Indrebø, 117: 'skaut konúgr jafnan sínu máli til landslaga Peirra, er sett hafði hinnhelgi Ólafr konúgr', and similar, 121.

¹⁶⁰ Kantorowicz, *Die zwei Körper des Königs*.

Denmark, England, Scotland, Ireland, on the islands of the North Atlantic, in the Netherlands, northern Germany, and in the Slavonic areas of the southern coast of the Baltic Sea.¹⁶¹ He was particularly considered to be the protector of travellers and seamen, as well as of fishermen and peasants. His cult was thus not confined to the clerical and aristocratic layers of medieval society, and he was venerated by members of the lower social strata as well.¹⁶²

The diffusion of the cult of St Olaf throughout medieval Sweden has (with the exception of Gotland)¹⁶³ not been particularly well explored.¹⁶⁴ A group of charters from the fourteenth century, which record a conflict between the archbishops of Uppsala and Niðarós about 'St Olaf's tax', provides evidence for the existence of a fee to St Olaf in Ångermanland, Medelpad, and Hälsingland.¹⁶⁵ It is, however, generally assumed that St Olaf's cult was well established in the rest of Sweden in the twelfth century, as well.¹⁶⁶ Written sources that support this view are the entries concerning St Olaf in the MPO-database in the Swedish *Riksarkivet* in Stockholm. In the later twelfth century, St Olaf's name was added to a number of historical texts. At first, his name was written on July 29, directly after Felix, Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix — a group of ancient Roman martyrs who had been venerated earlier — but later on, he occupied that feast day by himself.¹⁶⁷ He was the first of the Nordic saints to be vener-

¹⁶¹ **General:** Friedland, 'Sankt Olav als Schutzpatron nordeuropäischer Kaufleute'; Coupland, *A Saint for All Nations*; **Denmark:** Haastrup, 'Olav der Heilige in dänischen Wandmalereien'; Nyberg, 'Olavskulten i Danmark under medeltiden'; **Islands of the Northern Sea:** Ásgeirsson, 'Olav den helige på Island'; **Northern Germany:** Hasse, 'Die Lübecker und ihre Heiligen und die Stellung des Heiligen Olav in dieser Schar'; Baier, 'Zum Vorkommen von mittelalterlichen Darstellungen des Heiligen Olav im Norden der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik'; **Slavonic areas:** Mroczko, 'Kulte skandinavischer Heiliger in der mittelalterlichen Kunst Nordpolens'; Mänd, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia'.

¹⁶² Bø, 'St. Olav in der Volksüberlieferung'.

¹⁶³ Hallencreutz, 'Der Heiligenkönig und die Christianisierung Gotlands'; Pernler, 'Sankt Olav und Gotland'; Nylén, 'Gotland zu St. Olavs Zeit'.

¹⁶⁴ The only collection of evidence for his veneration on a national level was given by Falk, 'Sankt Olofs minne i Sverige'. For the region of Dalarna, see Ljung, *Sankt Olof i Dalarna. Kult och vallfart*.

¹⁶⁵ SDHK, 2605, 2607, 2608, 2611, 4979, 4985, 4986. On the conflict about this fee between the archbishops of Niðarós and Uppsala, see Lundegårdh, 'Kampen om den norrländska Olavskulten'.

¹⁶⁶ See, for example, Lindkvist, 'Erik den helige och det Svenska kungadömet framväxt', p. 132.

¹⁶⁷ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 9, 27–32.

ated across all the Swedish bishoprics, although the date given for the introduction of his feast day seems to vary. In the *Calendarium Vallentunense*, a calendar included in the *Liber ecclesie Vallentunense* that dates from 1198, and thus reflects the liturgical habits of the region of Uppland at this time, Olaf's name is added to the above-mentioned Roman martyrs.¹⁶⁸ In contrast, in twelfth-century material from the dioceses of Linköping (Fragment Mi 2) and Skara (Fragment Fr 1504/1505) he is no longer accompanied by other saints in his entry.¹⁶⁹ On the island of Gotland there is also comparatively early evidence for the veneration of St Olaf, with the *Gutasagan*, written around 1220, claiming a role for St Olaf in the Christianization of Gotland.¹⁷⁰

These findings show once again that Väster- and Östergötland were more thoroughly Christianized in the late twelfth century than those regions further north. In addition, the people in Västergötland in particular were in close contact with the neighbouring kingdom of Norway and it is therefore rather unlikely that these neighbours would have been excluded from the diffusion of the cult of St Olaf. Early examples for the veneration of St Olaf in Västergötland include the inscriptions on the baptismal fonts of Hangelösa and Lödöse, and it has generally been stated that no other saint before St Birgitta has played such an important role in medieval Sweden, a fact further reflected in the very high number of images of the saint found there.¹⁷¹ The situation was, therefore, such that the cult of a royal saint who was considered an ideal and model king was already established over the whole of the Scandinavian Peninsula when the cult of a new royal saint — that of St Erik, — originated in Uppsala, and slowly developed in the second half of the twelfth century. The development of this cult will be the subject of the main part of the present study.

¹⁶⁸ Helmfrid, *Vallentuna Anno Domini 1198*, p. 90. For more thorough information on the *Calendarium Vallentunense*, see chap. 4 below.

¹⁶⁹ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 101–06.

¹⁷⁰ *Gutasagan*, ed. by Westholm, 6.

¹⁷¹ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, pp. 20, 23–24; Blindheim, 'St. Olav: ein skandinavischer Oberheiliger'.

THE EARLY CULT (1160–c. 1250)

Historical Background

In the beginning of the eleventh century, we find a royalty with the claim to execute power in Svealand as well as Götaland. The royal power was, however, contested, and it was only at the end of the twelfth century that this claim got a fragile but reasonable basis.¹

This short passage, taken from Thomas Lindkvist's article 'Kungamakt, kristnande, statsbildning', provides a very good characterization of the nature of the 'Swedish' royal power in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. It has already been pointed out in Chapter 3 above that both the introduction of royal power and Christianization followed a quite different course of development in Sweden to that seen in the other two Scandinavian kingdoms. In order to provide some background for the analysis of the early cult of St Erik, I will begin by sketching the political developments in Götaland and Svealand in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.²

After the death of Inge the Younger, Sverker the Elder succeeded to the throne. Sverker's family had its power basis in Västergötland and it is difficult to assess how strong his influence was in Svealand/Uppland. Modern research

¹ Lindkvist, 'Kungamakt, kristnande, statsbildning', p. 217: 'I början av 1000-talet framträdde en kungamakt med anspråk på att utöva ett herravälde i såväl Svealand som Götaland. Kungamakten var dock omstridd och det var först mot slutet av 1100-talet som dessa anspråk fick en fragil, men reell grund'.

² If not indicated otherwise, this summary of the political history is based on the detailed entries concerning the respective rulers in SBL, LexMa and Lagerqvist, *Sveriges regenter*.

tends to assume that the royal grip on Svealand was consolidated only by Birger Jarl and his sons in the second half of the thirteenth century and that the power of the Sverker and the Erik-dynasty over Svealand was very limited.³ This view is supported by the fact that Christianization and an administrative framework were more established there; that all the early monasteries of the Cistercians were founded in this region; and that both ruling dynasties had their roots and basis in Västergötland. King Sverker the Elder and his queen Ulfhild, who was the widow of the former King Inge the Younger, are credited by the sources with the invitation of the Cistercians to Sweden and they established their family cemetery in the newly founded Cistercian monastery of Alvastra in Östergötaland.

Sverker the Elder seems to have ruled until sometime in the 1150s when he was succeeded by Erik Jedvardsson, who was to become St Erik. The actions of this king and the character of St Erik as a historical person are mostly unknown, with the exception of one episode of his reign in the year 1158 that is recorded by a Danish chronicle from the late twelfth century. This incident does not throw a particularly positive light on Erik's relationship with the church: it relates that his wife, Christina, drove the monks of the monastery of Varnhem in Västergötland out of their home. The land on which the monastery was built had been donated by a certain Sigrid, who was a relative of Christina. After Sigrid's death, Christina tried to claim this land and thus drove the monks away.⁴ However, the two parties must have come to an agreement shortly afterwards, since Varnhem was soon repopulated by monks from Alvastra, and Erik's son Knut (r. 1167–96) established the family graveyard of the Erik-dynasty there. It is one of Knut's charters that provides the earliest Swedish record of Erik Jedvardsson, naming him as one of Knut's predecessors.⁵

With regard to Erik's family relations, we are left with only bits and pieces of information. His father's name, 'Jedvard', is documented in some Icelandic sources (e.g. *Sverris saga*) and from this name it has been assumed that his father could have been an Englishman named Edward. However, this is, of course, pure conjecture. Even so, the legitimization for his claim to the throne must have come through his wife, who was a descendant of King Inge the Elder. All further information about Erik Jedvardsson (e.g. length of his reign, crusade to Finland, year and date of his death, personal devotion, and exemplary rule)

³ Therefore, the use of the term 'Swedish' is still problematic for this time. For the discussion of the use of this (and other) terms in the present study see chap. 1 above.

⁴ 'Narratiuncula de Fundatione Monasterij Vitæscholæ in Cimbria', pp. 138, 141.

⁵ SDHK, 268.

have their origin in his legend, and are thus to be treated very carefully in terms of their importance in constructing a picture of his life.

The man who the legend of St Erik names as his murderer, the Danish prince Magnus Henriksson, seems to have followed Erik on the throne for a short time. He was defeated and killed in battle in 1161 near Örebro by Karl Sverkersson, who reclaimed the Swedish throne for the Sverker-dynasty.⁶ It was under his rule that (Gamla) Uppsala was established as the Swedish archbishop's seat in 1164 and he may have led a military expedition to Novgorod in the same year.⁷ He was killed in 1167 by Knut Eriksson, the son of St Erik, who was to stay on the throne for nearly 30 years.

After some initial skirmishes with the sons of Karl Sverkersson, Kol and Burislev, Knut ruled unchallenged from c. 1172 onwards. In his rather long reign, we can find the first signs of an ascending royal power and of a closer connection between Svealand and Götaland.⁸ The minting of Swedish coinage resumed after a break of c. 150 years (one of those coins, the IVA bracteate will be discussed below) and in Bishop Kol of Linköping, a royal chancellor was named for the first time.⁹ Knut tried to improve the defence and administration of his kingdom by building round towers in several places. We also get the impression for the first time that the lawspeaker (*lagman*) had a position that was directly subordinate to that of the king.¹⁰ In a trade treaty between Birger Jarl and the Hanseatic city of Lübeck from 1250, reference is made to an earlier treaty between King Knut and his Jarl, Birger Brosa, on one side and Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony, on the other. The content of this first treaty is

⁶ The oldest extant original charter written in Sweden (SDHK, 200) was issued by Archbishop Stefan and sealed by him and King Karl Sverkersson. King Karl is, therefore, the first Swedish king for whom we have contemporary evidence of diplomatic activity.

⁷ The papal bull decreeing the foundation of the archbishopric is SDHK, 202. On the military expedition, see *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, ed. by Michell and Forbes, p. 24.

⁸ Sawyer and Sawyer, 'The Making of the Scandinavian Kingdoms'.

⁹ Schück, 'Kansler och capella regis under folkungatiden', p. 141.

¹⁰ Bjarne Larsson, 'Kunglig auktoritet i det medeltida Sverige före 1280' p. 181 points to a charter of Knut Eriksson (SDHK, 223) in which he states: 'Kantus swecie rex et princeps Nicolao legifero et omnibus habitantibus finnethiam, werendhiam, niwdhwngiam, nostris jussionibus obtemperantibus, salutem et pacem bonam'. (Knut, Sweden's king and ruler, sends greetings and good peace to Lawspeaker Nils and to all inhabitants of Finnveden, Varend and Njudung, who obey our orders.) The function of the lawspeaker was to recite the law at the Thing assemblies and to watch over their correct application. He also led the Thing and had a prominent position among the ruling strata of his Thing district. See Lindkvist, 'The Lagmän (Law-Speakers) as Regional Elite in Medieval Västergötland'.

unknown but it shows that Knut was trying to further trade between his realm and northern Germany.¹¹ He also started to establish diplomatic contact with England, as we know from English sources from the middle of the 1180s.

Knut was the first king for at least half a century to not die a violent death. Despite the steps mentioned above that pointed towards a stronger royal power, the institutionalization of kingship had not yet developed far enough to allow the rule of a king who had not yet come of age. Knut was therefore not succeeded by one of his under-age sons but by Sverker Karlsson, the son of Karl Sverkersson, who ruled from 1196 to 1208. The main feature that is known about Sverker the Younger's reign is his church-friendly politics. This characteristic of his reign emerges from a charter that he issued for the cathedral church of Uppsala and in which he donated several items to the church and also decreed the exemption of clerics from worldly courts of law and the tax-exemption of church goods.¹² Although he himself was married twice to noble women of Nordic origin, Benedikta Ebbesdotter (Hvide) and Ingegerd Birgersdotter (Bjälbo), it is noticeable that he married two of his three daughters, Kristina and Margareta, to the North German aristocrats Henrik II of Rostock and Wizlaw of Rügen, respectively. He thereby tried to deepen his contacts with that region and to find support in his quarrel with the sons of Knut Eriksson. In the Battle of Älgåras in 1205, his troops were able to kill three of them, but the fourth, Erik Knutsson, returned in 1208 and won the royal crown in the Battle of Lena.

Erik Knutsson is the first Swedish monarch of whose coronation we have evidence. He was crowned in the year 1210 by Archbishop Valerius of Uppsala.¹³ The reign of Sverker had been backed by two main supporters: the Swedish church and the Danish king. This coronation by Valerius shows that the new king, Erik Knutsson, had also made his peace with one of them. He achieved the appeasement of the other by marrying Rikissa, the daughter of the Danish King Valdemar and Sofia of Minsk, in the same year. Erik Knutsson died in 1216 of a disease and since he had no son born at the time of his death — his wife was pregnant at the time he died — the throne was again taken by a representative of the Sverker-dynasty, Johan Sverkersson.

During the time of his reign, a crusade to Estonia was undertaken in 1220, in order to show the Danish King Valdemar II (who had done the same in

¹¹ SDHK, 629.

¹² SDHK, 286.

¹³ We know of the coronation via the papal affirmation (SDHK, 351).

1219) that Johan did not intend to abandon Sweden's interests in the Eastern Baltic region.¹⁴ However, by 1222 Johan had died, unmarried and childless. As a result, the male line of the dynasty of Sverker died out, and it was once more the turn of the dynasty of Erik to seize the throne.

Erik Eriksson, born only a short time after his father's death, became king in 1222 although he was not of age. The rule was taken over by a council of the realm (*riksråd*), an institution which seems to have been formed for this task but which lasted through the time of Erik's minority to become, in the course of time, an important player in Swedish politics.¹⁵ The insurrection of a group of magnates called 'the Folkungar' drove Erik Eriksson 1229 out of the country and put Knut Långe (a distant relation of St Erik through a secondary line) in his place.¹⁶ Knut died, however, in 1234 and Erik Eriksson returned to the throne. Erik seems to have been a king not particularly obsessed by power. Even after he had come of age, a large part of the power obviously remained in the hands of the Jarl, a position that was occupied by Ulf Fasi until 1248 and thereafter by Birger Magnusson (both of whom came from the house of Bjälbo).¹⁷ Erik Eriksson died without an heir in 1250 and the throne went to Valdemar Birgersson, the son of Birger Magnusson (=Birger Jarl), who thereby started a new royal dynasty in Sweden, the Bjälbo dynasty.

¹⁴ On the Danish crusades see most recently Villads Jensen, *Korstog ved verdens yderste rand*. The crusade of 1219 is treated on pp. 477–92.

¹⁵ Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia*, pp. 82–84. The three leading members of the *riksråd* (in its established form from about the 1320s) were the chancellor (*kansler*) — a position which was always filled by the bishop of Linköping — the marshal (*marsk*), and the steward (*drotts*), the highest judge after the king.

¹⁶ See the genealogic table 'House of Erik' in Appendix 6. The name 'Folkungar', which can be found in a number of medieval sources is also used for the house of Birger Jarl by some medieval researchers: see e.g. Fritz, 'Det medeltida Vadstena', p. 62; Gillingstam, 'Folkungaätten'; Hildebrand and Gillingstam, 'Folkungaätten, oäkta'; Schück, 'Folkungar'. The name 'Bjälbo' was suggested in order to distinguish this royal dynasty from a group of aristocrats that is referred to under the same name (both groups can be traced back to a certain Folke the Thick). Among the authors who used the name 'Bjälbo' are Dovring, 'Folkunganamnet'; Adolfsson, *När borgarnar brann*, pp. 77–79; Harrison, *Sveriges historia: 600–1350*, pp. 213, 251–55. In the present study, the royal dynasty will be called by the name of 'Bjälbo' in order to avoid the confusion that almost inevitably occurs when two groups with identical names fight with each other, as was the case in late thirteenth-century Sweden.

¹⁷ On the position of the Jarl from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, see Fritz, 'Jarladömet — sveahertigdömet'.

The rise of this dynasty will be treated in Chapter 5 below, together with a number of decisive developments in Swedish society of the early thirteenth century that led to the polity's modernization and made possible the intensified cult of St Erik later in that century. Having provided the necessary historical background for the time of the dynasties of Sverker and Erik, we will now turn to the question of how the cult of St Erik started and how it developed during this period.

The Historiography of the Early Cult of St Erik

The early cult around St Erik has been discussed in great detail since research into the Swedish patron saint was revolutionized by Knut Stjerna's article 'Erik den helige. En sagohistorisk studie', published in Lunds universitetets årsskrift in 1898. Since then there have been different opinions on the topic, ranging from a near-denial of the existence of an early cult of St Erik¹⁸ to the assumption of a rich and lively cult that was already blooming by the twelfth century.¹⁹ Both these opinions draw largely on the different evaluations made by researchers into the credibility of the 'Legend of St Erik' and its date of composition.²⁰ Meanwhile, most historians support the position that the legend was composed in the late thirteenth century. No consensus has yet been reached, however, on the importance of the early cult of St Erik. While some medievalists are of the opinion that St Erik 'was *not* Sweden's eternal king',²¹ other researchers are convinced that 'a flowering cult of St Erik already [existed] at the beginning of the 1170s', which 'obviously extended over large areas'²² of Sweden, and that his veneration as *rex perpetuus* reaches as far back as the 1220s.²³ Among the numerous sources that are claimed by academics to give accounts of the early veneration of St Erik, there are only three that all researchers consider to refer to him indubitably as a saint. The first is the *Calendarium Vallentunense* from 1198, the second is *Sverris Saga* from the early thirteenth century, and the third is a remark in *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd*, which probably dates to around 1220.

¹⁸ Weibull, 'Erik den helige'.

¹⁹ Westman, *Den svenska kyrkans utveckling*, pp. 67–100.

²⁰ The 'Legend of St Erik' will be thoroughly analysed in chap. 5 below.

²¹ Lindkvist, 'Erik den helige och det Svenska kungadömet framväxt', p. 126.

²² Carlsson, 'Erikskultens uppkomst', p. 128.

²³ Sjöberg, 'Rex Upsalie et vicarius — Erik den helige och hans ställföreträdere'.

The *Calendarium Vallentunense* is part of the *Liber Ecclesie Vallentunense* and it is the earliest extant calendar of ecclesiastical feast days in Sweden.²⁴ With regard to fol. 31^v, the manuscript is dated by its author to the year 1198, which seems realistic, since the *Calendarium* also features saints such as St Thomas (Becket) of Canterbury, who was canonized in 1173, and St Bernhard of Clairvaux, whose feast day was introduced to the Cistercian calendar in 1175.²⁵ The paleographical evidence also points to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, since the script was a not fully developed *textualis*. The two Swedish saints St Erik and St Botvid and their feast days (18 May and 28 July respectively) are included by the original hand, while the feast day of St Eskil (11 July) and other Swedish saints, as well as other holy days that were for other reasons celebrated solely in Sweden (e.g. the *missa pro rege* (19 June)) are later additions. The book is therefore a Swedish production, most likely from the Mälaren region, and suggests that St Erik was venerated in that area by around 1200.

One of the two sources that inform us about the fact that St Erik's relics rest in a shrine in the cathedral of Uppsala is *Sverris Saga*.²⁶ It is generally accepted that the first part of this saga was written in the late 1180s by Karl Jónsson, abbot of Þingeyrar monastery on Iceland. Of this part, it is stated in the prologue of the saga that it was 'the book that Abbot Karl Jónsson first wrote when King Sverrir himself sat over him and settled what he should write'.²⁷ It is thus considered to be propaganda for King Sverrir of Norway. The authorship and time of production of the rest of the saga, as well as its historical accuracy, are not entirely clear. It is assumed that the second part of the saga was compiled based on statements of members of King Sverrir's retinue sometime after his death in 1202. The saga must have been finished by 1230, since Snorri Sturlusson's *Heimskringla* ends at the point in time where *Sverris Saga* begins.²⁸ Although this second part is probably not unbiased, the account of the resting place of the relics of St Erik is generally believed to be correct, since it is

²⁴ Helmfrid, *Vallentuna Anno Domini 1198*, p. 6. The book includes a facsimile of the medieval manuscript (pp. 41–64).

²⁵ Björkqvall, 'Vallentuna mässbok och kalendarium i forskningens ljus', p. 93.

²⁶ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed. by Indrebø, 100: 'Eiríks Sviakonúngs Játvarðsonar, hins helga. Eiríkr hvílir í skríni í Svíþjóðu at Uppsölum'.

²⁷ *Sverris saga. Etter Cod. AM 327 4o*, ed. by Indrebø, Prologue: 'Þerri bók, er fyrst ritaði Karl ábóti Jónnson, en yfirsat sjálf Sverrir konúngr, ok [réð fyrir hvat rita skyldi]'.
²⁸ Volz, 'Sverris saga'; Simek and Pálsson, *Lexikon der altnordischen Literatur*, p. 343.

mentioned in passing in the account of the marriage between King Sverrir and Margareta, the daughter of St Erik and sister of King Knut Eriksson.

Finally, there is *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd*. The *Äldre Västgötalag* ('The older law of the people of Västergötland') was probably written around 1220, and it is assumed that Eskil Magnusson, then lawspeaker of Västergötland, was the man responsible for the text's compilation.²⁹ It was the first of the regional laws of Sweden (*landskapslagar*) to be codified and it includes a list of Swedish kings, starting with Olaf Skötkonung and ending with Erik Eriksson. The entry about Erik Jedvardsson reads as follows:

The twelfth was King Erik. He was suddenly taken from the day [i.e. killed]. His rule was good while he lived and God gave him good reward for that. Now his soul is resting with God and the angels and his bones rest in Uppsala, where they have shown and revealed beautiful signs of God's grace.³⁰

We thus have a confirmation of the account included in the approximately contemporary *Sverris Saga* that St Erik's relics were enshrined in, and venerated at, the cathedral of Uppsala. It is further claimed in *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd* that it was on Erik's initiative that the cathedral church of (Gamla) Uppsala was built. However, the architectural and art-historical surveys must leave this question unanswered due to the lack of clearly dateable building structures.³¹

In addition to these three generally accepted sources, there are a number of other, (mostly figurative) sources, which are believed by some to give evidence for an early veneration of St Erik but which have been rejected as source material by others. This evidence can be divided into three categories: a) evidence for his veneration as a holy ancestor; b) evidence for his veneration as *rex perpetuus*; and c) further evidence for his veneration in general.

²⁹ 'Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd', ed. by Wiktorsson. On the dating see Wiktorsson, *Äldre Västgötalagen och dess bilagor i Cod. Holm. B 59*, I, 11; Strauch, *Mittelalterliches nordisches Recht bis 1500*, p. 394.

³⁰ 'Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd', ed. by Wiktorsson, p. 198: 'Tolfte war Erekar kononger · han war vsini swa brat af ðaghum takin · han giærðhi · e · goð ðöme mæðæn han lifðhi · oc guð gaff hanum þær goðæ lon fore · Nu ær hans sial · i · ro mæð guðhi oc hans · hænglum · och ben hans hwilæs · i · wpsalum · oc hawir þær teeth oc oppenbaræt margh faghær iærtingni mæð gudz naðhum.'

³¹ Göthberg, 'Gamla Uppsala kyrka under domkyrkotiden', pp. 57–59.

Evidence for his Veneration as a Holy Ancestor

The assumption that Erik's son Knut (r. 1167–96) endeavoured to further the cult of his father is widely accepted among Swedish medieval researchers.³² This assumption seems likely, since — as we have seen in the Norwegian example — to have a royal saint in the family would be an admirable way to heighten the *idoneitas* of one's descendants in the eyes of contemporaries. For decades, the dynasty of which St Erik was the founder was in permanent conflict with the Sverker-dynasty and could have made great use of an additional legitimization of its power. The basis for the assumption that St Erik's direct descendants furthered his cult, however, consists of only two figurative sources, namely a coin of King Knut Eriksson (Fig. 1) and a wall painting in the church of Eriksberg (Fig. 2).

A bracteate of Knut Eriksson shows a crowned figure that holds in its right hand a lily sceptre and in its left an object that might be a tower, a church, or a ciborium. The letters IVA are arranged around the picture. The coin was first described by Bengt Thordeman.³³ He interpreted the object in the left hand of the crowned figure as a ciborium and concluded from the later habit of (sometimes) depicting St Erik with such a device that the figure on the bracteate must also show the holy Swedish king.³⁴ He first interpreted the inscription as *Ilianus Västra Aros*, which would mean that the bracteate was part of the coinage of Bishop Ilianus of Västerås. In a later paper, however, he revised this



Figure 1. Coin of Knut Eriksson (r. 1167–96). Inscription: 'IVA', Stockholm, Kungliga Myntkabinettet. Photo courtesy of Kungliga Myntkabinettet.

³² See most recently Bengtsson, 'Från statisk till dramatisk', p. 51; the common-place nature of this assumption is shown by lexicon articles like: Schmid, 'Erik den Helige'; N.N., 'Erik den Helige'; Nyberg, 'Erik, St' but also recent research accounts keep the claim up: Blomkvist, Brink, and Lindkvist, 'The Kingdom of Sweden', pp. 189–90; Sundqvist, 'An Arena for Higher Powers', p. 196.

³³ Thordeman, 'Två fynd av Knut Erikssons Västerås-brakteater från Mackmyra i Valbo socken, Gästrikland'.

³⁴ On the attributes depicted with St Erik, see the list in Appendix 4. A ciborium is included in only 15 of the 215 representations of the saint, all of them originating from the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries.

interpretation and stated that the only written source that named this bishop was a falsification of the seventeenth century.³⁵ Nils Rasmusson suggested that the three letters should be interpreted as [C]IVitas Arosiensis, although this solution introduced the problematic assumption of a missing 'C'. There are two towns which could have been known as *Civitas Arosiensis*: Västra Aros (Västerås) and Östra Aros.³⁶ No bishop of Västerås, is, as Rasmusson remarks, known to have issued any coins, while Östra Aros only became a bishop's seat in 1273 when the cathedral of (Gamla) Uppsala was moved there. However, the coin in question has been dated to the reign of Knut Eriksson and can thus refer to neither bishopric. The most far-reaching interpretation was delivered by Ralf Sjöberg who, by reading the letters retrograde, received the solution VIA.³⁷ He interpreted the picture of the king as the substitution of the word *regia*. He thus received *via regia* and understood the term to be a citation from the legend of St Erik, in which the saint's journey through his kingdom after his royal election is labelled with these words.³⁸ This interpretation lent support to Sjöberg's opinion that the creation of the legend of St Erik has to be dated to the reign of Knut Eriksson.³⁹

The identification of the depicted figure with St Erik is problematic for several reasons. The object in the left hand of the crowned figure cannot be identified as a ciborium with reasonable certainty and even if this were proven, other interpretations concerning the identity of the saint would still be possible.⁴⁰ No further elements of the picture on the bracteate point to St Erik. In contrast to the resolutions described above for the letters IVA, the suggestion of Kenneth Jonsson, who reads *Iohannes Vpsalensis Archiepiscopus*, seems the most plausible.⁴¹ The depiction of the contemporary king, Knut Eriksson, on a coin of the archbishop of Uppsala, Johannes (r. 1185–87), and with a church (not a

³⁵ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 198.

³⁶ Rasmusson, 'Rex Upsalie', p. 291.

³⁷ Sjöberg, 'Rex Upsalie et vicarius — Erik den helige och hans ställföreträdare', p. 6.

³⁸ Schmid, 'Erik den heliges legend på latin, fornsvenska och modern svenska', p. xi: 'Deinde regnum suum circuiens ac populum visitans universum via regia incedens'. For the text of the legend, see also Appendix 1.

³⁹ For his early dating of the legend of St Erik see Sjöberg, 'Via regia incedens'. This early dating was first proposed by Carlsson, *Translatio archiepiscoporum*.

⁴⁰ St Olaf in particular is frequently depicted with a ciborium. See Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, pp. 33, 211–14, 339.

⁴¹ Jonsson, 'Från utländsk metall till inhemsk mynt', p. 56.

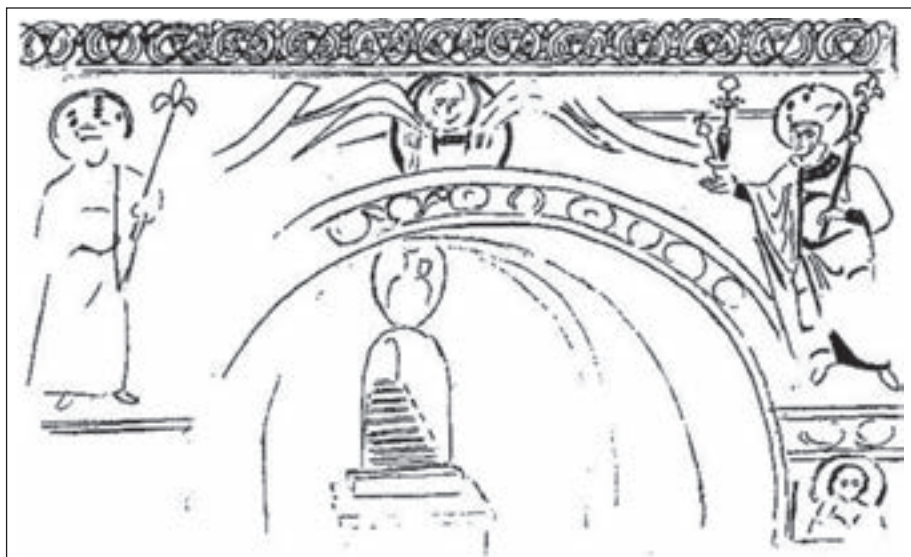


Figure 2. Wall painting in the church of Eriksberg, second half of twelfth century.
Sketch by Viola Hernfäll (1993).

ciborium) in his left hand would point to a close collaboration between the two leading dignitaries of Sweden and probably to a short period of time in which they issued coins together. Yet this explanation also leaves unanswered questions: if the coin was issued by an archbishop of Uppsala, one would expect him to have put an image of himself on it instead of a picture of King Knut Eriksson. Also, the unusual word order ('Iohannes Vpsalensis Archiepiscopus' instead of 'Iohannes Archiepiscopus Vpsalensis') would need some further explanation.

The second picture, which is assumed to be an early depiction of St Erik, is the picture of two crowned figures in the church of Eriksberg in the diocese of Skara (Västergötland). The two crowned figures are situated on the two sides of the eastern wall of the nave overarching the entrance to the choir. It had been assumed that both the church and its paintings would originate from the reign of Knut Eriksson.⁴² However, a dendro-chronological analysis in 1989 showed that it must have already been finished in 1153 — in other words, in the assumed time of the reigns of St Erik or Sverker the Elder.⁴³ However, given

⁴² Schiller, *Med göter genom göternas rike*, II, 403; Nyberg, 'Erik IX Jedvardsson'.

⁴³ Bräthen, 'Den märklige takstolen i Eriksbergs kyrka', p. 94.

Viola Hernfjäll's sustained arguments to date the paintings to the 1170s, it is nevertheless still possible to suggest that Knut Eriksson was the person who issued the paintings.⁴⁴ Hernfjäll has noted that the pictures are of considerable quality, and has concluded that the paintings in the church must have been 'ordered by a person above the common level'.⁴⁵ Lars Gahrn, in contrast, has disagreed with this statement, claiming that 'paintings equivalent to that in Eriksberg can be found in other parish churches'.⁴⁶ In a later paper, Hernfjäll — with reference to the above-mentioned thesis of Ralf Sjöberg — interpreted the paintings as a figurative representation of the *via regia*, the journey of every newly elected king through Sweden, known as the *Eriksgata* from the fourteenth century onwards.⁴⁷

Contrary to the bracteates discussed above, the two figures in the church of Eriksberg are clearly marked as holy kings by their crowns and lily sceptres. As in the above case, however, they lack any attribute that would allow for a positive identification. Of the left figure, only the left hand, in which it holds a sceptre, is visible. The right figure points with an object, which it holds in its right hand, to the seraph that is situated between the two royal saints. Some scholars have suggested that the depicted royal saints are St Olaf and St Erik.⁴⁸ A depiction of St Olaf from the second half of the twelfth century would not be surprising in this area. His cult spread very quickly over the whole of Scandinavia and dedications to St Olaf were one of the most common in Swedish parish churches.⁴⁹ Although his attribute, the axe, is not visible, it would thus be quite plausible to recognize the Norwegian royal saint as the leftmost of the two crowned figures whose attributes have completely vanished. Identification of the other figure is even more difficult. It has an object in its right hand, but this object does not call to mind any of the attributes of the royal saints who could come into question. Possible saints are: St Knut of Denmark (most common attribute: spear), St Erik (most common attribute: sword) or other Danish royal saints such as Knut Magnusson or Knut Lavard.⁵⁰ There is also the possibility that two Old

⁴⁴ Hernfjäll, *Medeltida kyrkmålningar i gamla Skara stift*, pp. 29–42.

⁴⁵ Hernfjäll, *Medeltida kyrkmålningar i gamla Skara stift*, p. 40.

⁴⁶ Gahrn, *Bland Svear och Götar*, p. 140.

⁴⁷ Hernfjäll, 'Via Regia — Kungsvägen — Eriksgatan'.

⁴⁸ Hernfjäll, *Medeltida kyrkmålningar i gamla Skara stift*, pp. 35–39; Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', pp. 182–83; Nisbeth, *Bildernas predikan*, p. 65.

⁴⁹ Pegelow, *Helgonlegender i ord och bild*, p. 314. See also chap. 3 above.

⁵⁰ Ahnlund, 'Till frågan om den äldsta Erikskulten i Sverige' asserts that Knut Magnusson

Testament kings are depicted on this wall painting. It is therefore possible to interpret the second figure as St Erik but this is only one iconographical possibility among many. It speaks against the depiction of St Erik in the church of Eriksberg that the veneration of St Erik in the diocese of Skara in the course of the Middle Ages never reached the same intensity as in the rest of Sweden. Indeed, it was the only diocese in which the saint's feast day did not receive the highest feast grade *totum duplex*.⁵¹

On the other hand, we have evidence that Eriksberg ranges among the places that have been visited by members of the dynasty of St Erik. Several place and field names with the prefix *kungs-* suggest that one (or several) of the Swedish royal dynasties used to have properties there.⁵² *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd* provides evidence that Knut Eriksson visited the place at least once and that he died there. The entry on him reads as follows: 'And twenty-three winters he was king and [he] left his life in Eriksberg in Gäsinge and [he] lies [buried] in [the monastery of] Varnhem'.⁵³ Bengt Thordeman concluded from this entry that: 'Eriksberg [...] was the ancestral seat of the Erik-dynasty. It can have been no accident that St Erik's son Knut Eriksson died there'.⁵⁴ Thordeman's statement, however, goes rather too far as an interpretation of the account of Knut Eriksson in *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd*. Nobody knows beforehand where and when he or she is going to die. The *kungs-* names and the fact that Knut Eriksson visited the place suggest that his dynasty had properties there, but to take the further step of claiming Eriksberg as the ancestral seat of the Erik-dynasty cannot be backed by authentic evidence.

The attempt to promulgate St Erik as a holy ancestor would doubtlessly have been a good way for his son, Knut Eriksson, to gain an advantage in the struggle with the Sverker-dynasty but the existing sources provide no clues or firm evidence. A fact that speaks against the assumption that the members of the Erik-dynasty furthered the cult of their holy ancestor concerns the burial

was a saint of the Sverker-dynasty. No pictures are (to my knowledge) preserved of him. Knut Lavard merged in the course of time increasingly with St Knut konung of Denmark. That is why he is also most commonly depicted with a spear.

⁵¹ Johansson, *Den medeltida liturgien i Skara stift*, p. 112.

⁵² Gahrn, *Bland Svear och Götar*, pp. 146–47.

⁵³ *Westgötalagen*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, p. 302: 'oc thre wintaer oc tyghu war han konungaer. Oc laet sit liff .i. i. Exrebaerghi .i. i. gjaesini. oc liggaer i warnem'.

⁵⁴ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 183: 'Eriksberg [...] varit den Erikska ättens stamort. Det kan icke vara en tillfällighet att Erik den heliges son Knut Eriksson avled där'.

place of the three kings of the Erik-dynasty. While St Erik's relics rested in Gamla Uppsala, his three descendants were all buried in the monastery church of Varnhem.⁵⁵ Those members of dynasties that venerated their saintly predecessors as royal ancestors were naturally eager to be buried *ad sanctos*, i.e. as close as possible to the relics of their saintly relative.⁵⁶

A group of sources that has not yet been analysed in this context is the charters of the kings of the Erik-dynasty. If the descendants of St Erik had tried to propagate the cult of their ancestor, one would expect that this would be shown by their naming him in their charters. Unfortunately, there are only two charters preserved in which Erik's descendants refer to him. The first diploma was issued by his son, Knut Eriksson, and can be dated to c. 1192. The charter, in which Knut confirms the purchase of fishing rights by the monastery of Nydala, has an *intitulatio* which reads: 'Knut, by the grace of God king of the Swedes, son of Erik, likewise king'.⁵⁷ The 'sanctus' or 'beatus' that we might typically expect here is, in fact, not added to the name of his father. The same holds true for the second charter, a diploma of King Erik Knutsson (r. 1208–16), the son of Knut Eriksson. In the document he confirms the possession of forests by the monastery of Nydala as had been done by his predecessors. He calls them: 'My predecessors Sverker, Erik, Karl and Knut as well as Sverker'.⁵⁸ St Erik appears, again without any accentuation of his sanctity as a king, between two kings of the Sverker-dynasty, Sverker the Elder and his son Karl Sverkersson.

The first preserved charter in which St Erik is addressed as a **holy** royal ancestor is handed down from Valdemar Birgersson (r. 1250–75) of the Bjälbo dynasty. Valdemar's father, Birger Jarl, was kin to the Sverker-dynasty through

⁵⁵ This is stated for all three kings in Wiktorsson, *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd*.

⁵⁶ Skórzewska, 'Family Matters?', pp. 356–60. A Nordic example is the death of the Norwegian king Olaf Kyrre who died in the region of Bohuslän (close to modern Gothenburg) and whose dead body was brought from there to Nidaros (approximately 1500 kilometres along the Norwegian coast). See also Ekroll, 'Erkebiskop Eystein, Oktogonen i Kristkyrkia og Kristi Gravkyrkje i Jerusalem', p. 50.

⁵⁷ SDHK, 268; the out-dated edition (*Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, ed. by Liljegren) has been replaced by *Diplomata Novevallensia*, ed. by Gejrot, no. 1: 'Kanutus, Dei gratia Swerorum rex. Filius Herjcs itjdem regis'. A commentary on the charter can be found in that edition at p. 139.

⁵⁸ SDHK, 317; new edition: *Diplomata Novevallensia*, ed. by Gejrot, no. 8: 'Predecessores mei Suerco Ericus Karolus & Kanutus atque Swerco'. A commentary to the charter can be found in that edition at p. 146. Both charters were issued by the recipient: see *Diplomata Novevallensia*, ed. by Gejrot, p. 16. On the development of the royal chancellery in Sweden see Schück, 'Kansler och capella regis under folkungatiden', pp. 141–50.



Figure 3. Three bracteates with the inscription 'REX VPSALIE', Stockholm, Kungliga Myntkabinettet, mid-thirteenth century. Photo courtesy of Kungliga Myntkabinettet.

his mother, Ingrid Ylva, and in 1234 he married the daughter of Erik Knutsson and sister of the reigning King Erik Eriksson, Ingeborg Eriksdotter. His son Valdemar was thus related to both rival royal dynasties and Birger Jarl succeeded in installing him on the Swedish throne in 1250 after the death of the last heir of St Erik, Erik Eriksson. The relocation of the archbishop's see of Uppsala from Gamla (=Old) Uppsala to Östra Aros (modern-day Uppsala) occurred during the reign of Valdemar Birgersson. The new cathedral erected there was to have two patron saints: St Lars and St Erik. The charter of King Valdemar from the year 1270 announces the decision to relocate the archbishop's see 'out of reverence for God, Saint Lars, and Saint Erik, king and martyr, our ancestor'.⁵⁹ Only at that time, when the cult of St Erik experienced its first wave of popularization, did the Swedish kings try to capitalize on the legitimizing potential of their kinsman, something the Norwegian kings had started to do immediately after St Olaf's death.

Evidence for his Veneration as rex perpetuus

The second development that we observed in twelfth-century Norway was the development of St Olaf from the holy royal ancestor, who could be remembered historically and physically, to the position of transcendent eternal king of the realm. As in the case of the holy royal ancestor, there are scholars who would like to date the beginning of the veneration of St Erik as a *rex perpetuus* very early, to around the middle of the thirteenth century. The basis for this dating again relies on numismatic sources.

⁵⁹ SDHK, 901: 'ob reuerenciam dei & beati laurencij & beati Erici regis & Martiris progenitoris nostri'.

Since the 1950s, five bracteates have been found at four different find-spots, each bearing the circumscription REX VPSALIE (Fig. 3).⁶⁰ These five coins include three slightly different representations of symbols, together with the REX VPSALIE circumscription. The symbols imprinted are: an 'A', a crown, and a cross. The bracteates have been dated to the middle of the thirteenth century and there are therefore several possibilities as to who might have issued the coins: Erik Eriksson (r. 1222–29, 1234–50), Knut Långe (r. 1229–34), and Valdemar Birgersson (r. 1250–75). The circumscription REX VPSALIE has been associated with the oldest Swedish coins, which were issued by Olaf Skötkonung and Anund-Jakob shortly after the turn of the first millennium. On these coins we can find the inscription REX ZITUNIE (king of/in Sigtuna).⁶¹ Nils Rasmusson assumed that a political program might stand behind the inscription REX UPSALIE which — in contrast to the period of political changes in the mid-thirteenth century — referred to a time when a stable kingship existed in Uppsala. He therefore ascribed the group of bracteates to Knut Långe. Knut had gained power through the Folkungar rebellion in 1229 and had driven Erik Eriksson into exile. Thus Rasmusson saw in the circumscription a critique of the 'weak' rule of Erik Eriksson but explicitly excluded a connection between the REX VPSALIE and St Erik.⁶² Erik Lönnroth, on the other hand, argued that St Erik — who was still very much a provincial saint at the beginning of the thirteenth century — had in fact ascended to the position of a *rex perpetuus* by the middle of the century. The rebelling magnates of Uppland were thus able to assemble under his name in their opposition to Erik Eriksson.⁶³ According to Lönnroth, the phrase REX VPSALIE stood as a symbol for the whole of Sweden and the king referred to could — as Bengt Thordeman added — 'hardly have been someone other than St Erik'.⁶⁴ The most far-reaching interpretation once again stems from Ralf Sjöberg. He connected the REX VPSALIE — bracteates with another coin that has been ascribed to Knut Långe and that (possibly) bears the inscription 'VICA' (Fig. 4).⁶⁵ In my opinion, this reading is challenge-

⁶⁰ Redelius, 'De uppländska folklanden och inskriften REX UPSALIE'.

⁶¹ Rasmusson, 'Rex Upsalie'; Thordeman, 'Rex Upsalie'.

⁶² Rasmusson, 'Rex Upsalie', p. 294: 'En hänsyftning på Erikskulten vid denna tid synes mig utesluten på grund av att hans namn ej nämnes'.

⁶³ Lönnroth, 'Kring Erikslegenden', pp. 278–79.

⁶⁴ Thordeman, *Nordens helgonkonungar*, p. 23: 'Denna myntets onämnde uppsalakonung kan knappast vara någon annan än Erik den helige'.

⁶⁵ Sjöberg, 'Rex Upsalie et vicarius — Erik den helige och hans ställföreträdere', p. 5.

able. He extended this (uncertain) inscription to 'VICarius' and thus, combining the two coin types, reached towards a parallel with the Norwegian coronation charter of Magnus Erlingsson discussed above, in which Magnus called himself the *vicarius* of St Olaf. Erik Lönnroth is certainly right when he writes that the cult of St Erik was in a very different position in the middle of the thirteenth century compared to what it had been some fifty years earlier. However, as will be shown in Chapter 5, the cult of the royal saint was far from being practised throughout the entire country by the middle of the century. Veneration of St Erik, or at least an awareness of the cult across the whole realm, would have been a necessity for Erik to assume the position of an eternal king who could unite all Swedes.

If the notion of St Erik as a *rex perpetuus* was already so widespread by the thirteenth century that the allusion on the REX VPSALIE — bracteates could be universally understood, it might be expected that this same motif would reappear in the legend of St Erik from the late thirteenth century.⁶⁶ This, however, is not the case. St Erik is described as a king who built churches, who amended the service of God, who issued and enforced laws and who fought bravely against the enemies of the faith and of his kingdom. On the journey through his kingdom that followed his royal election, he had been a mediator between enemies and had freed those who had been suppressed by the mighty. He had lived ascetically, had punished his flesh, and had finally made a crusade to Finland together with Bishop Henrik before he suffered martyrdom in Östra Aros at the hands of Magnus Henriksson.⁶⁷ Importantly, however, he does not appear as the eternal king of Sweden, either in the description of his life, or in his miracles. Because of these findings, it would appear — as has already been shown in the context of the research concerning St Erik's veneration as a holy royal ancestor — that conclusions linking the existing sources of the twelfth century and the notion of St Erik as a *rex perpetuus* should not be drawn.



Figure 4. Coin of Knut Långe, which (possibly) bears the inscription 'VICA', Stockholm, Kungliga Myntkabinettet, 1229–34. Photo courtesy of Kungliga Myntkabinettet.

⁶⁶ Schmid, 'Erik den heliges legend på latin, fornsvenska och modern svenska'.

⁶⁷ The connection between St Erik and St Henrik will be discussed in detail in chap. 5 below.

Evidence for a General Veneration of St Erik

There are three further sources that have been interpreted as providing evidence for the veneration of St Erik in different parts of Sweden as early as the twelfth century, namely a (lost) painting in the church of Hjelsmeryd, Småland, from the first half of the thirteenth century (Fig. 6), a silver brooch found at the island of Öland from the beginning of the thirteenth century (Fig. 5), and a papal letter from 1171, 1172, or 1180.

The bull from Pope Alexander III (r. 1159–81) is directed to ‘*K. illustri sweorum et gothorum regi*’ and to the bishops, Jarls, and all clerics in Götaland.⁶⁸ It deals among other things with the unauthorised veneration of a man in Götaland who met his death in a state of drunkenness and intoxication. It forbids this veneration on the grounds that the church could hardly permit the direction of prayers to a man who had died in a state of insobriety, since it is said by the apostles that drunkards should not be in possession of the Kingdom of Heaven. The addressed king, ‘K.’, is usually assumed to have been Knut Eriksson, who was king at the time. Several points in the short paragraph of the charter that deals with the prohibition of this saint’s cult are remarkable. One of them is the prohibition of an already established cult by the pope. The bull is a milestone on the way from canonizing persons as a privilege of the local churches to the monopolization of this act by the papacy as discussed above in Chapter 3. However, what is most interesting in our context is the fact that several researchers have identified the ‘drunken saint’ with St Erik.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ SDHK, 224; The letter is dated to 6 July but without year. The dating 1171/1172 is however suggested by accompanying sources. On the dating see Stade, ‘Påvebrevet till “konung K”’, pp. 154–57. The part in question reads: ‘Denique quiddam audiuius quod magno nobis fuit horrore quod quidam inter Vos sunt qui diabolica fraude decepti. **hominem quendam in potacione et ebrietate occisum quasi sanctum. more infidelium venerantur** cum vix eciam pro talibus in suis ebrietatibus interemptis orare permittat ecclesia. Dicit enim apostolus. quoniam ebriosi regnum dei non possidebunt vnde a potacionibus et ebrietatibus si regnum dei habere desideratis vos continere oportet et hominem illum de cetero colere in periculum animarum vestrarum nullatenus presumatis Cum eciam si signa et miracula per eum plurima fierent. non liceret uobis pro sancto absque auctoritate Romane ecclesie eum publice venerari.’

⁶⁹ In recent research: Lehtonen, ‘Finlands erövring och frälsningshistoria’, p. 9; Klaniczay, ‘Conclusion: North and East European Cults of Saints in Comparison with East-Central Europe’, p. 303; Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 25; in earlier research: Westman, *Den svenska kyrkans utveckling*, pp. 97–100; Carlsson, ‘Erikskultens uppkomst’, pp. 108–12; Stade, ‘Påvebrevet till “konung K”’; Tunberg, ‘Erik den helige, Sveriges helgonkonung’.

In the legend of St Erik it is stated that he suffered martyrdom shortly after having heard mass. This account has been interpreted to suggest that he partook not only in a mass but also in a meal held in celebration of the Ascension Day holiday, which included heavy drinking. It was during this celebration that he was surprised by his enemies.⁷⁰ It is further assumed by some scholars that the addressed king ‘K.’ is not to be identified with Knut Eriksson — he is assumed to be accepted as king only in Svealand — but with Kol, the son of Karl Sverkersson and leader of the Sverker party. The papal letter is considered to support the Sverker-dynasty against the Erik-dynasty. If we follow that line of argumentation, the papal letter proves the veneration of St Erik in Götaland within approximately ten years of his death. This chain of reasoning, however, is not unassailable.

The assumption of a rulership split between two kings of rival dynasties, with Götaland on one side and Svealand on the other, is contradicted by the charter itself, which is directed to ‘*K. illustri sweorum et gothorum regi*’. With regard to the question of the drinking party on Ascension Day, the argument rests on the assumption that the legend of St Erik is a trustworthy source. However, the legend was written in the late thirteenth century — more than a century after the papal letter in question — and it is only in the legend that we see for the first time the claim that St Erik had been killed on Ascension Day. Moreover, the dating of the death of St Erik is one of the contradictions within his legend. The date is given with *die illo festum ascensionis [...] xv. kalendas Junii* (i.e. 18 May) while Ascension Day was on 5 May in the year 1160. With regard to further arguments made by those scholars who assume that St Erik should be identified with the ‘drunken saint’, it is noteworthy that the further links in their chain of argumentation (that Kol was the recipient of the letter and the pope was a supporter of the Sverker-dynasty) lack supporting evidence.

Other suggestions have been made concerning the identity of the saint referred to in the papal letter. Harald Gille, king of Norway, and Sverker the Elder, the founder of the Sverker-dynasty, have both been named in this context, for example.⁷¹ If we had to confine ourselves to one particular saint, the most convincing suggestion would be the one made by Nils Ahnlund, who assumed that the saint in question was the Danish King Knut Magnusson,

⁷⁰ Tunberg, ‘Erik den helige, Sveriges helgonkonung’, pp. 273–74.

⁷¹ For **Harald Gille** see Beckman, ‘Till belysning af helgonkulten i Norden’, p. 231; For **Sverker the Elder** see Frödin, ‘Från det medeltida Alvastra’, p. 178; Grotenfelt, ‘Erik den helige och hans korståg till Finland’, p. 113.



Figure 5.
Silver brooch from Hallnäs, Persnäs parish,
Öland, Stockholm, Riksantikvarieämbetet's
photo collection no. 1524. Photo courtesy
of Riksantikvarieämbetet.

whose veneration could not be established in Denmark but who had been venerated as a saint in Götaland.⁷² This veneration in Götaland is suggested by entries in *Årsboken* and *Gråbrödraannalen* for the year 1156, where his death is recorded.⁷³ Such evidence for veneration in Götaland cannot be provided for St Erik.

The question of which saint Pope Alexander III had in mind when writing the letter should, however, be

addressed in a different way. If we want to understand the intention behind the paragraph about the 'drunken saint', we have to recall the general situation at the time when the letter was written.⁷⁴ Alexander aimed at enforcing papal supremacy over the worldly potentates and over the churches of the kingdoms of the Christian West. On the question of the relationship between the spiritual and the worldly power, he was in constant dispute with Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa) and King Henry II of England. Because of his attempts to centralize the church, the pope was one of the most active advocates of the monopolization of the process of canonization in the hands of the Roman Curia and this seems to be the driving motivation behind the prohibition of the cult of the 'drunken saint'. Alexander wanted to strengthen the power of the papacy in the North and, in particular, he wanted to strengthen the papal claim to be the only authority when it came to canonizations. The rumour of a man who had been slain while drunk and who was venerated by some locals probably served this purpose, providing an example through which the pope could

⁷² Ahnlund, 'Till frågan om den äldsta Erikskulten i Sverige', pp. 303–05.

⁷³ 'Årsboken', ed. by Fant, p. 23: 'MCLVI Obiit beatus Kanutus rex et martyr roskildensis'; 'Gråbrödraannalen', ed. by Fant, p. 61: 'MCLVI Obiit beatus Kanutus Rex et Martir Roskildensis'.

⁷⁴ Harrison, "'Quod magno nobis fuit horrii'"

demonstrate that unworthy saints would be venerated if the bishops *in partibus* were allowed to make decisions over the acceptance of a new cult. It may thus be doubted that even ‘King K.’ knew who the saint in question was and it is possible that this saint did not, in fact, exist at all.⁷⁵

One source that is assumed to show the decapitation of St Erik is a silver brooch from the island of Öland that has been dated to around the year 1200 (Fig. 5). The upper part of the brooch features a crowned head with a ring around its neck that is accompanied by two kneeling angels, one on each side. The middle spike of the crown forms a cross and the top of this cross is touched by two fingers of a hand that reaches down from heaven. Both angels point with one hand to the descending hand of God and with the other hand to the crowned head. On the lower part of the brooch, two more kneeling angels attempt to lift a headless body.

In the early 1920s, two researchers, working independently from each other, interpreted the picture as a depiction of the decapitation of St Erik, citing the account of his martyrdom from his legend.⁷⁶ They came to this conclusion by interpreting the ring around the neck of the crowned head as a gloriole. There are, however, rival interpretations. The image on the upper part of the brooch does not necessarily represent the sanctification of a king. The ring in the centre of the object could equally be interpreted as the limitation of the central part of the picture rather than a gloriole. If so, the image could depict the divine legitimation of the rulership of the king depicted on the brooch by the blessing hand of God. The king looks down at the headless body that is presented to the viewer by the two angels. If we take this headless body as the depiction of a decapitated criminal, the whole picture could be interpreted as a figural representation of the judicial force of the king, legitimated by God.⁷⁷ Another possibility could be to read the pictures from the lower to the upper part of the brooch. Then the pictures could be read as showing the elevation of a royal saint. The headless body below, to which the crowned head in the centre used to belong, is now elevated to heaven (at the top of the brooch).

However, we know too little about the brooch to be able to apply any of those interpretations with a sufficient degree of certainty. Too little is known about the

⁷⁵ Harrison, “‘Quod magno nobis fuit horrore’”, pp. 49–50; Jönsson, ‘St. Eric of Sweden’.

⁷⁶ Nordman, *Ett arkeologisk bidrag till Erikslegenden*; Lindblom, *Statens historiska museum*, p. 14.

⁷⁷ On the ‘rightful wrath’ of the ruler, its societal function, and divine legitimation see: Assmann, *Herrschaft und Heil*, pp. 80–85.

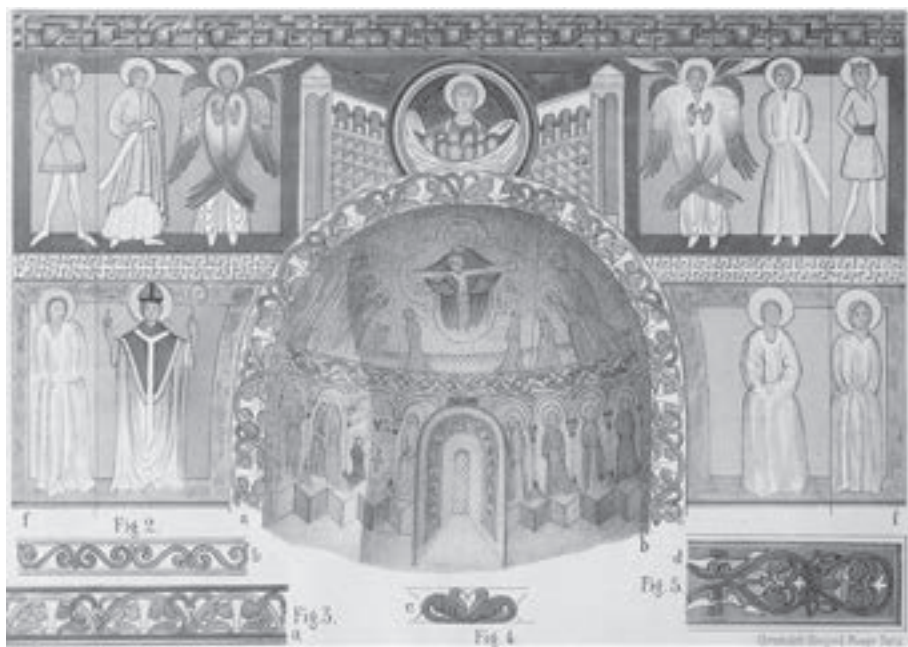


Figure 6. Wall painting in the church of Hjelsmeryd (now lost),
drawn by Nils M. Mandelgren (1868).

fabrication of the brooch, its place of origin, or indeed the art-historical context in which we must interpret the pictures. Even if we accept the interpretation that the brooch features a royal saint, it should be borne in mind that the island of Öland is situated less than fifty kilometres from the shore of Blekinge. In around 1200 this province was part of the Danish kingdom where St Knut of Denmark was venerated. The distance to Uppland, where the cult around St Erik was centred, measures around 350 kilometres. The character of Öland as an island suggests further the veneration of a saint known as a protector of sailors. As such, St Olaf would seem to be a more plausible subject than St Erik.

The last source to be discussed here which has in earlier research been connected with the early cult of St Erik is a wall painting in the church of Hjelsmeryd. It is only conserved as a drawing by Nils Månsson Mandelgren from the middle of the nineteenth century (Fig. 6).⁷⁸ As in the church of Eriksberg, the picture was drawn at the eastern wall of the church framing the apse and the sanctu-

⁷⁸ Mandelgren, *Samlingar till svenska konst- och odlings-historien*, II, PL 10.

ary.⁷⁹ It shows two lines of saints and angels. In the centre of the upper line God is shown on a throne, holding a number of souls in his lap. To each side, we see two praying angels and two apostles with banners from which the words had vanished when Mandelgren made his drawing. The two ends of the upper line of saints consist of two crowned saints, one of whom is holding an axe. The other one is devoid of attributes. Mandelgren identifies the two crowned saints as St Olaf and St Erik but adds question marks in both cases. Bengt Thordeman gives the additional information that in the same church, a relic of St Erik had been deposited and that the inscription on the label of the relic could be dated to the middle of the thirteenth century through its paleographical appearance.⁸⁰ In his eyes the existence of this relic makes it more probable that the paintings would also include a picture of St Erik. There are, however, several questionable points. For one thing, the dating on the label of the relic gives the time of its extraction from the shrine in Uppsala — in this case probably in the context of the relocation of the relics from Gamla Uppsala to Östra Aros in 1273 — but not the time of its deposition in the church of Hjelmseryd. It could have been deposited there any time between 1273 and the Reformation. We have no further information about its whereabouts. The dating and interpretation of the pictures by Mandelgren and Thordeman have also been questioned. Viola Hernjfall states that they originated from the beginning of the thirteenth century, ‘but since they have been changed and Gothicized it is most problematic to identify the original figures.’⁸¹ If an artist of the late thirteenth or subsequent centuries wanted to depict St Erik, there is no reason to assume that he would not have known the attributes of the saint and have thus just painted a crowned figure with a gloriole. Thus, we have to admit that we simply cannot tell conclusively which saint is depicted in the church of Hjelmseryd.

One final source that has been neglected up to now in research on St Erik should be mentioned in this context. It is the papal letter of 1256, in which St Erik is called a saint for the first time, and an indulgence is granted for visitors to his relics.⁸² The development of the process of canonization during the Middle Ages has been sketched in Chapter 3 above. As was seen in the above-

⁷⁹ On the decisiveness of this place in ecclesiastical art see: Nilsén, *Kyrkorummets brännpunkt*.

⁸⁰ Thordeman, ‘Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst’, pp. 183–84.

⁸¹ Hernjfall, *Medeltida kyrkmålningar i gamla Skara stift*, p. 36, n. 9: ‘Men eftersom den målats om och gotiserats är det ytterst vanskligt att söka identifiera de ursprungliga figurerna.’

⁸² SDHK, 740.

discussed papal letter of 1171/1172, the pope was already claiming control over the canonization of saints. However, this claim was incorporated into canon law only in 1234. The acceptance of Erik's sanctity by Pope Alexander IV in 1256 can thus be seen as firm — though indirect — evidence that the veneration of St Erik had already started before 1234 or even before 1171/1172. Any more recent attempt to introduce a saint would have violated the papal prerogative on canonization, which would have made it impossible for Alexander IV to accept the veneration of such a saint.

Uppland and St Erik in the Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries

After having rejected the sources discussed above as evidence for an early cult of St Erik, the question must be raised as to how one might otherwise re-imagine that cult. For this purpose, we need to consider the choice of Uppsala as the repository for St Erik's relics and as the site of the Swedish archbishopric in 1164. It is noteworthy that the establishment of the archbishopric in 1164 and the death of St Erik in (or around) 1160 took place in great chronological proximity, providing the new archbishopric with a local martyr. And it is furthermore interesting that this new martyr had the two characteristics that were most needed by the Uppsala clerics. For one thing, Erik was martyred in Östra Aros and his whole body rested in the cathedral of Uppsala: in other words, the *corpus integrum* of the saint was in the possession of the church of Uppsala. Therefore, he would have been predestined to help create an identity for the subjects of the archbishop as members of the bishopric. The other — and maybe even more important — characteristic was his social background. He was a martyr of royal origin, which accentuated the elevated status of the archbishopric over the other Swedish bishoprics. Such a demonstration of status was all the more necessary since the seat of Uppsala had been raised to an archdiocese only twelve years after Niðarós received its archbishop.

The papal legate Nicolas Breakspear, after establishing the archbishopric of Niðarós in 1153, had also travelled to Linköping where he met King Sverker the Elder. Whether they discussed the establishment of a Swedish archbishopric or not is uncertain. The subject would, however, have suggested itself and Saxo Grammaticus reports that the question was negotiated.⁸³ If Saxo's account is to be trusted, Uppsala could have been viewed as a sort of latecomer, since

⁸³ Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum = Danmarkshistorien*, ed. by Friis-Jensen, II, 14.11.1.

it was made an archbishopric only twelve years after Niðarós. Furthermore, it was placed — and remained so until the end of the Middle Ages — under the supremacy of the archbishop of Lund, which Niðarós was not. Saxo scoffs that in 1153, the Svear and Götar could neither agree upon the place for the archbishop's seat nor upon the person who should become archbishop. Because of this inability to find a compromise, they were refused the honour of getting their own archbishop, being described as 'barbaric peoples without a deeper understanding of the Christian teachings'.⁸⁴ It would thus have been of great importance to have a saint of (at least) the same prestige as St Olaf in Niðarós, in order to show the equal status of the Swedish archbishopric.

On the other hand, it is clear that St Erik never became the patron saint of the cathedral in Gamla Uppsala, but that he was only honoured with the patronage of the cathedral when it was moved to Östra Aros in 1273. The idea developed above, of St Erik as the patron saint of the archbishopric does, therefore, have alternatives. If the sources are read very critically, it must be admitted that the *Calendarium Vallentunense* from 1198 is the first source that connects the saint to the Mälaren region. The scratch marks on the relics of St Erik point to a veneration of the former Swedish king relatively shortly after his death, but there is no evidence pointing to the exact place of this veneration or even of his death.⁸⁵ Considering these objections, the idea of the above-assumed role of St Erik should still not be completely dismissed. However, this situation would explain the impression made by the sources, namely, that the intensity of the veneration of St Erik was by no means equivalent to the level of the veneration of St Olaf in Niðarós.

But why was the archbishopric established in Uppsala and not in Linköping, where Christianity was introduced much earlier and more profoundly, in a town that had already been established as an ecclesiastical centre, where the church had a broader economic basis, and where the protecting royal power was much stronger?⁸⁶ A definite answer to this question cannot be given. The

⁸⁴ Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum* = *Danmarkshistorien*, ed. by Friis-Jensen: 'Quod in Suetia quoque legationis potestate peragere cupiens Sueonibus et Gothis de urbe et persona tanto muneri idonea concordare nequeuntibus certamini decus negauit, rudemque adhuc religionis barbariem summo sacrorum honore dignitatus non est'.

⁸⁵ The scratch marks are supposed to have occurred when the body of St Erik was elevated from its original burial place and moved into a shrine before the flesh on the bones was completely decomposed and thus had to be scratched off. See, Ingelmark and Bygdén, 'Skelettdelarna i Erik den heliges relikskrin', p. 256.

⁸⁶ Nilsson, and others, *Sveriges Kyrkohistoria*, I, 96.

lack of sources forces us again to speculate. There are two points that could have spoken in favour of Uppsala. One argument for the choice of Uppsala could have been the existence of the newly martyred St Erik as a very fitting saint for the new archbishopric, as discussed above. The other argument could have been connected to the earlier status of Uppsala as a centre of the Old Norse religion.⁸⁷ To establish the Swedish archbishopric at this site would, on one hand, have symbolized the victory of Christianity over the Old Norse faith for contemporaries and it would, on the other hand, have enabled the pagan temple to be reinterpreted in a Christian manner.⁸⁸ This was, as we have seen, the Anglo-Saxon missionary tradition since the times of Pope Gregory I.

In my opinion, another observation might be helpful here: in all the neighbouring kingdoms, the seat of the archbishop was not founded in the core region of the royal power. In Norway the northernmost town of Niðarós was chosen, while royal power was strongest in southern and western Norway. In Denmark, the kings had their power centre on the Jutland Peninsula and the Danish islands, but the archbishopric was located in Lund in Skåne, which is situated on the Scandinavian Peninsula and is nowadays part of Sweden. The fact that *regnum* and *sacerdotium* were divided by this choice of the place for the seat of the archbishop is bemoaned in the Chronicle of Roskilde.⁸⁹ This habit of founding archiepiscopal seats in regions that are not the core areas of royal power could have been connected with church reforms from the time of Gregory VII onwards. The reformers worked under the maxim of the *libertas ecclesiae*, and the geographical separation from a dominating royal power may have been considered to be useful in order to avoid interference between the ecclesiastical and worldly potentates.

The three Scandinavian archbishoprics were not only located outside the core area of the royal power of their respective kingdom but also, in all three cases, towards parts of the realms where further missionary work was necessary. Seen from Denmark, the direction for missionaries to go was to the north-

⁸⁷ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 4.26–27; Sturlusson, *Heimskringla*, ed. by Kristjánsdóttir, II: *Ynglingatal*, 11, 18, 29, 38; Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum* = *Danmarkshistorien*, ed. by Friis-Jensen, I, 1.7, 3.2, 6.10, 7.10. See, however, Janson, *Templum nobilissimum* who rejects the assumption that Adam's description of the heathen temple at Uppsala has a counterpart in reality and who makes a convincing case as well.

⁸⁸ See Fröjmark, 'Från Erik pilgrim till Erik konung', pp. 415–16.

⁸⁹ 'Chronicon Roskildense', ed. by Gertz; Berengaard, *Muren om Israels hus*, pp. 51–72; Kluger, 'Die neue Ordnung im Norden', p. 295.

east. Between the Danish Skåne and Götaland — where the first Swedish bishopric had been erected in Skara in c. 1020 — the territory of Småland still required missionary work. Therefore, in this part of the kingdom, the archbishopric of Lund was erected in 1103. The same holds true for Norway. While Christianization was most advanced in southern and western Norway, up to the north there stretched the vast territories of the nomadic Sami peoples who practised a shamanistic religion which has survived up to modern times. For this reason, the Norwegian archbishopric was placed in Niðarós in 1153.⁹⁰

These arguments also apply in Sweden. Even if we follow Henrik Janson in his sceptical view concerning the actual existence of the famous heathen temple in Uppsala as it was described by Adam of Bremen, Uppland has to be considered as an area where Christianity was not as firmly rooted as in Götaland and so was the royal power. Considering this, it seems likely that one of the reasons why the Swedish archbishopric was founded in Uppsala instead of Linköping was to demonstrate the *libertas ecclesiae* to the royal dynasties of Sverker and Erik. The Swedish church chose not to establish its ‘headquarters’ in Götaland, which was the core region of the royal power of both dynasties. Furthermore, the possible directions of evangelization were north to the Sami peoples and east to the Finns, both of whom were still pagan to a large extent.

The first archbishop of Uppsala was Stefan, a Cistercian monk from Alvastra, who received his *pallium* and consecration in Sens, France, from Archbishop Eskil of Lund in the presence of Pope Alexander III. This probably took place on 3 August 1164, the feast day of St Stephen, the first martyr, who was the patron saint of the cathedral of Sens.⁹¹ It has been suggested by Sven Helander that Archbishop Stefan encouraged the foundation of the Cistercian monastery of Viby in order to use it as a Cistercian regular cathedral chapter.⁹² Helander’s argument is very reasonable and his suggestion is more plausible than that of the existence of an early Benedictine cathedral chapter in Uppsala, which would have made it the first and only monastery of the Benedictine

⁹⁰ The situation in Niðarós was, however, multifaceted. Although the town was situated far from the core of Norwegian royal power, some researchers have argued that the foundation was designed to strengthen royal power in northern Norway in the face of the rebellious Jarls of Lade, the most powerful magnates of the region. See Christophersen, ‘Power and Impotence’; Nordeide, ‘Activity in an Urban Community’; Callmer, ‘Urbanization in Scandinavia and the Baltic Region c. AD 700–1100’; Skovgaard-Petersen, ‘The Historical Context of the First Towns in Northern and Eastern Europe’.

⁹¹ SDHK, 202; Winroth, ‘Stephanus’.

⁹² Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 67–68.

Order in Sweden.⁹³ A cathedral chapter is mentioned in an undated charter of Archbishop Peter (r. 1187–97), in a charter of King Sverker Karlsson from the year 1200, and in an undated charter of Archbishop Olaf ‘Lambatunga’ (r. 1198–1206).⁹⁴ In each case, property or income was transferred to the canons. However, in 1224, Pope Honorius III complained in a papal bull about the non-existence of a cathedral chapter in Uppsala,⁹⁵ and not until in the 1240s did preparations to found the first prebends of the new cathedral chapter become visible. In a charter from November 1247, a Dean Björn of Uppsala (*‘Beroni Preposito Vpsalensi’*) is named for the first time.⁹⁶ It has also been suggested that Archbishop Stefan promoted the cult of St Erik after having travelled to Rome on behalf of the Danish King Valdemar I and having worked there for the canonization of Knut Lavard.⁹⁷ If this were the case, the question must be raised as to why the cult of St Erik started off as slowly as it did. One likely reason is the lack of support from his royal successors, as discussed above. A further reason might have been the hesitant propagation of the saint by Archbishop Stefan. As a Cistercian monk, Stefan may have considered it problematic to support a new saint in his archbishopric without the consent of the general chapter of his order. The veneration of St Erik nevertheless started at some time in the second half of the twelfth century, although it only experienced its first breakthrough from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, when the newly arrived mendicant orders had broken the almost absolute Cistercian dominance of Swedish monastic life.

Summary

From the character of the sources from around 1200, it can be assumed that the cult of St Erik was centred in and around Uppsala and that it was furthered by the archbishops and clerics of the cathedral established in 1164. The three sources from this time that give evidence of the existence of an early cult, the *Calendarium Vallentunense*, *Sverris Saga*, and *Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd*, all connect the cult of St Erik to this region. The fact that his descendants (Knut Eriksson and Erik Knutsson) did not mention his saintliness in their

⁹³ This has been suggested by Gallén, ‘De engelska munkarna i Uppsala’.

⁹⁴ SDHK, 264, 286, 275; Dahlbäck, ‘Uppsalakyrkans uppbyggnadsskede’, pp. 143–47.

⁹⁵ SDHK, 427: *Vpsalensi Ecclesia [...] predicta Ecclesia Capitulum non habente*.

⁹⁶ SDHK, 590; Dahlbäck, ‘Uppsalakyrkans uppbyggnadsskede’, pp. 149–53.

⁹⁷ Andersson, ‘Uppsala ärkestifts tillkomst’, pp. 402–03.

charters and that they were not buried in his proximity suggests that they did not contribute to the promotion of the cult of their ancestor. They most probably knew of the local cult surrounding St Erik, but since it was only known in such a restricted area, it was not reasonable to refer to such a saint in charters that were intended for recipients from other parts of Sweden who may have never heard of him. St Erik was, in other words, at this time a parochial saint without the potential to legitimize a claim to power over the kingdom of Sweden. His cult was therefore a concern of the bishopric of (Gamla) Uppsala as its diocesan saint. His former status as a king founded the equal status of Uppsala in relation to Niðarós and its saint St Olaf. Nonetheless, the regional limitation of St Erik's cult did start to change slowly in the second half of the thirteenth century, when he became the patron saint of the new cathedral in Uppsala and the essential liturgical texts for his feast day were written. We shall discuss this phase of the cult of St Erik in the following chapter.

THE FIRST WAVE OF CULT INTENSIFICATION (c. 1250–1319)

Historical Background

When Erik Eriksson ascended to the throne in 1222, his dynasty — that of St Erik — had outlasted that of Sverker the Elder, with which it had been in conflict since the middle of the twelfth century. Both dynasties had alternately seized the Swedish crown and neither of them had been able to establish a stable line of succession to the throne. The main reason for this lack of continuity was surely genealogical accident: rarely did a monarch of either dynasty die leaving behind an adult son, meaning that those who elected kings tended to look to the dynasty that could provide an adult successor to the throne.¹ A secondary effect of this situation was naturally that the power of local magnates was relatively great compared to that of the ruling royal dynasties, whose hold on power was only ever temporary. Only in 1222, when the Sverker-dynasty had died out in the male line and only one royal house was left, did the concept of a minority kingship become acceptable. Compared to the developments in Denmark and Norway, these genealogically influenced circumstances caused a certain delay in the establishment of a strong kingship that could govern both the lands of the Svear and the Götär with the same robustness. In addition to

¹ Since the dates of birth are rarely extant, there is no absolute certainty about the age of a king's son at the time of the death of his father. This is particularly true for the early kings of both dynasties. However, the further forwards we go in time, the better informed we are of likely dates of birth of members of the royal families. From Knut Eriksson's time onwards, we can be quite sure that any (remaining) sons of the dead king were not yet of age.

the two competing royal dynasties, a third aristocratic house also began to gain influence after the reign of Knut Eriksson: the house of Bjälbo.

One representative of this house was Birger Brosa, who was called 'Svear's and Götar's Jarl' and who seems to have been very close to King Knut Eriksson: certainly, he witnessed all known donation charters of Knut.² He is also named in the trade treaty that was agreed upon between Knut Eriksson and Duke Henry the Lion of Saxony.³ The position of the Swedish Jarl seems to have become hereditary in Birger's family, since — with one possible exception, that of Jarl Jón — all further jarls of Sweden were from the house of Bjälbo.⁴ The outstanding position of this house among the other families of the Swedish aristocracy is further highlighted by frequent marriages between its male and female members and the royal houses of Scandinavia (see the genealogy of Bjälbo in Appendix 6). During the time of the reign of Erik Eriksson (r. 1222–29 and 1234–50), the kingdom seems to have been governed by the jarls Ulf Fasi and Birger Magnusson rather than by the king himself. Consequently, Birger Magnusson (Birger Jarl) succeeded in installing his son Valdemar on the throne in 1250, after Erik Eriksson had died without an heir. Valdemar could also claim a genealogical connection to the dynasty of Erik Eriksson, since his mother was the sister of that king. Thus, a new royal dynasty was established that was to rule Sweden without dispute until 1364. The establishment of this new dynasty, however, did not go unchallenged. Birger Jarl had to fight armies of the Folkungar in two battles (1247 and 1251). The 'Folkungar' represented an aristocratic party with its power base in Svealand, and it probably tried to install Holmger Knutsson on the throne. His father, Knut Långe, had driven King Erik Eriksson into exile in 1229 and had ruled until his death in 1234. Birger Jarl is accused by the *Erikskrönika* (whose author in other instances appears to appreciate the Jarl) of having won the Battle of Herrevadsbro against the Folkungar in 1251 by treachery alone.⁵ After the battle, he killed as many of the Folkungar as he could and confiscated their goods, thereby depriving the whole party of the material means to continue its resistance against the rule of his family.

² If not indicated otherwise, this summary of the political history is based on the detailed entries concerning the respective rulers in SBL, LexMa and Lagerqvist, *Sveriges regenter*.

³ SDHK, 268: 'Byrgo sweorum & guttorum dux'.

⁴ Gillingstam, 'Folkungaätten', p. 261; On the early Swedish Jarls, see: Lindkvist, 'Jarlär före Birger Jarl'.

⁵ *Erikskrönikan enligt cod. Holm*, ed. by Pipping, p. 15.

The merits of Birger Jarl with regard to his reformation of the Swedish kingdom are undisputed and have often been told.⁶ Therefore, a short summary of his *res gestae* may suffice. The main aim of his reforms seems to have been to strengthen the power of the kingship — in other words, the position of his family — in relation to the self-administration of the regions (*landskap*) and in relation to the other aristocratic families. He shared this aim to centralize power with the church and thus sided with the ecclesiastical authorities. Birger was probably present at the provincial synod in Skänninge in 1248 together with the legate of Pope Innocent IV, William of Sabina, Archbishop Jarler of Uppsala, all other bishops in Sweden (except for the momentarily vacant chair of Åbo/Turku), and several magnates of the kingdom, although notably, King Erik Eriksson was absent.⁷ The synod ended with William issuing a charter in which the enforcement of celibacy was demanded and the establishment of secular cathedral chapters, which were to have the right to elect their bishop without intervention by secular powers, was decreed. Birger's agreement with this confinement of royal power was probably rewarded by ecclesiastical support for his reforms. Another of Birger's deeds that the church certainly appreciated was his crusade to Finland in 1239.⁸

Birger established good relations with the other two Scandinavian kingdoms by marrying his daughter Rikissa to the Norwegian king Håkan Håkansson the Younger in 1251, and his son, King Valdemar, to Sophie, the daughter of the Danish King Erik Plovpenning, in 1260. In addition, Mechthild, the widow of the Danish king Abel, became his own (second) wife in 1261. An expression of his good reputation in Denmark can be seen in his position of mediator in the conflict between the Danish King Christopher I and Archbishop Jacob Erlandsen of Lund. Among the actions that he took to strengthen royal authority in Sweden were the further development of a system of royal castles as military and administrative bases,⁹ the monetarization of taxes (which had largely been paid in kind

⁶ Engström, 'Birger Magnusson'; Strauch, 'Birger Jarl. Kirche, Königtum und Kaufleute im mittelalterlichen Schweden'; Schück, 'Birger Jarl'. The present summary of Birger Jarl's accomplishments is based on this literature.

⁷ On this very important synod for Swedish history see Nilsson, 'The Provincial Council of Skänninge'; Nilsson, 'Att bli en del av Europagemenskapen'; Inger, 'Skänninge möte ur kyrkorättslig synvinkel'; Ljungfors, 'Mötet i Skänninge 1248'; Nilsson, and others, *Missionstid och tidig medeltid*, pp. 17–24.

⁸ The *Erikskrönika* dates the crusade to 1249 but Gallén, 'Kring Birger Jarl och andra korstågen till Finland' has convincingly shown that 1238/39 is more likely.

⁹ If it was indeed Birger Jarl who started the building of the oft-mentioned castles is convincingly doubted by Fritz, 'Spår av en framväxande riksadministration', pp. 19–22.

up to this point),¹⁰ the first attempts to establish a law that had validity in the whole kingdom and was based on the will of the king,¹¹ and the creation of several trade contracts with the North German towns of Lübeck and Hamburg.¹²

The question as to whether Birger Jarl's time was a time of great changes for the converging Swedish kingdom was discussed at a symposium in Stockholm in the year 2001 and all the contributors to the resulting essay collection answered the question more or less in the affirmative.¹³ The same view is taken in the present study. At the same time, it is important to point out that in a number of his reforms Birger continued earlier attempts to modernize the Swedish monarchy and society. In particular, several aspects of the rule of Knut Eriksson should be cited here: the first appearance of a royal chancellor, a trade treaty with a North German potentate, the establishment of administrative and defence bases in a number of places, both in Götaland and Svealand, and the resumption of coinage are measures taken by Knut Eriksson that were revived and continued by Birger Jarl.

There is no doubt about the importance of Birger Jarl for his time and for Swedish history in general, but it is also evident that he profited from a general trend of modernization that had been delayed during the reigns of Johan Sverkersson and Erik Eriksson and that could now break through. The election of King Valdemar in the year 1250 did not mean that he received the actual power at this time. Birger Jarl was never king, but he seems to have been ruling the kingdom rather than the king during the last years of the reign of Erik Eriksson and he remained in that position under the *pro forma* rule of his son until his own death in 1266. He continued to act autonomously as representative of the Swedish monarchy, both within and outside of Sweden.¹⁴ After the death of his father, the rule of Valdemar was mainly characterized by conflict between him and his brothers, Magnus and Erik, which led to Valdemar's defeat in the year 1275 and to the succession of Magnus 'Ladulås' Birgersson to the Swedish throne.

During his reign Magnus deepened and consolidated the reforms of his father in the same way that Birger Jarl had built on earlier modernization ideas.

¹⁰ Bjarne Larsson, 'Kunglig auktoritet i det medeltida Sverige före 1280', p. 172.

¹¹ Schück, 'Birger Jarl: mannen och verket', p. 11; Strauch, 'Birger Jarl', pp. 153–58.

¹² SDHK, 629, 738, 799.

¹³ Annerbäck, *Birger Jarls tid — en brytningstid?*.

¹⁴ This traditional view has, however, been questioned by Jonsson, 'Utvecklingen av ekonomin som den speglas i myntningen', pp. 66–71.

He continued the building of royal castles and facilitated the administrative centralization of the kingdom. Magnus also furthered the development of Swedish trade towns and encouraged them to organize themselves after the continental paradigm, with a town council and a distinct district in which the town's laws were to be applied. He is, however, most renowned for having furthered the development of Swedish law by issuing two collections of royal ordinances, and for his good relations with the church, of which the privilege of Söderköping from 1281 is the clearest expression. In this privilege ecclesiastical institutions were freed from all present taxes as well as from all possible future charges, and bishops were allowed to collect and keep the penances of those who worked on church soil and had been condemned by a court of law.¹⁵ In a similar way, the societal position of the aristocracy had already been defined in the Ordinance of Alsnö (Alsnö stadga) in 1280.¹⁶ In his later years Magnus appears to have been worried about the salvation of his soul. Probably because of these concerns, he donated a number of goods to several Franciscan institutions within and outside of Sweden and he stood 'behind the foundation of at least four, perhaps five, friaries as well as the convent of the Poor Clares in Stockholm'.¹⁷ Furthermore, he was probably the first king to be buried in the Poor Clares' church in Stockholm, which is nowadays called *Riddarholmskyrkan* and has served as burial site for many Swedish kings and queens from the subsequent centuries.

The reign of Magnus' son Birger was overshadowed by the dispute between him and his brothers, the dukes Erik and Valdemar. When Magnus Ladulås died, his son Birger was only ten years old and Sweden was once again — as in the minority-years of Erik Eriksson — ruled by a council. This council was dominated by Marshal Torgils Knutsson. Birger's independent rule probably started in 1302, after his coronation, but the marshal retained great influence. Birger's conflict with his brothers became acute after he and Marshal Torgils forced them into accepting a humiliating agreement in 1304. A first climax of the conflict was reached in 1306 when the two dukes overwhelmed the king and imprisoned him in Nyköping. He was released in 1308 and moved to Denmark after having yielded a great deal of his power to the dukes. The central figure in Sweden now became Duke Erik, and for some years the open conflict appeared to have come to an end. However, the underlying problem still existed, and when Birger invited his brothers to Nyköping in 1317 they were overwhelmed by his followers and died in 1318 in imprisonment. The allies of

¹⁵ SDHK, 1181.

¹⁶ SDHK, 1122.

¹⁷ Nybo Rasmussen, 'The Franciscans in the Nordic Countries', pp. 9–10.

the dukes reacted very strongly, driving Birger firstly to the island of Gotland, and then in 1320 into exile to Denmark, where he died the following year. By this point the three-year-old son of Duke Erik, Magnus Eriksson, had already been crowned king of Sweden in 1319. At the same time he also became king of Norway since through his mother Ingeborg, the daughter of the Norwegian King Håkan V Magnusson, he inherited the right to the Norwegian throne.

The Dynasty of Bjälbo and St Erik

As we begin to explore and examine the cult of St Erik and its supporters, some pieces of information concerning the connection between him and certain members of the new royal house should be highlighted. The first is a notice, included in the *Erikskrönika*, indicating that Birger Jarl was buried in Varnhem, like all the kings of the house of St Erik, with the exception of Erik himself.¹⁸ Birger Jarl's children had a cognatic association with the Erik-dynasty since Birger was married to the sister of Erik Eriksson, Ingeborg. He intended to strengthen the Bjälbo clan's claim to the Swedish throne by connecting his own dynasty to that of St Erik. Birger Jarl was, however, also related to the house of Sverker, as his mother, Ingid Ylva, was the granddaughter of Sverker the Elder. Thus he could equally have based his hereditary claim on his association with the other royal house of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. A possible answer to the question as to why he did not do this, instead selecting the house of St Erik, is given by a charter issued by Birger's son Valdemar.¹⁹

In this charter from 1270, King Valdemar calls St Erik *beati Eriki regis et martiris progenitoris nostri*, emphasizing an attribution that the 'real' members of the house of St Erik had always avoided.²⁰ Valdemar, however, tried to strengthen his weak hereditary claim by this referral to his saintly royal ancestor. It is further noteworthy in this context that the name 'Erik' began to be given to sons born into the house of Bjälbo from this point (i.e., the middle of the thirteenth century) onwards.²¹ The third son of Birger Jarl, who was born in

¹⁸ 'Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd', ed. by Wiktorsson, p. 199.

¹⁹ Through Birger Jarl's great grandmother, the Danish princess Ingegerd, the dynasty of Bjälbo was also related to another royal saint, her father Knut IV (St Knut konung). In contrast to St Erik there is no evidence of Knut's political utilization by members of the Bjälbo dynasty.

²⁰ SDHK, 901. On the members of St Erik's house see chap. 4 above.

²¹ Sands, 'The Cult of St Erik, King and Martyr in Medieval Sweden', p. 210. See also the genealogical table 'Genealogy of the House of Bjälbo' in Appendix 6. On the importance of the right name of a royal heir in medieval Scandinavia, see Uspenkij, *Name und Macht*, passim.

1250, was named Erik, as were the only son of King Valdemar and two sons of King Magnus Ladulås (Erik c. 1275–77 and Erik ('Duke Erik') c. 1282–1318). This attempt to found a dynasty on a saintly ancestor has to be seen in the context of the whole modernization movement during the reigns of Birger Jarl and his sons, when Swedish society had in many respects caught up with the other Nordic and European countries. The kingdoms that are most likely to have provided an example in the utilization of a royal saint for political ends are Norway, Denmark, and France.

The Norwegian St Olaf was viewed as a holy ancestor by the royal dynasty up to the middle of the twelfth century. However, his veneration had developed further and had reached the status of the rather abstract *rex perpetuus* by the second half of the twelfth century.²² Therefore, the dynasty of Sverre, which ruled Norway from 1177 to 1319, had no reason to attempt to trace its ancestry back to him. The cult around holy royal ancestors, however, reached a new height around the middle of the thirteenth century in Denmark. The Danish King Erik IV ('Plovpenning', r. 1241–50) had been murdered — probably on the orders of his brother Abel (r. 1250–52) — in 1250.²³ His second brother, King Christopher I (r. 1252–59), tried to establish Erik Plovpenning as a saintly royal ancestor for his line of the royal house in an attempt to exclude the sons of Abel from the succession. Erik Plovpenning had no male offspring that could claim the throne and he was thus a suitable candidate for legitimizing the claims of the sons of Christopher. The attempt to promote the saint followed the pattern that had already been established by the promotion of the cults of St Knut Konung and St Knut Lavard. In the case of St Knut Konung, his brothers Erik Ejegod (r. 1095–1103) and Niels (r. 1104–34) promoted the cult in order to strengthen the position of the king. The cult of St Knut Lavard was furthered by his brother Erik Emune (r. 1134–37) with the intention of making him the holy royal ancestor of his line of the royal house of Denmark.²⁴ Tore Nyberg has suggested that the Norwegian and Danish examples created 'a favourable climate for the veneration of a royal saint' in Sweden.²⁵ In addition, it should not be forgotten that in central Europe the cults of royal saints

²² For a detailed discussion of these developments, see chap. 3 above.

²³ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, p. 181.

²⁴ Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 101–74.

²⁵ Nyberg, 'St. Olaf als der Erste einer Dreiergruppe von Heiligen', p. 70.

had reached their zeniths in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The veneration of Louis IX of France, who had died in 1270 and had been canonized in 1297, may in particular have influenced the growing cult of St Erik. Young men from Scandinavia are known to have studied in Bologna in 1219, where the Swede Simon and the Dane Niels entered the Dominican Order.²⁶ Paris must have been an even more important destination for clerics wishing to study theology, since two Dominican schools, the *Écoles Saint-Thomas*, were situated there, in addition to the university.²⁷ It should also be noted that the movement to canonize St Louis and the growth of the cult of St Erik both took place in the 1270s with Dominican participation. It is therefore very possible that they influenced each other.

A further piece of evidence shows that the Bjälbo kings tried to establish a genealogical connection to St Erik. In the prologue of the *Upplandslag*, the regional law of Uppland, codified in 1296, King Birger Magnusson states: 'In this law we will follow our forefathers, St Erik, Birger Jarl, and King Magnus'.²⁸ He thus followed the example of his uncle Valdemar in explicitly claiming St Erik as his direct ancestor. It is also interesting that St Erik appears as ancient law-giver in this passage of the *Upplandslag*, thereby performing another function that was common for holy kings. *Ärvdabalken III*, the section on how property should be bequeathed from one generation to the next, states that a woman should be married according 'to all the law which is Upplandian and which the holy King Erik has given'.²⁹

It should, finally, be mentioned that it was Duke Erik Magnusson who initiated the opening of the shrine of St Erik by Archbishop Nils Kertilsson in 1303 and he was also among those who received relics of the saint.³⁰ We thus have

²⁶ 'De ordine praedicatorum de Tolosa in Dacia', ed. by Gertz, 1.3. For more general detail on journeys by Scandinavians in Europe, see Waßenhoven, *Skandinavien unterwegs in Europa (1000–1250)*.

²⁷ Hinnebusch, *Kleine Geschichte des Dominikanerordens*, p. 52.

²⁸ *Upplandslagen enligt Cod. Holm. B 199 och 1607 års utgåva*, ed. by Henning, p. 6: 'Ok wilium wir fylghia. J. laghum Pæmmæ warum forfæþrum erikinum hælghæ, byrghiri iarli ok magnusi kunungi'.

²⁹ *Upplandslagen enligt Cod. Holm. B 199 och 1607 års utgåva*, ed. by Henning, p. 82: 'til allæn Pæn ræt ær uplænzki lagh æru. ok hin hælghi erikær kunungær gaff'. On St Erik as lawgiver, see Strauch, *Mittelalterliches nordisches Recht bis 1500*, pp. 454–56; Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten', pp. 133–65; Liedgren, 'Erik konungs lag'; Ambrosiani, 'Uplandslagens Ärfda B. III'.

³⁰ SDHK, 2021.

comparatively rich evidence that Birger Jarl, King Valdemar Birgersson, King Birger Magnusson, and Duke Erik Magnusson tried to associate their house with St Erik. The idea of using the legitimizing potential of a holy royal ancestor had already existed in Denmark and Norway for a long time and it appears to have finally reached Sweden around the middle of the thirteenth century, where it was adopted by Birger Jarl and his successors.

A New Cathedral in Östra Aros

When the archbishopric of Uppsala was established in the year 1164, an appropriate church was built there. In a letter from Pope Innocent IV to the inhabitants of Uppsala from the year 1245, the destruction of the cathedral church by fire is mentioned and the people are admonished to assist the archbishop in its rebuilding.³¹ There is no mention of the exact date when the church burned down. It is therefore possible that a letter of Pope Innocent III from the year 1204 in fact refers to the same fire in which the archbishop of Uppsala is said to have lost his pallium.³² What becomes clear, however, is the intention to rebuild the old cathedral. Plans to relocate the archbishop's seat to Sigtuna, where it had been situated before it moved to Uppsala, are mentioned during the second decade of the thirteenth century.³³ However, these plans were dismissed in the 1250s and Östra Aros, the place of St Erik's death, was chosen as the new desired destination for the archbishop's seat.³⁴ In this context, Erik was called *beatus* in a papal bull for the first time in 1256. In the same bull, an indulgence was granted to those visiting his relics.³⁵ This indulgence was renewed in 1266.³⁶ At this time, definite plans for the removal of the cathedral church appear to have been made. The transition of the seat and of St Erik's relics from Gamla Uppsala to Östra Aros — a distance of about six kilometres — is usually assumed to have been performed sometime in the year 1273. It must have taken place after King Valdemar Birgersson's charter from 1270, in which he and the

³¹ SDHK, 556.

³² SDHK, 40,785; this is assumed by Dahlbäck, 'Domkyrkan i Gamla Uppsala', p. 23.

³³ SDHK, 339.

³⁴ Ferm, 'Från Östra Aros till Uppsala', pp. 45–46; Nilsson, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 1, 29–33.

³⁵ SDHK, 740: 'Cum igitur sicut asseritis ad sepulchrum beati Henrici [!] Regis cuius corpus in uestra requiescit ecclesia deuote concurrat populi multitudo'.

³⁶ SDHK, 866: 'ecclesia [...] in qua corpus beati Erii martiris [...] requiescit'.

magnates of the kingdom gave their approval to move the cathedral.³⁷ Another charter from 28 July 1273, in which Valdemar states that he has donated several items to the new cathedral on the occasion of the *translatio* of St Erik's relics, marks the *terminus ante quem*.³⁸ The *Calendarium Upsalense* from 1344 mentions that the seat of the archbishop was transferred from Gamla Uppsala to Östra Aros on 4 July 1273.³⁹ In a papal letter from 1268, St Erik is mentioned as one of the patron saints of the new cathedral for the first time.⁴⁰ The reason given for the relocation of the archbishop's seat was that Gamla Uppsala's situation was disadvantageous and that the church was in a bad condition.⁴¹ It was also decided that the seat should keep its name, Uppsala. Thus the town of Östra Aros changed its name to Uppsala and the locality that was formerly known as Uppsala was now referred to as Gamla Uppsala (*antique vpsalie*).⁴²

The relocation of the archbishop's seat is interesting in our context, because it deepened the connection between the archbishopric and St Erik. As related above, St Erik's relics had been enshrined in Gamla Uppsala from the 1220s at the latest and *Äldre Västgötalagens kungälängd* recounts miracles there. After 1273, the cathedral church was situated at the exact site of St Erik's death and by then his relics had been returned to the same place. Such a connection to a local

³⁷ SDHK, 901.

³⁸ SDHK, 932. There has been a lively debate on the subject in earlier research. Since the question of when exactly the *translatio* was performed is only of peripheral importance for the cult of St Erik and the objective of the present study, there is no need to enter this discussion. The central statements have been made by Janse, *Upsala ärkesätets flyttning*; Kjellberg, 'Flyttningen av ärkebiskopssätet och Erik den heliges relikier'; Carlsson, *Translacio archiepiscoporum*; Ahnlund, 'S:t Eriks translation och legend'; Söderlind, 'Erik den heliges skrinläggning och Uppsala ärkessätets flyttning'; Cross, 'St Eric of Sweden', p. 295. The state of research on the question has been summarized most recently by Lovén, 'Domkyrkans medeltida byggnadshistoria', pp. 274–77.

³⁹ 'Calendarium för Upsala Ärke-Stift, från år 1344' p. xvii: 'Translacio archiepiscoporum de antique vpsalia ad vpsalium Anno d:ni M^oCC^o.LXX^otercio'.

⁴⁰ SDHK, 882: '[ecclesia] que in honore beatorum laurentii & henrici martirum dicitur esse constructa'.

⁴¹ SDHK, 901: 'Considerantes igitur dictam ecclesiam propter situs sui inportunitatem stare quasi solitariam & desolatam. ac propter fabricam vetusti operis & incendii ruine'.

⁴² In the legend, the names of Östra Aros and Uppsala are still in use. In the diplomatic material the term *antique vpsalie* appears for the first time in a charter from 1305, SDHK, 2088. According to Pernler, 'Hög- och senmedeltid', p. 32, the parish with that name existed already in 1302.

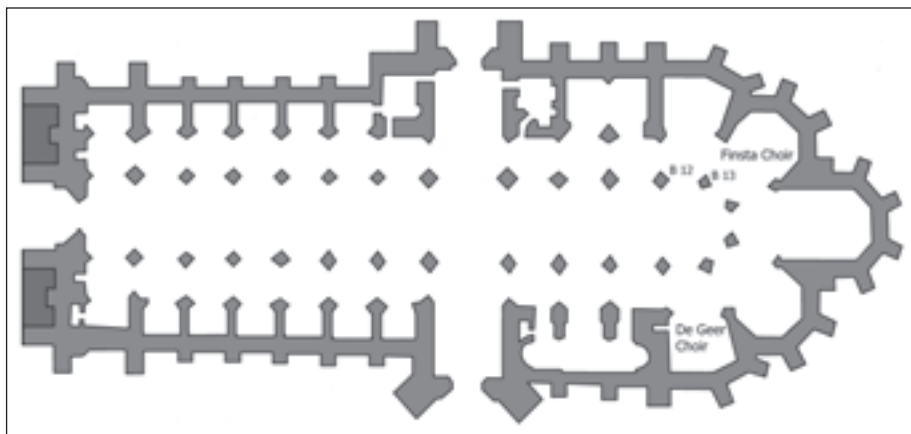


Figure 7. Ground plan of the cathedral of Uppsala, drawn by the author.

saint was very common for the Swedish bishoprics at that time.⁴³ According to two statements from the seventeenth century, the (now-lost) tomb of St Erik was situated in the choir proper (*högkoret*) of the new cathedral between piers B 12 and B 13 (Fig. 7). However, whether this was the actual medieval position of the tomb cannot be stated with certainty.⁴⁴ The shrine, which was gold-plated in the early fifteenth century, is not preserved,⁴⁵ but it must have been very precious, since it was melted down in 1573 by King Johan III. The calculated gold weight was 1.2 kg.⁴⁶ The present shrine, which has been situated in the Finsta choir since 1976, was produced in the 1580s on the order of the same king.⁴⁷

I have argued above that St Erik was chosen as the patron saint of the archbishopric of Uppsala in order to show that it had the same prestige as the archbishopric of Niðarós (Trondheim) with its patron saint St Olaf. The arch-

⁴³ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, p. 9: 'Den svenska kyrkoprovinsens sju stift fick med tiden vart och ett sitt eget stiftshelgon: Erik i Uppsala, Birgitta i Linköping, Elin i Skara, David i Västerås, Botvid och Eskil i Strängnäs, Sigfrid i Växjö och Henrik i Åbo' (The seven bishoprics of the Swedish church province received in due time each its own saint: Erik in Uppsala, Birgitta in Linköping, Elin in Skara, David in Västerås, Botvid and Eskil in Strängnäs, Sigfrid in Växjö, and Henrik in Åbo). The connection has been discussed recently by Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*.

⁴⁴ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks grav', pp. 238–39.

⁴⁵ The receipt of the goldsmith is preserved: SDHK, 18,398.

⁴⁶ Bengtsson, 'St:Eriks skrin', p. 138; Bygdén, 'St:Eriks skrin genom tiderna', pp. 333–34, 357.

⁴⁷ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks grav', p. 245.

bishop and cathedral chapter of Uppsala now took the opportunity to move the cathedral to the place where St Erik was said to have been slain and to officially dedicate the new cathedral to St Erik. He did not, however, hold this position alone; he shared it with St Lars, who had been the patron saint of the cathedral in Gamla Uppsala. It appears that in the early years of building the new cathedral in Uppsala, St Olaf was intended to be the third patron saint of the church.⁴⁸ Statues of the three saints were erected at the three church portals and all three saints are named together in the synodal statutes of 1297. A fact that would also point in that direction is that St Erik shared his choir inside the cathedral with St Olaf.⁴⁹ In later documents, however, St Olaf is no longer mentioned as a potential patron saint of the cathedral.

The Upplandian Aristocracy and the Cult of St Erik

Having traced the strengthening royal power of the Swedish kings and the reorganization of the clergy, it is now interesting to consider further changes in thirteenth-century Swedish society that enabled the intensification of the cult of St Erik. Olle Ferm names a number of particularly important changes extending throughout the whole of medieval Swedish society, including — in addition to those already discussed — a growth in economic production alongside the intensification of royal taxation, and the introduction of new ideas and ways of thinking coming from the European mainland.⁵⁰ He concludes by describing the emergence of new societal groups: clerks, burghers, and knights and squires. The latter of these groups was officially created by a privilege of Magnus Ladulås in 1280, the so-called *Alsnö stadga*, in which elite warriors were exempt from taxes in the same way that clergymen were.⁵¹ A number of members of this new aristocratic group, particularly those living in Uppland, engaged in the veneration of St Erik.

For a better understanding of those developments in the late thirteenth century and how they concerned St Erik, it is necessary to analyze the personal connections between some (mostly interrelated) aristocratic families, the cathedral in Uppsala, and the Dominican convent in Sigtuna in greater detail.

⁴⁸ This is assumed by Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 127, 141–44.

⁴⁹ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnhav*, pp. 128–31.

⁵⁰ Ferm, 'Transformations sociales et émergence de nouvelles élites dans le royaume de Suède'.

⁵¹ SDHK, 1122; Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia*, pp. 63–67.

Figure 8.

Seal of Ingeborg Bengtsdotter showing St Erik standing and Ingeborg kneeling before him. Circumscription: 'S[igillum] INGIBVRGIS FILIA BENEDICTI S[anct]US ERIC[us]', 1302. Photo courtesy of the Riksarkivet.

Members and relatives of the two houses of Ängel and Finsta played a leading role in the archbishopric and in the promotion of the cult of St Erik in the last decades of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century.

The relocation of the archbishop's seat was accomplished by Folke Johansson Ängel, who was archdeacon of the cathedral chapter at that time and became archbishop in 1274. The next archbishop, Jakob Israelsson (bishop 1278–81) was a brother-in-law of his predecessor Folke Johansson.⁵² Bengt Johansson, one of the brothers of Archbishop Folke, was a canon at the cathedral chapter and advanced to the position of archdeacon in 1275. He followed his brother Folke in this position after the latter was elected archbishop in 1274. Three nephews of Archbishop Jakob, two of them the sons of his brother Erland, were also active at the cathedral of Uppsala: Karl Erlandsson was a canon in the cathedral chapter and, in the early 1290s, unsuccessfully contested the election of Nils Allesson as archbishop of Uppsala by the cathedral chapter.⁵³ Karl's brother, Johan Erlandsson, was a knight and therefore played no role in the cathedral chapter itself. He was, nevertheless, an active



⁵² On the genealogic connections between the aristocrats named in this chapter and their respective links to the cult of St Erik, see the table of the interconnected aristocratic families in Appendix 6. The table has been compiled using the information given on the respective families by Koit, 'Änd'; Axelsson, 'Brunkow'; Gallén, 'Finstaätten'; Gallén and Liljeholm, 'Fänöätten'; Gillingstam, 'Rörik Birgerssons ätt'; Schück, 'Ängel-Ätten'.

⁵³ Schück, 'Ängel-Ätten', p. 133.

venerator of St Erik. He showed his devotion by donating property in Risinge to the chapel of St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala where he wanted to be buried.⁵⁴ His devotion was conspicuously shared by his wife, Ingeborg Bengtsdotter (whose mother was a sister-in-law of Archbishop Folke). In her seal, Ingeborg is depicted kneeling in front of St Erik (Fig. 8).⁵⁵ Anders Andersson And, nephew to Archbishop Jakob through his mother, is named as member of the Uppsala Cathedral chapter for the first time in 1276. He took part in the election of Archbishop Johan and was the leader of the archbishopric between Johan's death in 1291 and the election of the next archbishop, Nils Alleson, in 1295. He was dean of the cathedral chapter 1278–99 and 1302–17. His influence also extended into the worldly sphere. He is named as a member of the king's council in 1288 and took part in the compilation of the *Upplandslag* in the early 1290s. His devotion towards St Erik is shown by a donation that he made to the building of the chapel of the saint in Uppsala Cathedral.⁵⁶

For the purposes of the present work, the most interesting nephew of Archbishop Jakob was Israel Erlandsson, the oldest son of Erland Israelsson.⁵⁷ He succeeded his uncle Bengt in the Uppsala canonry in 1275. It was Archbishop Folke who directed Israel Erlandsson towards St Erik when he was searching for a saint who could heal him of the quartan fever. In miracle 25 of the collection of miracles worked by St Erik, Israel writes that he visited his uncle Folke in Uppsala when he was sick.⁵⁸ Folke advised him to go to the relics of St Erik, donate a candle and read an antiphon, versicle, and collect, which he taught the boy for the occasion. In the course of a few days, Israel recovered completely. The successful healing obviously led to a life-long devotion of Israel Erlandsson towards St Erik.⁵⁹ Israel was not only a member of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala but he is also mentioned as a member of the convent of

⁵⁴ SDHK, 2598.

⁵⁵ *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, 1, no. 146.

⁵⁶ SDHK, 2758. Thoroughly on Anders Andersson And; see Hedberg, *Uppsala stifts herdaminne*, pp. 306–19.

⁵⁷ For the biography of Israel Erlandsson, see Hildebrand, 'Israel Erlandsson'; Schück, 'Ängel-Ätten', pp. 133–38; Gallén, 'Finstaätten', p. 38.

⁵⁸ 'Vita et miracula S. Erii regis et martyris', ed. by Nelson, miracle no. 25, pp. 294–96.

⁵⁹ This devotion is illustrated by several of the miracles of St Erik in which Israel Erlandsson named himself as one of the witnesses or is in others ways involved. During his time as bishop of Västerås, he consecrated the church of Lima in Dalarna to St Erik and a number of other saints (SDHK, 3064) and donated in 1327 goods to the table of the archbishop of Uppsala 'ad laudem gloriose virginis. et beatorum Laurencij et Erii martyrum' (SDHK, 3495).

the Dominican friars of Sigtuna in 1281.⁶⁰ In addition, in a charter from 1299 he is named as one of the former parish priests of St Peter's church in Sigtuna and as the present prior of the Dominican convent.⁶¹ In 1309 he was elected bishop of Västerås and in the same year received the papal confirmation of Pope Clement V.

What makes Israel Erlandsson so interesting for the present work is the fact that in his person the veneration of St Erik converged with Dominican scholarship. He had most likely been to the continent for educational purposes since he is named as *lector* of the Sigtuna friary in 1290 and 1296.⁶² He was the scribe who collected and recorded St Erik's miracles. The legend and Office of St Erik were certainly composed by a person or a group of men with Dominican training. To what extent Israel himself was involved is, however, hard to decide.⁶³ The significance of these three works in spreading the cult of St Erik can hardly be overestimated since they constituted the liturgical basis for any sort of promotion of a medieval cult. They were the sources of material for sermons on the saint's feast day and motifs for the saint's visual representations were frequently taken from the legend or miracle collection as well.

Legend, Office, and Miracle Collection

In connection with the relocation of the archbishop's seat and the dedication of the new cathedral to St Erik, it became necessary to create the texts needed for the solemn veneration of the new patron saint, particularly on his feast day. Therefore a legend, a miracle collection, an office and probably a (now-lost) record of the miracles occurring during the *translatio* of his relics from Gamla Uppsala to Östra Aros were written. The oldest extant manuscript of the legend is composed in Latin and it is included in the *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis* from 1344, a collection of documents that were of importance for the arch-

⁶⁰ SDHK, 1191–1193.

⁶¹ SDHK, 1857.

⁶² SDHK, 1480, 1704. Lindkvist, 'Eriksmiraklerna', p. 148 names a longer period in the 1280s during which Israel, after becoming a Dominican friar, appears not to have been collecting miracles of St Erik. This could have been connected to an educational stay abroad. For a Dominican *lector*, it was mandatory to study at a *studium generale*. Since the Dominican province of Dacia had no such *stadium*, Israel would have received his education in one or several of the Dominican *studia* in Cologne, Paris, or Oxford.

⁶³ The authorship of the legend of St Erik will be discussed below in connection with the legend of St Henrik.

bishopric.⁶⁴ The compilation of the legend has, however, been dated to the last quarter of the thirteenth century, since an abridged version, which relies on the legend for its content, is included in a manuscript from that time.⁶⁵ This version is often addressed as the 'short legend' and this has led to a degree of controversy, largely over the question of whether this 'short legend' was in fact a summary of an earlier extended legend that predated the 'standard legend' of the *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis*.⁶⁶ It appears more likely, however, that the account of the 'short legend' in British Library MS Add. 40, 146 is an early example of the later and widely followed habit of including an abridged version of a saint's legend in the breviary of a diocese.⁶⁷ Toni Schmid has ascribed the codex to the diocese of Linköping,⁶⁸ while the catalogue of the British Library gives the bishopric of Strängnäs as the possible place of composition, since both feasts of Eskil are included in the calendar.⁶⁹ However Sara Ellis Nilsson has recently held that these two feast days were only added during the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries, when the breviary was in use in the bishopric of Strängnäs. Its place of production was, according to her, probably in the diocese of Uppsala.⁷⁰ This last ascription seems the most probable and the plausibility of Ellis Nilsson's assumption is strengthened by the inclusion of the 'short legend' in the manuscript, and by the red ink that was used for the entry of St Erik's feast day, marking it as a *festum terrae/fori*. In the late thirteenth century, St Erik's feast day was celebrated only as a *festum chori* in the Strängnäs diocese.⁷¹ One sentence in the 'standard legend' seems to imply that another account existed containing 'the rest of his [St Erik's] life and the translation of

⁶⁴ The Latin text of the legend, edited by Schmid, 'Erik den heliges legend på latin, fornsvenska och modern svenska' follows the manuscript of the *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis*. The *Registrum* is preserved in codex A8 in the Riksarkiv in Stockholm.

⁶⁵ BL, MS Add. 40146. The manuscript has been brought to scholarly attention by Jørgesen, 'Bidrag til ældre nordisk kirke-og litteraturhistorie'.

⁶⁶ This assumption is supported e.g. by Lundén, *Sveriges missionärer, helgon och kyrkogrundare*, p. 294; Sjöberg, 'Rex Upsalie et vicarius', p. 3; Janse, 'Erik den helige såsom historisk person', pp. 91–92 while other researchers consider it a later summary of the 'standard legend', e.g. *S:t Eriks hystoria = The Historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 21.

⁶⁷ *S:t Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 21.

⁶⁸ Schmid, 'Erik den helige i liturgin', p. 159.

⁶⁹ See the 'Archives and Manuscripts' online catalogue of the British Library.

⁷⁰ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 155–56.

⁷¹ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, p. 315, Table 3.6 with reference to the fragments FR 25,621–25,622 of the MPO database.

his holy relics and the miracles, which the Lord has worked through his saint'.⁷² This has been interpreted as evidence for a longer version of the legend predating the 'standard legend'.⁷³ Recently, an attempt has been made to identify some elements included in this older legend. However, these efforts remain — naturally — rather hypothetical.⁷⁴ On the other hand, it has been pointed out that a very similar passage can be found in the legend of St Birgitta of Sweden, which has not led to any speculations of this kind.⁷⁵ In order to gain greater certainty of the meaning of the passage, it would be necessary to search a greater number of saints' legends for equivalents and analyse their possible meanings.

Later versions of the legend are extant. Both the Latin and Old Swedish text in the *Codex Vaticanus Reg. Lat. 525* were parts of a manuscript in the library of Queen Christina of Sweden (r. 1604–11) but the manuscript has been dated to the early fifteenth century.⁷⁶ The Latin version of the legend in Codex C 15, which used to belong to the Vadstena monastery of the Order of St Birgitta but is now kept in Uppsala University Library, has a similar dating.⁷⁷ The version of the legend in the *Codex Bildstenianus* has been dated to the second quarter of the fifteenth century and was probably also composed in Vadstena.⁷⁸ Finally, a Middle Low German version printed in 1507 has survived in a *Passionale* from Lübeck called *Leuent der Hylligen* and a Latin copy of the legend produced in Flanders has also recently been discovered.⁷⁹ These versions differ in their

⁷² 'Reliqua vite eius et translacio sancti corporis ac miracula que dominus operatus est per sanctum suum. et vsque in presens non desinit misericorditer operari que hic omissa sunt breuitatis causa alibi scripta sunt'. The Latin text in Appendix 1 is copied from Schmid, 'Erik den heliges legend på latin, fornsvenska och modern svenska' which relies on the *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis* manuscript. The English text is the translation of the Old Swedish version in *Codex Bildstenianus* provided by Sands, 'The Cult of St Eric, King and Martyr in Medieval Sweden', pp. 218–21.

⁷³ Carlsson, *Translacio archiepiscoporum*.

⁷⁴ Lovén and Bengtsson, 'Spår av den äldre Erikslegenden'.

⁷⁵ *S:t Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 21; Nilsson, 'St. Erik's Two Bodies and Chants', pp. 161–62.

⁷⁶ *Vita et miracula Sancti Eriki regis Sueciae*, ed. by Nelson, p. xxi.

⁷⁷ *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala*, ed. by Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg, and Hedlund, I (1988), pp. 151–52.

⁷⁸ *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala*, ed. by Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg, and Hedlund, V: c. 401–550 (1992), p. 330 dated the text to 1440–1450. The text has been edited by Gordon, *An Introduction to Old Norse*, pp. 171–74.

⁷⁹ 'Leuent der Hylligen'; Bibliothèque municipale de Vallenienne, MS 519, fols 114^v–118^r. On the latter see the forthcoming publication of Jonathan Grove whom I thank for the information about the manuscript.

wording in some places, but the related motifs and stories, as well as the characteristics of the saint, are the same in all versions. The legend will therefore be treated as a single work, although it should be noted that a systematic analysis of all manuscripts containing accounts of the various versions is an urgent *desideratum* and could contribute to a reconstruction of the spreading of the cult of St Erik.

The trustworthiness of the legend was subject to lengthy discussions in the twentieth century. The discussion was started by Knut Stjerna in his article 'Erik den helige. En sagohistorisk studie' in 1898. The vast majority of the research community objected to his critical evaluation of the legend's trustworthiness. He was, however, backed by Lauritz Weibull.⁸⁰ Modern medievalists mostly agree with Stjerna as far as the trustworthiness of the legend is concerned.⁸¹ It can be observed that some of the statements in the legend can be contradicted (such as the date of St Erik's death) while others (such as the crusade to Finland or the actual existence of St Henrik) are hard to prove because supplementary sources are not extant. On the other hand, dismissing the legend as purely schematic also means disallowing it as a source for studying the medieval mindset.⁸² The legend may not reflect the way of thinking of the middle of the twelfth century — the time in which the legend is set — but it can be instructive concerning the late thirteenth century, the time when the text was composed. Even if the author had picked all the motifs from already extant legends, the question would remain as to why he chose the motifs he did.⁸³

Of course, it is not only historiographical texts that have to be seen within the context of their time — a special motivation is needed for the works of hagiographers, as well.⁸⁴ These works were not only written because of a desire for spiritual edification or to provide more information about a saint, but also in response to specific circumstances or to meet certain needs. Such reasons might include the desire to increase the prestige of an ecclesiastical institution by raising the prestige of a saint connected with it; the need to defend certain behav-

⁸⁰ Weibull, 'Erik den helige'. See also the discussion of the research conducted on St Erik in chap. 1.

⁸¹ For example Lindkvist, 'Med Sankt Erik konung mot hedningar och schismatiker', p. 16.

⁸² So do Lovén and Bengtsson, 'Spår av den äldre Erikslegenden', pp. 51–52.

⁸³ Graus, 'Funktionen', p. 40: 'Die Feststellung von Topoi ist für die historische Kritik unerlässlich, aber man darf bei ihrer Feststellung nicht stehenbleiben; aus Topoi entsteht jeweils ein neues, zuweilen recht markantes Bild'.

⁸⁴ This has, for example, been pointed out by Coué, *Hagiographie im Kontext*, pp. 6–7, 174.

ior by providing a saintly example; or in order to urge a person or a group of people to behave in a particular way, 'prefigured' by the saint through the hagiographer.⁸⁵ The main reason for the composition of the legend of St Erik was certainly his patronage over the new cathedral in Uppsala. When reading this legend, it should always be kept in mind that the events described in it happened more than a century before. Even if the author(s) intended to give a truthful account of the life and deeds of St Erik, the information included in the legend would already have passed down through several generations of 'uncontrolled' oral tradition.⁸⁶ One result of this long period during which stories about the saint would have been told without a fixed written version was probably the blending of his figure with that of Sverker the Elder, as will be discussed below. In addition to those unconscious changes during the time of oral tradition, the political situation in Uppland in the second half of the thirteenth century definitely influenced the author(s) of the legend. To illustrate this point, the connection between the expansionistic politics towards Finland and the legends of St Erik and St Henrik will be discussed below in greater detail.

The legend of St Erik consists of a short introduction in which Erik's origin and election are related very briefly. He is generally characterized as having a mild temperament and is therefore loved by God and all people. This introduction is followed by five parts telling how Erik furthered the church and ruled his kingdom justly. He is also praised for having 'forced the desires of the body to yield to the wisdom of the soul, and for always turning the striving of his soul towards God'.⁸⁷ After putting his kingdom in order, he is said to have ventured on a crusade to Finland 'against the adversaries of the faith and the enemies of his people'.⁸⁸ He made the crusade together with Bishop St Henrik, whom the legend identifies as bishop of Uppsala. In Finland, St Erik succeeded in defeating and evangelizing the Finns. After subordinating the Finns, St Erik left St Henrik behind in order to complete the missionary work. He himself returned to Sweden and suffered martyrdom at the hands of some Swedish fol-

⁸⁵ Coué, *Hagiographie im Kontext*, pp. 172–73.

⁸⁶ 'Uncontrolled' here means the fact that knowledge about the history of the past 100 years was not an oral tradition that was fixed by mnemotechnics and frequent public recitation. (An example of controlled oral tradition is the lawspeakers of Iceland, who had to recite one third of the law at the Althing once a year). On the research field of the relationship between orality and textuality, see, for example, Doane and Pasternack, *Vox intexta*; Vansina, *Oral Tradition*; Geary, 'Oblivion between Orality and Textuality in the Tenth Century'.

⁸⁷ 'seipsum prius diiudicat carnem spiritui subiciendo ac spiritum ad dominum dirigendo'.

⁸⁸ 'ad inimicos fidei et hostes populi sui [...] versus finnonnes expeditionem dirigit'.

lowers of the 'son of the king of Denmark', Magnus (Old Swedish version), or else by Magnus himself (Latin version), who is said to have attacked him as he was attending mass in the church of the Holy Trinity in Östra Aros. According to the legend, he 'passed away in the year of our Lord 1160, on the 18 May, when Alexander III presided over the church in Rome'.⁸⁹ Several lines before, the legend claims that the attack occurred on Ascension Day. This is one of the inconsistencies of the legend, since Ascension Day in 1160 fell on the 5 May.

The Office of St Erik will be discussed briefly since two excellent researchers have already studied it in detail: Toivo Haapanen in 1927 and Ann-Marie Nilsson in 2000.⁹⁰ Haapanen identified three chronological layers in the office that mirror the development of the cult in general. The oldest layer, probably from the first half or the middle of the thirteenth century, is represented by the Gospel antiphons *Ave martyr preciose* and *Miles regis glorie*, which are written in rhymed trochaic metre.⁹¹ They can be linked to the miracle about Israel Erlandsson (no. 27 (25)) in which he states that his uncle Folke, by then dean of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala, taught him 'an antiphon with the verse and collect, which he was to recite often in honour of St Erik'.

The second layer, which is usually dated as contemporary with the legend and the miracle collection, completes those few elements to a short office, i.e. one with three *lectiones*.⁹² In the diocese of Uppsala, St Erik's day was celebrated with the highest feast grade of *totum duplex*. Feasts of this grade usually had an office with nine *lectiones*. The reason why St Erik's office received only three *lectiones* can relate to the fact that 18 May almost always falls within the time period of Easter — excepting for the earliest possible date for Easter (22 March). In the province of Uppsala it was prescribed that, during the Easter

⁸⁹ 'Passus est autem beatus Ericus anno incarnationis M.c.lx.xv. kalendas Junii Alexandro papa tercio romane ecclesie president'.

⁹⁰ *S:t Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson; Haapanen, 'Olika skikt i S:t Eriks metriska officium'.

⁹¹ Haapanen, 'Olika skikt i S:t Eriks metriska officium', pp. 79–83.

⁹² It should, however, be pointed out that an expression in the hymn 'Adest dies leticie' points to a later date of composition. It includes the lines: 'Adest dies leticie/fulget Erixi gloria/rex et patronus Suecie/celi petit palacia'. (*St Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 47). The idea of St Erik as 'rex et patronus Suecie' first appears in a charter of Magnus Eriksson of the year 1331, in which St Erik and St Lars are called 'tocius regni nostri patronorum' (SDHK, 3826). It is, however, also possible that this line in the hymn has been changed later, since the manuscripts containing this particular hymn derive only from the fifteenth century. See *S:t Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, pp. 24, 151; Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 191–92.

period, every feast day should be celebrated with just three *lectiones*, since the liturgy of the Easter period had to be observed as well. This short office is written in hexameters and is clearly influenced by Dominican liturgy, especially by the Office of St Dominicus himself. It is thus assumed that this (main) layer of the office was composed at the same time as the legend and the miracle collection.⁹³ Haapanen assumes that the author should be sought in the Dominican friary of Sigtuna.

The most recent layer, according to Haapanen, was probably added in the early fifteenth century. The office was extended to a full office containing nine *lectiones*. This was necessary to accommodate when Easter fell on the first possible date, which happens once or twice in a century. In addition, and more importantly, the feast of St Erik's *translatio* on 24 January was introduced into the diocese of Uppsala in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. This feast also received the grade *totum duplex* and lay outside the *tempus paschale*. Therefore a full office was needed.

In the legend two miracles directly follow the death of St Erik. The first involves the sudden appearance of a well at the very place where the first drop of Erik's blood touched the ground; the second miracle is the healing of a blind widow to whom the body of the saint was carried after the battle. These miracles have their equivalents in the legends of St Knut Lavard and St Olaf, but they are also a common motif in the legends of non-royal saints. A collection of a further fifty-two miracles, the first miracle collection of medieval Sweden, was added to the legend in *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis* and two miracles, which are said to have happened in 1403 and 1411, are added in the Vatican manuscript.⁹⁴ In four of the miracle accounts in the collection, two miracles are related in one story. Miracle 46 (44) consists of twelve miracles based on the memories of Archbishop Folke, which are severely abbreviated. Some of those fragments contain relevant information. On the other hand, two miracles of St Lars are included in the collection. Therefore, we know of sixty-five miracles of St Erik altogether.⁹⁵ The counting applied in my text and in Appendix 2

⁹³ Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 77–80; *S:t Eriks hystoria = The historia of St. Erik*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 35; Nilsson, 'St. Erik's Two Bodies and Chants', pp. 156–57, Appendix 2, examples 1–5.

⁹⁴ On the miracle collection, see Westman, *Den svenska kyrkans utveckling*, p. 81, n. 3; Lindkvist, 'Eriksmiraklerna'; Myrdal and Bäärnhielm, *Kvinnor, barn & fester i medeltida mirakelberättelser*, pp. 116–17, 134–35.

⁹⁵ Seven further miracles of St Erik are mentioned in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sources. For details, see the list in Appendix 2.

includes the two miracles from the legend, while the numbers in brackets represent the count given in the 1828 edition.⁹⁶ The miracle collection is of interest for the purposes of the present study, particularly as far as the social and geographical provenance of those who experienced the miracles is concerned.

In some of the miracles, the person who recorded the miracle or brought it to the notice of a scribe of the cathedral of Uppsala is named. Israel Erlandsson is mentioned by name in miracles no. 19 (17), 22 (20), 27 (25), 49 (47), and 54 (52). The contributor of miracle no. 34 (32) appears to be an archbishop since it occurred at a procession during which the relics of St Erik were being carried, led presumably by the archbishop in question. Furthermore, the majestic plural is used: 'and we with our college, with several religious men, and with discreet clerics [...] investigated this miracle'.⁹⁷ Miracle no. 46 (44) is said to give an account of the miracles that Archbishop Folke could remember and miracles no. 47 (45) and 49 (47) were collected by Archbishop Nils. In the first one of these, no. 47 (45), the majestic plural is also used. An archbishop is also named as the witness of miracle no. 53 (51). There are also two parish priests, Martin of Lövsta (no. 23 (21)) and Johan of Gamla Uppsala (no. 48 (46)), who inform Israel of miracles effected by the intercession of St Erik. The heterogeneous impression that is given by the different contributors of the miracles seems at first sight to be strengthened by the random chronology of the collection. Sune Lindqvist has, however, convincingly shown that this appearance must have been due to the fact that Israel Erlandsson, who collected the miracles, wrote them down on different leaves of parchment, the order of which was later confused.⁹⁸ Israel names himself as the collector of the miracles in an epilogue stating:

So I, brother Israel, son of Erland, Prior of the Order of Preachers of Sigtuna, following the request of certain canons of the church of Uppsala, while the see was vacant, have, as well in sermons faithfully re-narrated as in the simple form entrusted to the letters, both the miracles and the help that were granted to those who invoked St Erik [...] that came to my knowledge through trustworthy statements.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant.

⁹⁷ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, miracle no. 32: 'Nos vero, una cum Capitulo nostro, et aliis viris religiosis, et Clericis discretis [...] diligenter examinavimus hoc miraculum'.

⁹⁸ Lindqvist, 'Eriksmiraklerna'.

⁹⁹ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, Epilogue: 'Ego igitur Frater Israel, Erlandi Filius, Ordinis Praedicatorum Prior Sictioniensis, rogatus a quibusdam

The Geographical Spread of the Cult

Both the geographical regions where the miracles occurred and the social standing of the persons to whom they happened are of interest for the present study. The sites of the miracles have been shown in Map 3. For those places where only the parish is specified in the text, the location of the parish church has been marked on the map (25 (23), 33 (31), 41 (39), 52 (50), 53 (51)). In twelve of the miracles (numbers 11 (9)–13 (11) and 15 (13), the second miracle in number 26 (24), and seven miracles in number 46 (44)), no location is named. In five miracles (10 (8), 22 (20), 28 (26), 29 (27)), it can only be deduced that the location was probably inside the borders of Uppland (e.g. 22 (20): *in curia sua Näs* somewhere on the route from Stockholm to Uppsala). Finally, three miracles have been recorded in Hälsingland (9 (7), 35 (33), and one miracle in number 46 (44)); two in Östergötland (17 (15) and 44 (42)); one in Dalarna (34 (32)); one in Västmanland (25 (23)); and one in Jämtland (26 (24)). Forty-seven out of fifty-five miracles in the collection in which a place is specified are said to have happened in Uppland (85 per cent). A concentration of miracles is visible in Uppsala (five miracles, with a further two in Gamla Uppsala) and in the surrounding area. Three miracles occurred in other bishoprics, namely one in the diocese of Västerås and two in the bishopric of Linköping. The location (Våla parish), which is named as the place of the miracle in the bishopric of Västerås, however, lies only about a hundred kilometres west of Uppsala. It can thus be concluded from the evidence of the miracle collection that the cult of St Erik was mainly spread throughout Uppland and that within Uppland, Uppsala was the centre of the cult. Some first signs of the veneration of the saint, however, did start to appear in other Swedish bishoprics, namely those of Linköping and Västerås.

This evidence is confirmed by that of the charters. After the first mention of St Erik as a saint in King Valdemar's charter of 1270, his feast day started to be used for the dating of charters in the late thirteenth century. The first charter was dated by his feast day in 1291. This rather late date reflects the rise of his cult in the second half of the thirteenth century; this was also the time that the dating of charters by saints' feast days became a regular habit.¹⁰⁰ All the early

Canonicis Ecclesiae Upsalensis, sede vacante, ut miracula et beneficia, quae Beatum Ericum invocantibus, [...] praestiterit [...], quae relatu fide digna ad meam pervenere notitiam, in predicatione fideliter enarravi, et simplici stilo commendavi scripturae.

¹⁰⁰ On the habit of using saint's days for dating purposes, see the detailed discussion in chap. 2.



charters (up to 1310), which used St Erik's day for their dating, were issued in Uppland. They all deal with matters connected to the archbishop or chapter of Uppsala, and members of the aristocratic network sketched above are mentioned in each of them.¹⁰¹ We can thus safely assume that all those charters were issued in close connection with the archbishop's seat of Uppsala and even that they were probably written by members of the cathedral church.

There is, however, some evidence to suggest that St Erik was also known and venerated in some dioceses other than Uppsala. One of the miracles discussed above was reported from the diocese of Västerås and two were reported from the diocese of Linköping, in Östergötland. In the latter region, the first charters dated by St Erik's day appeared in 1319 and 1323. A number of liturgical fragments, collected in the MPO (*Medeltida Pergamentomslag*) project at the *Riksarkiv* in Stockholm, as well as some fragments preserved at the National Library of Finland in Helsinki, include accounts of St Erik. Jan Brunius and

¹⁰¹ SDHK, 1522, 1562, 1621, 2023, 2352–2354.

Sara Ellis Nilsson have recently worked with those fragments.¹⁰² According to the results of their work, the cult of St Erik started spreading in the ecclesiastical province of Uppsala by the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Brunius identified six fragments of missals, extant from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in which the mass of St Erik had been included. The entries concerning the Swedish saint are — with one exception — later additions to the original text. All of the entries for the feast day of St Erik are either written in the margins (fragments Fr 26,233, Fr 26,827) or at places that were left empty by the original author (fragment Fr 2996). In one case (Fragment Fr 26,800–05), the entry of an earlier saint's text (probably St Dunstan's) has been erased and replaced by the text of the mass of St Erik.

A number of those early fragments have their origins in the diocese of Uppsala. Some, however, give further evidence for the observation that the veneration of St Erik spread very early on to the diocese of Linköping: The missal Fr 26,889 was probably composed in England in the twelfth or thirteenth century and was only later accommodated to the liturgical order of the diocese of Linköping. The combined breviary and missal Fr 25,021 had most likely already been written for use in that diocese in the thirteenth century.¹⁰³ Another breviary ascribed to the Linköping bishopric and dated to the thirteenth century, Fr 22,220–22,512, contained at least three lessons of St Erik's office, while a Dominican calendar, Fr 25,640, in which St Erik's day is marked as *festum chori*, was also probably used there.¹⁰⁴ The evidence of the miracle collection, as mentioned above, points in the same direction. In miracle no. 17 (15), Brother Peter, prior of the Dominican province of Dacia, is said to have intended to cross Lake Vättern;

when he was near the Cistercian monastery of Alvastra there came a great storm and wind, so that he was compelled to remain there for a long time. Then he called on St Erik's help and instantly [...] the weather grew calm and mild.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 40–45, tables 14–20, pp. 115–22; Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, Table 3.6, pp. 315–17.

¹⁰³ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁴ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 315–16.

¹⁰⁵ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, miracle no. 15: 'cum esset apud Aluastrum monasterium ordinis Cisteriensium, prope ripam prædicti stagni, nimia tempestate præpeditus ibi moram facere cogeatur. Invocato autem patrocínio Beati Eriki [...] subito cessavit tempestas'.

In miracle no. 44 (42), Katarina, the wife of Ragvald Puke, is said to have been healed from a severe sickness; she only recovered after her husband had prayed to St Erik for the saint's intercession. According to Hans Gillingstam, the residence of Lady Katarina was in Kosjöhult, Simonstorp parish, Bråbo härad in Östergötland.¹⁰⁶

The diocese of Linköping, however, was not the only one to which the veneration of St Erik spread in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Toni Schmid stated in 1932 that St Erik's feast day was also recorded in the oldest *calendarium* of the diocese of Strängnäs, which she dated to the thirteenth century.¹⁰⁷ One fragment listed by Ellis Nilsson, that of the calendar Fr 25,621–22, also has its provenance in the Strängnäs bishopric, while a question mark is added to the provenance of Fragment 25,624, a calendar from the same diocese.¹⁰⁸ Further dioceses from which thirteenth-century fragments naming St Erik's day or including parts of his liturgy originate are the bishoprics of Turku (the missal F.m.I. 120 and the Dominican missal F.m.I. 115) and Skara (calendar Fr 25,606).¹⁰⁹

While the core area of the cult of St Erik remained Uppland in the period discussed in this chapter, there are also the first signs of a spread of his veneration to other Swedish regions. These signs are most numerous for the bishoprics of Linköping and Strängnäs, but they also include those of Västerås, Turku, and Skara. The only diocese from which no such sporadic evidence of the cult of St Erik can be found is therefore Växjö. The cathedral chapter of Uppsala and the archbishop still played a key role in promoting the cult, but the other bishops also supported it by including St Erik's feast day in the calendars of their dioceses and by co-granting indulgences.¹¹⁰

Early Depictions of St Erik

The archbishop and the cathedral chapter of Uppsala strongly identified themselves with St Erik, a point reflected in the fact that they included an image of the saint on their seals. The chapter had introduced such a seal as early as 1275. The first archbishop to feature St Erik on his counter-seal was Archbishop

¹⁰⁶ Gillingstam, 'Puke', p. 178.

¹⁰⁷ Schmid, 'Strängnäs stifts kalendarium under medeltiden', p. 86.

¹⁰⁸ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 315–16.

¹⁰⁹ Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*, pp. 315–16.

¹¹⁰ SDHK, 911, 1744.

Johan in 1289.¹¹¹ He headed a long succession of archbishops of Uppsala who did the same. A number of them are known to have particularly venerated St Erik. Among the early depictions that can be reasonably considered to feature St Erik are several images of the saint on a number of seals from the second half of the thirteenth century and the first two decades of the fourteenth century. With the exception of the seal of Ingeborg Bengtsdotter, all of them belonged to clerics or ecclesiastical corporations. There is a close correspondence between the depiction of the royal saint and that of contemporary kings on their royal seals.¹¹² In all cases St Erik is depicted wearing plain clothes and a crown, while his attributes are usually a sceptre and an orb. On three seals a book replaces the orb. This attribute of St Erik has not yet been in the focus of medieval research, but in my opinion, the book has to be seen in the context of St Erik's role as the ancient law-giver of Uppland. This aspect is stressed in the introduction to the *Upplandslag* of 1296 and in its *Ärvdabalken III* (see above).

Also dating to 1296, the first print of the counter-seal of Archbishop Nils Allesson is preserved. This seal shows Mary on the top with the infant Jesus, while in the middle are the two patron saints of the cathedral of Uppsala, St Lars and St Erik, and at the bottom, the archbishop in a kneeling position (Fig. 9). On this seal St Erik is depicted holding a sceptre and a book. It is the first time that we see the book as an attribute in an image of St Erik. A second seal, that of the priest Olof of Hilleshög (Uppland), shows St Olaf with his axe and St Erik with a globe, and both saints hold a book (Fig. 10). A third seal, which has previously not been linked to St Erik, is attached to a charter that was issued in 1309 in Åbo/Turku (Fig. 11).¹¹³ This shows a crowned saint holding a book in his left hand in front of his stomach. The head of the owner of the seal, parish priest Jakob of Nummis, is discernible at his right side while the (kneeling) body of the priest is no longer visible. On the seal, the lower part of a sceptre in the saint's right hand is visible (Fig. 11). It is, therefore, possible to interpret the depicted saint as St Erik, which would make it the earliest known depiction of the saint in Finland.

¹¹¹ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 179.

¹¹² Späth, 'Siegelbild und Kathedralgotik', p. 51; See the seals depicting St Erik (Figs 9–11). For a comparison with contemporary royal seals, see *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, I, PLs 1–7. They only differ in the sense that St Erik is always depicted standing, while the kings on royal seals are always depicted sitting on their thrones.

¹¹³ SDHK, 2291; a schematic rendering of the seal is included in *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, I, PL 16, no. 226.



Figure 9. Counter-seal
of Archbishop Nils Allesson, 1296.
Drawn by Emil Hildebrand (1862).



Figure 10. Seal of Olof
of Hilleshög, 1310.
Drawn by Emil Hildebrand (1862).

St Erik is not the only royal saint of Scandinavia to be depicted holding a book. Anne Lidén states that the law-book is one of St Olaf's royal attributes and refers to *S:t Olafs lag* (the 'law of St Olaf') the assumed first law of Norway.¹¹⁴ Depictions of him holding a book most frequently appear in Icelandic law illustrations (e.g. Fig. 12) and in a decorated initial of the part of his office that starts '*In regali fastigio*' in the *Antiphonarium Nidrosiensis*. But two Norwegian wooden sculptures in Skedsmo and Lunner also show St Olaf holding a book (Fig. 13), and both Sts Olav and Erik are shown holding a book in the seal of Olof of Hilleshög mentioned above (Fig. 10). Because it is the only lay seal to depict St Erik, the seal of Ingeborg Bengtsdotter is especially noteworthy. Ingeborg belonged to the network of Upplandian nobles within which the veneration of St Erik was popular in the late thirteenth and early

¹¹⁴ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, p. 53.



Figure 11. Seal of Jakob of Nummis, 1309.
Drawn by the author.

fourteenth centuries. Her husband, Johan Erlandsson, a brother of Israel Erlandsson, showed his dedication to St Erik by donating property to the altar of the saint in the cathedral of Uppsala.¹¹⁵ Seals of aristocratic women depicting saints became common on the continent in the course of the twelfth century.¹¹⁶ For aristocratic women, it provided an opportunity to show their veneration of a particular saint.¹¹⁷ Thus in addition to being a unique document of female devotion towards St Erik, the seal gives further evidence for Sweden adapting to the European trends during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

Alongside the seals, the only piece of artwork that includes a depiction of St Erik and of which details are still known is a window painting from the church of Gamla Uppsala. The original is lost, but Johan Peringskiöld included an image of the window in his

book *Monumenta Uplandica* in 1710. In the picture St Erik is depicted with a beard, holding a sceptre and globe, and facing St Lars. The embroidery on a maniple from Uppsala Cathedral shows two crowned figures without beards and without attributes. Whether they are meant to depict St Erik and St Olaf, however, is open to speculation, as is the identification of the wooden sculpture from Roslagsbro (Uppland), which is devoid of most attributes. In recent research, this latter figure has been understood to depict St Olaf rather than St Erik because of its *underliggare*. These figures on which the saint is standing

¹¹⁵ SDHK, 2598.

¹¹⁶ Stieldorf, *Rheinische Frauensiegel*, pp. 47–62.

¹¹⁷ Sands, 'The Saint as Symbol', p. 95: 'Presumably these images serve to document the special relationship between the sealer and the saint, which is of such importance that it takes on an identificatory function.'



Figure 12.
St Olaf with a book in Teiknibokin,
MS AM 673 III 4to, fol. 1^v.
Iceland 1400–50. Courtesy of
The Árni Magnússon Institute
for Icelandic Studies.



Figure 13. St Olaf with a book: wooden sculpture in
Skedsmo, Akershus fylke, Norway (around 1250).
Photograph by Eirik Irgens Johnsen.
Courtesy of Kulturhistorisk museum Oslo.

are most commonly put under the feet of St Olaf although some few examples of St Erik standing on an *underliggare* are known as well.¹¹⁸ The existence of a stone sculpture of St Erik at the western entrance of the cathedral of Uppsala has been dated to the late thirteenth century.¹¹⁹ It is reasonable to assume that statues of the two patron saints and of St Olaf were erected during an early construction phase of the cathedral. With regards to the appearance of this early statue of St Erik, nothing can be said with any amount of certainty since the sculpture which is now situated at the western portal of the cathedral was made by Theodor Lundberg in the 1890s and nothing is known about the original one.¹²⁰

Social Groups Supporting the Cult of St Erik

Israel Erlandsson relates in the miracle about his own healing that his uncle, Archbishop Folke, was a ‘worthy and godly man [who] paid particular honour and veneration to St Erik’.¹²¹ Archbishop Folke appears in two further miracles as the person who either took a vow to St Erik himself or else gave someone else the advice to do so.¹²² Archbishop Nils Allesson — to name only one further archbishop as an example — decreed in the regulations of the provincial synod in Söderköping around 1300 that every priest in the archbishopric of Uppsala had to celebrate four masses in public, among them one for the ‘wellbeing of the kingdom’ and one for St Erik and St Henrik ‘*pro statu Carelie*’.¹²³ He thus spread the knowledge of the two closely connected saints to all his suffragans while at the same time calling their attention to the eastern territories where Swedish royal authority and the Christian faith were being established. Moreover, Nils Allesson was the archbishop who ‘rediscovered’ the original grave of St Erik in

¹¹⁸ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, p. 346; Jacobsson, *Beställare och finansiärer*, pp. 402–05. For the examples of St Erik with *underliggare*, see the list of depictions in Appendix 4.

¹¹⁹ Thordeman, ‘Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst’, p. 219; Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, p. 120.

¹²⁰ Lovén, Dahlberg, and Bengtsson, ‘Byggnadsbeskrivning’, pp. 144–48.

¹²¹ ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant, miracle no. 25: ‘Fulco avunculus suus bonæ memoriæ, [...], venerationis et honoris Beati Eriki zelator’.

¹²² ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant, nos 21, 23.

¹²³ SDHK, 1822: ‘Statuimus etiam et publicamus, quod quilibet Sacerdos Upsaliensis Provinciae, cujuscunque status, conditionis vel eminentiæ fuerit, dicere teneatur has subscriptas missas speciales, singulis annis, unam de Sancta Trinitate, et aliam de beata Virgine, pro Domino Rege et statu Regni, et tertiam de Sanctis Martiribus Erico Rege et Henrico Episcopo pro statu Careliæ et quartam pro anima felicitis memoriæ Domini Magni’.



Figure 14. Seal of the Dominican brother Johan showing St Erik and St Dominik, 1282. Drawn by Emil Hildebrand (1862).



Figure 15. Seal of the Guardian of the Franciscan convent of Uppsala showing St Erik and St Francis, 1301. Drawn by Emil Hildebrand (1862).

the church of Gamla Uppsala in 1302 and he was in charge of the opening of the shrine of St Erik in 1303 in order to retrieve relics of the saint.¹²⁴ These were to be used to equip altars with the obligatory remains of a saint and the opening of the shrine was therefore a necessary action if more churches were to have

¹²⁴ Concerning the 'rediscovery', a table is depicted in Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Uplandiae*, p. 192 which reads: 'Anno Domini MoCCCII. Oct. Kal. Decembris per venerabilem patrem Dominum Nicolaum, divina providencia Archiepiscopum, cum devocione congrua certitude sepulchre gloriosi Regis et Martyris Beati Erii reperta est, et locus ipse designatus venerationi fidelium frequentandus. In ipso autem sepulchre inter pulveres sacri corporis etiam aliqua ossa parva de corpore ipsius Martyris continentur'. (On 24 November, the secure grave of the glorious king and martyr St Erik was rediscovered with fitting devotion by the venerable father Nils, by God's providence archbishop, and this place was marked for the veneration of frequenting believers. But this grave contained, between the powder of the sacred body, also some small bones of the body of this martyr).

St Erik as their patron saint and if more (minor) altars inside churches were to be dedicated to him. In his testament in 1305, Nils Allesson bequeathed money to the chapel of St Erik '*ab ecclesia maiori seperatam*', which was a sign of his personal veneration towards the saint.¹²⁵ The testament is, furthermore, one of the earliest pieces of evidence for the existence of a second chapel dedicated to the royal saint outside the walls of the cathedral. The chapel is probably first named as '*cappelle beati Eriki ibidem iuxta scolae*' in a testament from the year 1301.¹²⁶ Finally, the foundation of a prebend in honour of St Erik at the altar '*Votum Olavi*' in 1314 goes back to an earlier donation of Archbishop Nils.

Besides the members of the cathedral of Uppsala,¹²⁷ some friars of the Dominican convent in Sigtuna have already been mentioned as promoters of the cult of St Erik. First of all, Israel Erlandsson had an important intermediary position, being a member of the house of Finsta, of the cathedral chapter, and of the Dominican friary. However, Johan, prior in Sigtuna before 1286, Bishop of Åbo 1286–89, and archbishop elect 1289–91, also played an important role in spreading and furthering the cult of St Erik, as shall presently be discussed in more detail below. St Lars and St Erik featured on his seals when he was prior of Sigtuna and on his counter-seal as bishop of Åbo and as archbishop elect of Uppsala (Fig. 14). His (unknown) successor as prior of the Sigtuna house from 1287 onwards followed his example, having the same two saints on his seal. Not only the Dominican friars of Sigtuna, but also the Franciscan brothers of Uppsala and Stockholm, are mentioned in several episodes of the miracle collection as having been favoured by the intercession of St Erik and having preached about those miracles to the public (nos 4 (2), 8 (6), 11 (9), 20 (18)). A further clue to the veneration of St Erik by the Franciscans of Uppland is given by the fact that the guardian of the Franciscan monastery in Uppsala had St Erik together with St Francis showing his stigmata on his seal in 1301 (Fig. 15). In addition to those clerics and ecclesiastical institutions, there is substantial evidence for the veneration of St Erik among the high nobility of Uppland. Some of those who engaged in the cult of the royal saint have been named above in connection with the families of Ängel and Finsta. The miracle collection adds a number of people who were members of the Upplandian nobility and who allegedly trusted in the intercession of St Erik.

¹²⁵ SDHK, 2088.

¹²⁶ SDHK, 1939; on the geography of the cult sites of St Erik in Uppsala see also Lovén, 'Erikskulten i Uppsala'.

¹²⁷ The actions of some of them in supporting the cult of St Erik have been discussed above.

Beginning from the top of the social hierarchy, it is related that King Birger Magnusson (while obviously still in his childhood) lay ill for a year 'so that it was feared that he might die at any moment'.¹²⁸ Karl Tyske, his educator, prayed to St Erik, St Olaf, and St Nicholas with the promise of a pilgrimage and offerings and he cast lots in order to find out to which of the three saints he was to turn. Hardly surprisingly, the lot fell three times on St Erik. In the last sentence of the account of this miracle, the same Karl Tyske states that he himself had once been healed from a pain in his eyes through the intercession of St Erik. Karl Tyske was the (half?) brother of the later Archbishop Nils Kettilsson, who in his turn was among those who received relics of St Erik when the shrine was opened in 1303 by Archbishop Nils Allesson at the request of Duke Erik.¹²⁹ According to the miracle collection, Nils Kettilsson also received the help of St Erik when he was sick during his time as archbishop.¹³⁰ The royal bailiff of Stockholm, Saxe, is likewise said to have been miraculously healed by the intercession of St Erik.¹³¹

Two members of the houses of Finsta and Ängel benefited from the prayers of the royal saint. As related above, it was St Erik to whom Israel Erlandsson was directed by his uncle, Archbishop Folke, when he wanted to be healed of his quartan fever.¹³² The knight Magnus Johansson, an uncle of Israel's, received the help of the saint when he, obviously already at an advanced age, fell ill, was unable to speak, and could neither eat nor drink. His nephew Israel, his chaplain Håkan, and his page Knut all vowed to walk barefoot from Flötesund to Uppsala (approximately ten kilometres) if his health were restored.¹³³ Ragnborg, the wife of Folke Johansson of the house of Fånö and niece of Israel Erlandsson, made the same vow to St Erik and promised, moreover, to sacrifice a pound of wax if she were able to deliver her child 'without mortal danger and continue to live'.¹³⁴ Another form of veneration of St Erik occurred in that family as well. An aunt of Folke Johansson, whose name is not recorded but who

¹²⁸ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki Regis et Martyris' ed. by Fant, no. 26: 'de vita ipsius penitus pæne desperati, putarent eum denuo moriturum'.

¹²⁹ SDHK, 2021. When the shrine was opened in 1303 Nils Kettilsson was bishop of Västerås; he became archbishop in 1305. On the opening of the shrine see *Röster från svensk medeltid*, ed. by Aili, Ferm, and Gustavson, pp. 105–07.

¹³⁰ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 48.

¹³¹ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 38.

¹³² 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 25.

¹³³ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 20.

¹³⁴ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Fant, no. 17: 'Si a partus periculo et discrimine mortis liberaretur'.

is known to have been married to Filip Finvidsson, had named one of her four sons ‘Jedvard’, which was a very uncommon name. The use of the name could be explained if one remembers that St Erik’s father — according to some Old Norse sources — bore that name. The naming can, therefore, be interpreted as an expression of a special veneration of St Erik.¹³⁵

But why did those members of the high nobility of Uppland not choose the name of Erik himself? To answer this question we must take a look at the meaning of the name. The Old Nordic root of ‘Erik’ is given as **Ainarik(i)az*, which is supposed to be a composite of two words: **aina* = one/only and **rikia* = powerful/highborn/rich or **rikaz* = ruler/chieftain.¹³⁶ The name Erik therefore seems to be connected to rulership. Although it was not exclusively used for rulers,¹³⁷ it was especially common among the royalty in all three Scandinavian kingdoms.¹³⁸ The name of the route of every newly elected Swedish king, the *Eriksgata*, could also have derived from this connotation of the name Erik. Seen in this onomastic context, it would have meant ‘the road of the ruler’; a fitting description for the circular ride with its regulated route during which the new king had to visit all the counties (*landskap*) of his kingdom.¹³⁹ Only from the middle of the fourteenth century onwards, did the name ‘Erik’ become more common in non-royal circles.¹⁴⁰ This might explain why the aristocratic but non-royal families of Uppland hesitated to use the name ‘Erik’ in the late thirteenth century and why Filip Finvidsson and his wife, in order to express their devotion towards St Erik, named their son ‘Jedvard’ instead.

¹³⁵ On the use of saints’ names among families, see Sands, ‘The Saint as Symbol’, pp. 89–96.

¹³⁶ Petersson, *Lexikon över urnordiska personnamn*: <<http://www.sprakochfolkminnen.se/download/18.5e02b54a144bbda8e9b1c11/1398151044347/urnordiska-personnamn.pdf>>, p. 22 (only online) [accessed 5 April 2016].

¹³⁷ See, for example, the ‘ericus peregrinus’ of Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 3.54 (53).

¹³⁸ For the Swedish royal houses, see the genealogical tables in Appendix 6. For the Norwegian and Danish royal genealogies, see Hoffmann, *Die heiligen Könige bei den Angelsachsen und den skandinavischen Völkern*, pp. 234–38. A similar usage of the name Helena/Elin is reported by Pernler, *S:ta Elin av Skövde*, pp. 23–24.

¹³⁹ The *Eriksgata* and its route was first referred to by that name in the *Östgötalag* from c. 1290 and the *Upplandslag* from 1296. A royal ride through the different Swedish provinces is already mentioned in the *Äldre Västgötalag* (probably c. 1220). It is not known which king undertook the ride first, but it was first documented for Magnus Eriksson in 1335. For details of the *Eriksgata*, see Holmblad, *Erikskatan från medeltid till nutid*.

¹⁴⁰ The material which documents the usage of the name is collected in: *Sveriges medeltida personnamn*, I, cols 694–768.



Map 4. The prescribed route of the *Eriksgata*. Map by the author.

Many other people mentioned in the miracle collection are of interest for the present study. ‘Domina Katerina’, daughter of Karl Ingeborgason (Lejonbalk) and wife of Ragvald Puke, lay in bed as if she were dead until her husband made a vow to St Erik that, if she recovered, he would make a pilgrimage to his shrine and sacrifice a canopy. After his appeal to St Erik, ‘she quickly recovered and St Erik was offered the promised canopy’.¹⁴¹ Lady Helga Anundsdotter, wife of Rörík Birgersson, had suffered two miscarriages and feared a third, since she was again with child. ‘She prayed sincerely to St Erik, asking him to pray to God on her behalf so that she, in health, could give birth to a living child’. She donated a golden infant to the saint’s shrine and ‘when her term was up she gave birth to a living daughter’.¹⁴² In the last of the miracles collected in the late

¹⁴¹ ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’ ed. by Fant, no. 42: ‘Mox illa insperate convaluit plene, et ipse Beato Erico promissum obtulit Baldekinum’.

¹⁴² ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant, no. 27: ‘Beatum Ericum præcor-

thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, ‘the noble maiden named Christina, daughter of Sir Harald Älg’ and granddaughter of Lady Helga Anundsotter, was healed of a severe sickness and quartan fever.¹⁴³ If we sum up the evidence, we have indications that — as in the period of the early cult of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries — the members of the cathedral chapter, including the archbishops of Uppsala, engaged in the veneration of St Erik. What is new in the second half of the thirteenth century is the engagement of the royal house of Bjälbo, as well as that of a number of aristocratic houses, mainly from Uppland, in the veneration of the royal saint. The aristocratic element in his cult is witnessed by donations to the altars of the saint, by the depiction of St Erik on the seal of Ingeborg Bengtsdotter, and by the frequent invocations of the saint by Upplandian nobles as recorded in the miracle collection.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the collection only includes one miracle in which St Erik is called upon for an ‘agricultural purpose’. On this occasion ‘the farmers of Bälinge, Pickaby, and Åkerby met in order to discuss how they might honour God, so that he would grant them a harvest that would feed and nourish them.’¹⁴⁴ Although the majority of the miracles were effected for the benefit of ‘common people’, the percentage of nobility and clergy as beneficiaries of St Erik’s intermission is fairly high, when compared to the miracles of St Olaf, for example.¹⁴⁵ There, a critical attitude towards the nobility can be felt, particularly in the early miracles. In no. 13 in the collection of Olaf’s miracles, a maid is forced by her master to work on St Olaf’s day and the saint reacts by punishing the master, ‘a certain official, a man hateful and vile’ with

daliter invocavit, promittens quod si per ipsius merita Dominus conceptum suum vivum nasei concederet. [...] Tempore igitur oportuno puellam vivam peperit; Helga Anundsotter was a distant relative of the Bjälbo dynasty: her mother, Ingeborg Elofsdotter, had been the daughter of Birger Jarl’s (half?) brother Elof; see Axelsson, ‘Brunkow’; Gillingstam, ‘Rörik Birgerssons ätt’. The information in the two articles is contradictory on some points concerning the identity of Elof.

¹⁴³ ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant, no. 52: ‘nobilis quædam puella nomine Christina, filia Domini Haraldi Älgh’.

¹⁴⁴ ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris’, ed. by Fant, no. 41: ‘rustici parochias Belling, Spicaby, et Akirby inhabitantes in hoc unanimiter optime convenerunt, quod pro temperie aeris a Domino impetranda’.

¹⁴⁵ On the miracles of St Olaf see Appendix 2. English translations of the poems *Glælognskviða* and *Erfridrapa* can be found in Lindow, ‘St Olaf and the Skalds’, pp. 122–27; the poem *Geisli* has recently been edited and translated in *Einarrr Skúlason’s Geisli*, ed. by Chase. The miracles in *Geisli* have been listed by Holtsmark, ‘Sankt Olafs liv og mirakler’. The *Passio Olafi* has been translated in Phelpstead, *A History of Norway*.

blindness, and by turning the bread which the maiden had been forced to bake into stone. In a later miracle of the miracle collection (no. 20), St Olaf restores the cut-out tongue of a boy who had been falsely accused of a crime and who had been judged and punished by the authorities in this way. Finally, in miracle no. 23, a priest who was falsely accused of having sexual intercourse with an aristocratic lady and whose tongue and eyes had been cut out by the lady's 'two brothers of noble family, who possessed an abundance of worldly wealth', is healed by the saint. A detailed comparison of the social aspects across all of Sweden's miracle collections has been carried out by Göran Bäärnhielm and Janken Myrdal.¹⁴⁶ In their comparison, St Erik provides the highest percentage of miracles for those in need among nobles and clergymen, but comes in last place in terms of miracles worked for city folk and peasantry.¹⁴⁷ This percentage rises still further when the time of the record of the miracles is taken into account. Sune Lindqvist has shown that Israel Erlandsson recorded the miracles of St Erik during two periods, 1270–77 and 1292–1310. According to his reconstruction of the chronology of the miracles, all the above-mentioned miracles that benefited members of the higher aristocracy, clergy, and King Birger and his household were recorded during the second period.¹⁴⁸

Another thing that is noteworthy when comparing the miracle collections of St Erik and St Olaf is the fact that Israel Erlandsson, the compiler of the first, was always eager to point out St Erik's intercession and God's performance of the miracle. In his epilogue, he even adds a learned discussion with references to the church fathers and the Evangelists about what should be considered a miracle (*miracula*) and what should rather be seen as help from the saint (*beneficia*). In St Olaf's miracle collection, St Olaf effects the miracles himself in many instances, which is hardly theologically correct. This shows that Israel Erlandsson must have had a good theological education, a fact which supports the above made assumption that he received parts of his training in one or several Dominican *studia* on the continent.

Another way to identify supporters of the cult of St Erik is to look at the foundation of prebends in honour of that saint. Göran Dahlbäck assembled all the material donations that were dedicated to the cathedral of Uppsala during the Middle Ages. He names seven prebends and altars that feature St Erik in their name, as well as a number of other altars that were furnished with his

¹⁴⁶ Myrdal and Bäärnhielm, *Kvinnor, barn & fester i medeltida mirakelberättelser*; Myrdal and Bäärnhielm, 'Miracles and Medieval Life'.

¹⁴⁷ Myrdal and Bäärnhielm, 'Miracles and Medieval Life', pp. 105–06.

¹⁴⁸ Lindqvist, 'Eriksmiraklerna', pp. 150–56.

relics.¹⁴⁹ The first prebend in the choir of St Olaf and St Erik was founded by Magnus Johansson (Ängel).¹⁵⁰ It was originally set up at the monastery of Sko in 1291 but was transferred to the cathedral of Uppsala in 1301 as the sixth prebend. At around the same time, in 1304, a vicariate at the choir of St Olaf and St Erik was founded by Duke Bengt Birgersson, the youngest son of Birger Jarl who was Duke of Finland and Bishop of Linköping.¹⁵¹ The goods that had been donated to the cathedral of Uppsala by Karl Erlandsson in 1296 and Israel Persson in 1298 were included in the furnishing of this vicariate.¹⁵² In 1314, Archbishop Nils Allesson founded the seventh prebend of the cathedral in the choir of the two royal saints. Finally, Duke Valdemar Magnusson seems to have ordered the foundation of a prebend in that choir (*prebenda Ducum*) before his death in 1318, but it took until 1329 before it was actually furnished.¹⁵³ The income of the chapel of St Erik does not appear to have been administered by the cathedral, since neither the income from the chapel, nor from the prebend, which was established in the 1330s or 1340s, are listed in the registers of 1344, 1444 or 1475.¹⁵⁴

In addition to those places of veneration of St Erik inside the cathedral church, there is evidence for (at least) one external chapel.¹⁵⁵ As early as 1278, the dean of the cathedral chapter, Björn, bequeathed one silver mark to the '*Ecclesie sanctj ericj in arusia*', the church of St Erik in Östra Aros.¹⁵⁶ It seems likely that this church was a temporary wooden building in which masses were celebrated before this became possible in the cathedral, which was still under construction.¹⁵⁷ It is probably this chapel to which Karl Gregersson

¹⁴⁹ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*. The latest statement on the different places of veneration of St Erik inside and outside the cathedral (choir, chapel(s), altars, prebends) is included in Lovén and Bengtsson, 'Domkyrkans kor och altaren under medeltiden', pp. 255, 265; Carlsson, 'Sankt Eriks kapell'.

¹⁵⁰ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*, p. 132.

¹⁵¹ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*, pp. 131–32.

¹⁵² SDHK, 1167, 1222.

¹⁵³ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*, pp. 138–39.

¹⁵⁴ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*, p. 141. The catalogues from 1444 and 1475 have recently been published: Dahlbäck, 'Gods- och inventarieförteckning för Uppsala domkyrkas prebendor 1443–44/1475'.

¹⁵⁵ Lovén, 'Erikskulten i Uppsala'.

¹⁵⁶ SDHK, 1037.

¹⁵⁷ The existence and duration of this church are discussed in Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten', p. 127; Lovén, 'Domkyrkans medeltida byggnadshistoria', pp. 303–05; Carlsson, 'Sankt Eriks kapell', pp. 379–81.

and Archbishop Nils Allesson refer in their testaments of 1301 and 1305, respectively.¹⁵⁸ At some time between 1333 and 1344, this wooden chapel was replaced by a stone building. In *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis*, a canon named Arne is mentioned, who 'started to build the chapel of St Erik in stone further down at the saint's place of death'.¹⁵⁹

St Erik and St Henrik

When Pope Urban II called all Christian knights for a military expedition to free Jerusalem in 1096, many followed his call, took the cross, and even succeeded in conquering large parts of Palestine, including Jerusalem. Although there are examples of other people going on crusade,¹⁶⁰ the concept of 'crusade' became in the first place an effective way to mobilize crowds of fighting men for different purposes, attracted by the papal promise of absolution. The first occasion on which this label was used for a military expedition in Northern Europe was the Wendish Crusade, which began in 1147 after Pope Eugene III had issued the Bull *Divina dispensatione*.¹⁶¹ Saxons, Danes, and Poles cooperated in attacking the heathen Slavs. These attacks were renewed several times until 1185 when the Pomeranian Slavs submitted to King Knut VI of Denmark.

During this same period, in the 1150s, the legends of St Erik and of St Henrik claim a Swedish crusade to Finland led by their two protagonists, after which a Finnish bishopric is said to have been founded. Scholars have, for a long time, claimed that St Erik's crusade to Finland has to be regarded as a historical fact.¹⁶² This claim is based on archaeological evidence that suggests a Christian presence in Finland as early as the twelfth century,¹⁶³ the Bull *Gravis*

¹⁵⁸ SDHK, 1939, 2088.

¹⁵⁹ SDHK, 5055: 'qui capellam beati Eriki inferius circa locum passionis eius primus incepit edificare de lapidibus'; Carlsson, 'Sankt Eriks kapell', p. 381.

¹⁶⁰ On the 'people's crusade' in 1096 see Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, pp. 57–60. On the 'children's crusade' see Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, pp. 252–54.

¹⁶¹ *Mecklenburgisches Urkundenbuch*, ed. by Verein für Mecklenburgische Geschichte und Altertumskunde, I (1863), no. 44. For the latest review of the research on the Wendish Crusade, see Herrmann, *Der Wendenkreuzzug von 1147*; on the crusade, see Christensen, *The Northern Crusades*, pp. 50–72; Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Wendenzüge — Kreuzzüge'.

¹⁶² Grotenfelt, 'Erik den helige och hans korståg till Finland', p. 125: 'Erik den heliges korståg till Finland är ett historiskt faktum'. Other scholars who supported this view were, for example, Westman, *Den svenska kyrkans utveckling*, pp. 93–95 and Antoni, 'Korstågstiden och dess innebörd', p. 158 but also, very recently, Lind, 'The First Swedish Crusade against the Finns'.

¹⁶³ Lehtosalo-Hilander, 'Finland'; Lehtosalo-Hilander, 'The Conversion of the Finns in

admodum, which Pope Alexander III sent to the archbishop of Uppsala,¹⁶⁴ and the entries in the Novgorod Chronicle describing the activities of Swedish pirates led by a king and a bishop in 1142 and a raid on Novgorod in 1164.¹⁶⁵

Recent research has expressed more scepticism about the claim of a crusade in the mid-twelfth century based on these two legends. One of the most critical statements is that of Eric Christiansen, who notes ‘as it stands, it is an obvious literary construct, which cannot be accepted as historical. [...] The legend is crusade propaganda, not fact.’¹⁶⁶ The mention of the weak-mindedness of the Finns concerning their faith, in the Bull *Gravis admodum*, does not necessarily allude to a previous crusade but is more likely to refer to the normal procedure of a slow Christianization process. Similar statements concerning new converts abandoning the Christian faith after the first missionary attempts were made regarding the Scandinavians of the ninth to eleventh centuries in a large number of continental and Old Norse sources.¹⁶⁷ The Swedish military expedition of 1142 that is mentioned in the Novgorod Chronicle should be seen as a sea

Western Finland’; Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrickslegenden*, p. 51; Line, ‘Sweden’s Conquest of Finland’, pp. 85–87; Purhonen, ‘On the Arrival of Christianity in Finland’; Lind, ‘The ‘First Swedish Crusade’ against the Finns’ even assumes that a special kind of church organisation with strong influences of the eastern church had established itself in Finland during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

¹⁶⁴ SDHK, 207.

¹⁶⁵ *The Chronicle of Novgorod*, ed. by Michell and Forbes pp. 17–18 (AD 1142): ‘The same year a *Knyaz* of the *Svei* [=Swedes] with a Bishop in sixty boats attacked merchants who were coming from over sea in three boats; and they fought, they accomplished nothing, and they separated three of their boats and they killed one hundred and fifty of them’; p. 24 (AD 1164): ‘The *Svei* approached Ladoga, and the people of Ladoga set fire to their dwellings, and shut themselves up in the town with *Posadnik* Nezhata, and sent for the *Kynaz* and for the men of Novgorod. And they came right up to the town on a Saturday, and could do nothing to the town, but took more harm themselves; and they retired to the river Voronai. The fifth day after this *Kynaz* Svyatoslav arrived with the men of Novgorod, and with *Posadnik* Zakhari, and turned upon them, on 28 May, the day of Saint Eulali, on Thursday, at 5 of the day, and defeated them with God’s help, some they cut down, and others they took. They had come in 55 boats, 43 boats they took, only a few of them escaped, and those wounded’.

¹⁶⁶ Quote from: Christensen, *The Northern Crusades*, pp. 114–15; also arguing along that line: Lindkvist, ‘Med Sankt Erik konung mot hedningar och schismatike’, p. 26; Line, ‘Sweden’s Conquest of Finland’, pp. 73–74.

¹⁶⁷ Rimbart, *Vita Anskarii*, ed. by Waitz, 20; Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. by Schmeidler, 1.61; Widukind of Corvey, *Rerum gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, ed. by Hirsch and Lohmann, 3.65. For further examples see Capelle, *Heidenchristen im Norden*, pp. 22–27.

raid rather than a crusade: the source describes a raid on merchant ships and does not even mention a landing of the Swedes. The presence of a bishop on the ships — assuming that this information is correct — could have a number of explanations (e.g., raiding himself, pastoral care for the people on the raid) and does not necessarily indicate plans to base a permanent Roman Catholic mission in the area of the Greek/Russian Orthodox Church. It cannot be ruled out that King Erik Jedvardsson led a military expedition, similar to that mentioned in the Novgorod Chronicle, to Finland.¹⁶⁸ However, it is more probable that such an expedition would have had the characteristics of a Viking raid rather than those of a crusade with the aim of establishing a permanent mission.¹⁶⁹ The assumption that there was no (successful and permanent) church organization in twelfth-century Finland, does, however, appear to be confirmed by the fact that the first sources that name a Finnish bishopric derive only from the middle of the thirteenth century.¹⁷⁰

One should not overemphasize the political utilization of saints, but it is notable that the inclusion of the crusade episode in the two legends could serve a number of different purposes. One of the main tasks of the Dominican Order was to preach the crusade. Before Johan took office as bishop of Åbo, he was a Dominican prior. In addition to being friar, *lector*, and later on prior of the Dominican friary of Sigtuna, Israel Erlandsson was appointed inquisitor (by Archbishop Nils Allesson in 1311, for the treatment of the case of Botolf of Ösby)¹⁷¹ and head crusade preacher of the Dominican province of Dacia.¹⁷² The propagation of a crusade to Finland was thus an affair that was a central concept of Dominican identity in general and to Israel Erlandsson's ambition

¹⁶⁸ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 47 arrives at the same conclusion after a thorough discussion of the twentieth-century research on possible dates for the 'first crusade' and so does Line, 'Sweden's Conquest of Finland', p. 82.

¹⁶⁹ Lindkvist, 'Die schwedischen Kreuzzüge nach Finnland in der Geschichtsschreibung', p. 62: 'Schwedische Heerzüge, von denen um die Wende vom 12. zum 13. Jahrhundert die Rede ist, waren im Grunde genommen verspätete Wikingerzüge. Die ihnen zugrunde liegende Absicht waren Plünderung und Tributforderung, in keinem Fall aber permanente Eroberungen'. On the history of the first permanent 'Swedish' settlements in Finland see: Kerkkonen, 'Obygd — Erämark — Nybygd'. See, however, the critical paper of Lind, 'Puzzling Approaches to the Crusading Movement in Recent Scandinavian Historiography', who is able to show that it is hard to determine how peaceful the early missionary attempts in Finland actually were.

¹⁷⁰ SDHK, 682.

¹⁷¹ SDHK, 2413.

¹⁷² He was appointed to this office in 1292 (SDHK, 1532).

in particular, since he was not only a Dominican crusade preacher but also a member of the aristocratic circle that led the fortunes of Uppland and that must have had a strong interest in expanding its influence (and property) across the other side of the Gulf of Bothnia.

What better way of promoting a crusade to Finland could there have been than to include such an expedition in the two legends on which members of the Dominican friaries of Sigtuna and Åbo were working (the authorship of the two legends will be discussed presently), thus setting a sanctified example for the crusaders of their time to follow? Through the legend, Bishop Johan of Åbo could strengthen the authority and popularity of the only 'native' saint of his bishopric, thereby attaining an equal standing with the other Swedish bishoprics of the time.¹⁷³ We should not, however, assume that Israel Erlandsson and Bishop Johan expressly invented a crusade without any kind of historical basis. It is possible that a raid by King Erik to Finland, not recorded in our sources but remembered by contemporaries, could have presented the basis for the accounts in the two legends. After all, what might a saintly king and a saintly bishop have wanted to achieve in a heathen land if not to evangelize it?

With regard to the model of the crusade episode recorded in the legend of St Erik, it should be noted that the aforementioned raid of 1142 did not happen during Erik's kingship but in the reign of Sverker the Elder. There are, indeed, a number of characteristics ascribed to St Erik in his legend that in fact bring to mind Sverker the Elder rather than the historical Erik.¹⁷⁴ It is known, for example, that Sverker furthered the church of his realm by the foundation of monasteries. He and his queen Ulvhild played an important part in the erection of the first Cistercian monasteries in Götaland — Alvastra and Nydala — while Erik and his queen Christina drove the monks of Varnhem out of their monastery.¹⁷⁵ Moreover, Sverker is said to have been murdered on his way to church on Christmas Eve by one of his followers, who was incited by Magnus Henriksson.¹⁷⁶ This strongly recalls the episode in the legend of St Erik, in

¹⁷³ The cathedral at Åbo/Turku received St Henrik as its patron in the last years of the thirteenth century, and his feast day was introduced into the calendar of the diocese at about the same time; see Malin(iemi), *Der Heiligenkalender Finnlands*, p. 147; Heikkilä, *Sankt Henriks-legenden*, pp. 61–65. The first charter dated by his feast day was written in 1335 (SDHK, 4110: 'jn festo sancti Henrici episcopi et martiris').

¹⁷⁴ This observation has already been made by Schmid, 'Erik den Helige i liturgin', p. 166.

¹⁷⁵ Konrad, *Exordium magnum Cisterciense*, ed. by Griesser, 28.282 (Gr+258); 'Narratiuncula de Fundatione Monasterij Vitæscholæ in Cimbria', pp. 138–39.

¹⁷⁶ Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum* = *Danmarkshistorien* ed. by Friis-Jensen, II, 14.17.2;

which he is attacked and killed by an armed brigade on the orders of the same Magnus after celebrating mass on Ascension Day. Given these similarities, it seems plausible that the memory of the two kings melded to form the image of St Erik represented in his legend.

In modern research it has become usual to ask what a saint's legend can tell us about the time of its creation, rather than about the time in which its subject lived.¹⁷⁷ The fact that it was easier to create a role model out of a king who was only vaguely remembered, and whose memory could therefore be easily manipulated, has been summarized by Janet Nelson, who comments: 'What distinguishes a saint from a sacral or holy person is the very obvious, but crucial, fact that a saint is dead'.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the crusade episode in the two legends is to be seen in the context of Swedish foreign policy of the late thirteenth century and not based on a Swedish mission to Finland in the middle of the twelfth century. The Swedish foreign policy of the thirteenth century was expansive and two military expeditions — usually labelled 'crusades' — over the Gulf of Bothnia were undertaken. The first of these was led by Birger Jarl in 1239 and the second by Marshal Torgils Knutsson in 1292/1293. The latter ended with the conquest of today's southern Finland and the erection of the castle of Viborg/Viipuri (today part of Russia). During this time of Swedish expansion towards the east, the legends of St Erik and St Henrik were composed and an episode about a crusade in the mid-twelfth century was included in both.

Toni Schmid and others have claimed that a close connection exists between the legends of St Erik and of St Henrik.¹⁷⁹ They were both written in the late thirteenth century and they even resemble each other in wording in a number of places. Similarities can also be observed for the offices of the two saints, in which the same melodies (of Dominican origin) were used.¹⁸⁰ The two legends use a common historical background, which has its basis in the fact that the two saints are said to have lived at the same time and in the same region: Erik

his death is also spoken about in a papal letter of 1208: SDHK, 320; 'Äldre Västgötalagens kungalängd', ed. by Wiktorsson, p. 198 reveals: 'Hans hæstæ swen myrði han iulæ otto [...] sum han skuldi till kyrkyu faræ' (His groom murdered him on Christmas eve, when he was on his way to the church).

¹⁷⁷ See e.g. Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 55: 'berättelserna företräder ju den tid då de har skrivits, inte Henriks egen tid'.

¹⁷⁸ Nelson, 'Royal Saints and Early Medieval Kingship', p. 43.

¹⁷⁹ Schmid, *Sveriges kristnande*, p. 141; Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, pp. 129–32.

¹⁸⁰ Nilsson, 'Über die skandinavische Hymnenüberlieferung', pp. 250–51.

as king of Sweden and Henrik as bishop of Uppsala. The legends claim that their two protagonists undertook a crusade to Finland together in order to spread the Christian faith and to rescue the souls of the pagan Finns. This common historical background has led scholars to assume that 'It is well known that the actual "historical" part of the legend of Henrik derives from the legend of Erik',¹⁸¹ an assumption that is shared by more recent research.¹⁸² The same is true for the relationship between the liturgies of St Erik and St Henrik. According to Tuomas Heikkilä, they have the same melody in many of their hymns.¹⁸³ Besides the general historical setting, it is the episode about the crusade in which the two legends most strongly complement each other. This episode is the reason why the two saints often appear together in depictions and why each saint was also venerated in the other's 'homeland'. In addition to depictions that show both saints, it is noticeable that in two charters as well as in the *Calendarium Vallentunense* writers who meant to refer to St Erik, used the words '*Henrici Regis*' by mistake.¹⁸⁴ Such errors illustrate the proximity of the two saints in the minds of contemporaries.

It has been suggested on those grounds that both legends could have been written by the same person.¹⁸⁵ However, this has recently been rejected on the grounds that there is too great a difference between the styles of the two works, as well as to their different places of composition.¹⁸⁶ Nonetheless, it certainly remains possible that both legends were written by people who were closely connected to one another. Tuomas Heikkilä discusses questions concerning the authorship, time, and place of origin of the legend of St Henrik in great detail.¹⁸⁷ He states that because of the distribution of the manuscripts contain-

¹⁸¹ Malin(iemi), *Zur Kenntnis des Breviarium Aboense Cod. Holm.* 56, p. 25: 'Es ist wohl bekannt, dass der im eigentlichen Sinne "geschichtliche" Teil der Henrikslegende aus der Erikslegende stammt'.

¹⁸² Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 150: 'Förekommande textcitat och -lån gör det i praktiken säkert att S:t Henrikslegenden har tillkommit först efter motsvarande text för S:t Erik'.

¹⁸³ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 149.

¹⁸⁴ SDHK, 740, 3799; *Calendarium vallentunense*. It must, however, be admitted that the two charters are only preserved in two medieval copy books (SDHK, 740 in A8, RA; SDHK, 3799 in A10, RA). The misspellings there might, therefore, be the result of mistakes made by the copyist.

¹⁸⁵ Schmid, *Sveriges kristnande*, p. 141.

¹⁸⁶ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 156.

¹⁸⁷ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, pp. 149–59.

ing the legend it is obvious that the place of its creation was in the bishopric of Åbo/Turku. In terms of its probable period of composition, he suggests a time frame between the latter half of the 1270s and the beginning of the 1290s. He rejects the assumption that a bishop of Åbo could have been the author of St Henrik's legend, on the grounds that the authorship of a person of such high reputation would have been mentioned in the text in order to raise its credibility and authority.¹⁸⁸ Instead, he points to the two communities that, in his opinion, are the most likely to have composed the legend: the people working in the immediate surroundings of the bishop of Åbo (a formal cathedral chapter founded in or shortly before 1286) and the friars of the Dominican friary of St Olaf, which was founded in Åbo/Turku in 1249. The supposition of a Dominican context for the origin of the text is strengthened by the fact that it was written in an 'almost classic style of Latin' and that the author obviously knew the sermons of Bernard of Clairvaux.¹⁸⁹ We could, therefore, summarize the characteristics of the legend of St Henrik as follows: it was composed in Finland between 1275 and 1290 by a person of (Dominican) scholarship who had an intimate knowledge of the legend of St Erik.

In searching for a person who fits those characteristics, the network traced above, centring on the cathedral of Uppsala and the Dominican house in Sigtuna, is again pivotal. In order to supply a connection to Finland and St Henrik, we need to add Prior Johan to the circle of Upplandian nobles described above. Before his time as archbishop elect of Uppsala (1289–91), Johan was bishop of Åbo/Turku from 1286 onwards, and before that he was prior of the Sigtuna house of the Dominican Order. He was therefore based in Sigtuna in the period when Israel Erlandsson lived in the convent as a friar, and Israel and Johan had a close ongoing relationship. They witnessed (at least) one charter together¹⁹⁰ and they were both appointed as executors of the will of Israel's sister Ragnhild Erlandsdotter, a position which was only given to trusted relatives and friends.¹⁹¹ Obviously, they also shared an admiration of St Erik since the holy king featured on Johan's seal as prior of the Sigtuna friary

¹⁸⁸ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 157.

¹⁸⁹ Heikkilä, *Sankt Henrikslegenden*, p. 129: 'S:t Henrikslegendens Latin är mycket klart och nästan klassiskt. Textskribenten har behärskat väl också de accusativus cum infinitivokonstruktioner som oftast ignoreras i medeltidslatinet, liksom bisatsernas riktiga modus', pp. 132–33 (Bernard of Clairvaux). Heikkilä does not include these findings into his argumentation concerning the authorship of the legend of St Henrik.

¹⁹⁰ SDHK, 1336.

¹⁹¹ SDHK, 1427.

from 1282 (Fig. 14). He then reused this seal as his counter-seal during his time as bishop of Åbo and as archbishop elect of Uppsala.¹⁹²

In my opinion it is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Johan, who would have known of the legend of St Erik, whether it was ongoing or complete at this time (and who had perhaps even worked on it himself), issued the composition of a legend of St Henrik during his time as bishop of Åbo and connected both legends through the episode of the crusade. If this is the case, it would limit the possible time frame for the composition of St Henrik's legend to the years 1286–89. At the same time, the authorship of Bishop Johan would give us a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the legend of St Erik, if we follow the scholars who assume that St Erik's legend was composed before that of St Henrik. This does not mean that Bishop Johan has to be the author of the legend of St Henrik, in the sense that he personally wrote it. It is much more likely that he used the method of the composition of hagiographical texts we have already encountered when analysing the miracle collection of St Erik. He would have seen this first-hand during his time as prior of the Dominican convent of Sigtuna. As has been shown above, the compilation of the miracles of the royal saint was a group project rather than the work of a single person. Although Israel Erlandsson was the person who collected the miracles he is named along with three archbishops, a number of Franciscan and Dominican brothers, and two parish priests, as contributors to the miracle collection. This collaborative method of composing a hagiographical text may have been used for the legend as well as the miracle collection.

The question of authorship of the legend of St Erik has been raised surprisingly seldom. While Israel Erlandsson and other contributors are named in the miracle collection, and he names himself as the compiler of the text in his epilogue, no such clue is given in the legend. It has, nevertheless, largely been assumed that Israel Erlandsson must have authored the legend.¹⁹³ Recently, the question has been raised as to what possible meanings 'authorship' could have had in the Middle Ages.¹⁹⁴ The assumption that the 'author' was more of a project leader than the sole writer has been made in the case of Archbishop Eystein and the *Passio Olavi* on the grounds that Eystein was the author and collector

¹⁹² Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 179.

¹⁹³ For example, Westman, 'Erik den Helige och hans tid', p. 46. See, however, the differing opinion of Cross, 'The Authorship of "Vita S. Eriki"', who rejected Israel Erlandsson as the author of St Erik's *vita*.

¹⁹⁴ Mortensen, 'Eystein and Passio Olavi'.

of only a few of the miracles that follow the *Passio* of St Olaf.¹⁹⁵ This situation is very similar to that of the recording of the miracles of St Erik and it therefore seems likely that the composition of his legend was similarly a result of teamwork. There may well have been one person who was 'project leader' and who was responsible for finally putting the legend into writing, but nonetheless it is likely that the conceptual work was conducted by a group.

Given his position as a member of the house of Finsta, of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala, and of the Dominican house of Sigtuna in the personal network outlined above, it seems most plausible to me to assume that the person who worked most actively on the compilation of the hagiographical and liturgical texts of St Erik was Israel Erlandsson, while the position of 'project leader' could have been held by his prior, Johan. Taking all of this into account, it is, in my opinion, very likely that Johan, when he became bishop of Åbo, exported the concept to Finland and applied it to the composition of the legend of St Henrik. Here, he was once again leader of a very similar project, and the members of his cathedral chapter and of the Dominican house of Åbo/Turku were those who contributed to the composition of the legend of St Henrik. This mode of composing a legend might also be the reason why no single person is credited with the authorship of the legends of the two saints, and — if this suggestion is developed further — it may also be an explanation for the fact that large parts of the extant medieval hagiographical material are transmitted anonymously.

The engagement of Dominicans in the promotion of a new saint is not particularly unusual, but it is worth noting that in this same period, during the 1270s when the texts for the veneration of St Erik were produced, something very similar happened in France. In 1270, the French king Louis IX died on his second crusade near Tunis.¹⁹⁶ Two years later, the newly elected pope, Gregory X, urged the confessor of the late king, the Dominican friar Geoffrey of Beaulieu, to write a summary of Louis's life that was supposed to be used as a starting point for a canonization process. This first and most influential *vita* of St Louis was complemented a few years later by a second account by another Dominican, William of Chartres, and in 1275 the Dominican provincial chapter of France asked the Roman cardinals to further the canonization

¹⁹⁵ Ekrem, 'Om Passio Olavis tilblivelse og eventuelle forbindelse med Historia Norwegie', pp. 138–45; Waßenhoven, Skandinavien unterwegs, pp. 129–36.

¹⁹⁶ For general information on Louis IX of France, see his most recent biography, Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, trans. by Gollrad.

of Louis IX.¹⁹⁷ A further parallel between the production of some of the texts on St Louis and those on St Erik can be found in some aspects of the political situation. Both in Sweden and in western and central Europe, the political and clerical leaders wanted to set out on a new crusade and new crusading saints like St Louis and St Erik could further such enterprises immensely.¹⁹⁸ Given the probability that Israel Erlandsson was educated in the Dominican *studium generale* of Paris, the strong Dominican element in the promotion of the cults of St Erik and St Henrik becomes still more plausible.

Summary

It can be concluded that from the middle of the thirteenth century, the cult of St Erik developed rapidly on the basis of the local cult in Gamla Uppsala that had started sometime in the second half of the twelfth century and that was now gaining its first foothold in Östergötland and other parts of the kingdom. One important requirement for its rise was the changing nature of Swedish society at the time as discussed in the 'Historical Background' section. The change that proved to be most fundamental for the development of the cult of St Erik was the establishment of a secular cathedral chapter in Uppsala, probably in 1247. As a result, a community was created that could actively promote the cult of St Erik, something that the Cistercian regular chapter that probably existed up to 1224 had not done to any great extent. Another important prerequisite for the cult of St Erik to flourish was the arrival of the mendicant orders in Sweden.¹⁹⁹ They introduced a new way of preaching and, through their high standard of scholarliness, they improved literacy in the region. This is particularly true for the Dominicans, and the cooperation between the archbishop and the cathedral chapter in Uppsala on one side, and the Dominican convent in Sigtuna on the other, is obvious. Furthermore, the arrival of the

¹⁹⁷ The letters of Gregory X and of the Dominicans of France, as well as the two *vitae*, have recently been edited and translated in *The Sanctity of Louis IX*, ed. by Gaposchkin and Fields, pp. 64–159. 'Read together, our two *vitae* and the contemporary letter in the name of all Dominicans in France represent the influence of a 'Dominican moment' in the move towards Louis's canonization' (p. 37).

¹⁹⁸ On the planning of a new crusade by Louis's successor Philip III and Gregory X, see *The Sanctity of Louis IX*, ed. by Gaposchkin and Fields, pp. 37–38.

¹⁹⁹ For a more general discussion of the mendicants in Scandinavia see Gallén, *La Province de Dacie de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*; Nybo Rasmussen, *Die Franziskaner in den nordischen Ländern im Mittelalter*.

Dominicans ended the almost perfect monopoly that the Cistercians had held up to this time over monasteries in Sweden.²⁰⁰ More generally, the changes inside the 'Swedish' society of the thirteenth century — including the creation of secular cathedral chapters, the arrival of the mendicants, the privileges given to aristocracy and clergy, and the strengthening of royal power, leading to the evolution of a political entity that could be called 'Sweden' — were prerequisites for this first flourishing of the cult of St Erik.

With regard to the supporters of the cult of St Erik, it can be concluded that, in addition to the new royal house of Bjälbo, with its attempts to exploit St Erik's legitimizing potential, the institutions that promoted the cult of the saint were the cathedral church of Uppsala and the Dominican friary in Sigtuna. Their most outstanding member in this respect was Israel Erlandsson, canon at the chapter and later prior of the Dominican house in Sigtuna and bishop of Västerås. The works composed in honour of St Erik and St Henrik in the period under discussion in this chapter bear the mark of a strong Dominican influence and were most likely produced in the Dominican houses of Sigtuna and Åbo/Turku. Furthermore, it is possible to identify a circle of Upplandian nobles who engaged in the veneration of St Erik. The cult of St Erik in general bore a rather aristocratic imprint, which is witnessed by the miracle collection in which a large number of nobles, royal officials, and high clerics appear as beneficiaries of St Erik's intercession.

²⁰⁰ The evidence for a Benedictine monastery in Vreta has been questioned. See Nilsson and others, *Sveriges Kyrkohistoria*, 1, 93. The only non-Cistercian house in Sweden was that of the order of St John, which was founded in 1185 in Eskilstuna, see Nyberg, 'Zur Rolle der Johanniter in Skandinavien'.

TIMES OF STAGNATION VERSUS THE RULE OF MAGNUS ERIKSSON (1319–89)

Historical Background

The second half of the thirteenth century was a most vibrant and dynamic time. The rise of the Bjälbo dynasty gave the starting signal for far-reaching changes in many aspects of medieval Swedish society. It was only then that the kings who called themselves *Rex Sveorum Gothorumque* really started to exercise their power in both regions — Götaland and Svealand — having previously had their power base mainly in Västergötland. It was also the time when the Swedish regional laws (*landskapslagar*) were codified (*Äldre Västgötalagen* probably around 1220, the other regional laws after 1280) and law started to be based on the will of the king rather than on existing legal customs. Two more trend-setting events of the time were the crusades to Finland — which had its connection to the cult of St Erik as discussed above in Chapter 5 — and the invitation of German merchants to Swedish trade towns.

The time after the death of Magnus 'Ladulås' Birgersson was mainly characterized by the struggle between his oldest son, King Birger, and his brothers, the dukes Erik and Valdemar.¹ The struggle ended in 1318 with the death of the two younger brothers, the expulsion of Birger, and the coronation of Duke Erik's three-year-old son Magnus as king of Sweden in 1319.² Shortly

¹ The account of the political history is mainly based on the entries on the leading characters (Birger Magnusson, the dukes Erik and Valdemar, Magnus Eriksson, Erik and Håkan Magnusson, King Albrekt of Mecklenburg) in SBL, and in Lagerqvist, *Sveriges regenter*.

² The charter that was issued in connection with this coronation, known as *frihetsbrev*, has

beforehand, he had also inherited the Norwegian crown from his grandfather, Håkan Magnusson, through his mother, Ingeborg Håkansdotter, often referred to as 'Duchess Ingeborg'. During his early years, a minority council governed the kingdom until Magnus came of age, probably in 1331. The *riksråd* as a permanent political institution became stronger during the time of Magnus's minority, and even after he came of age, it retained a great influence on Swedish politics. Shortly after King Magnus reached his majority, in November 1332, a contract was negotiated between Duke Valdemar of Jylland and the counts Gerhard and Johan of Holstein on one side, and King Magnus Eriksson and the archbishop of Lund on the other side that enabled the Danish nobles to pawn the districts of Skåne and Blekinge on the Scandinavian mainland for 34,000 silver marks of Cologne weight to Magnus.³ The contract was modified in 1343 to the effect that the territories were sold from the Danish King Valdemar Atterdag to Magnus. The price for this was raised to 49,000 silver marks. However, this contract was to haunt Magnus throughout his reign, as it was one of the reasons for the severe financial problems that he faced throughout his kingship, and that also led to conflicts with those creditors who had provided him with the money to pay the rates.⁴ One of those creditors was the Church, and Magnus's failure to repay the money that he had borrowed from different ecclesiastical incomes led to his excommunication by Pope Innocent VI in 1358. Another important legal act that was to prove extremely politically significant later on was the marriage of Magnus's sister Eufemia to Duke Albrekt II of Mecklenburg in 1336.

been labelled the 'Swedish Magna Carta', since it was an aristocratic document that constrained the power of the king; SDHK, 2934 (Latin).

³ SDHK, 3918.

⁴ Among the additional reasons for Magnus's financial distress were a taxation system that was not yet adjusted to the major changes in Swedish society (new royal officials that had to be paid, mercenary armies instead of the feudal knight fealty, etc.), a crusade to Novgorod between 1348–1351, and the impact of the Black Death, which reduced the population basis for Swedish taxation income by half in the course of several waves of the plague between c. 1350 and the 1370s. See Myrdal, 'Digerdöden, pestvågor och ödeläggelse', pp. 154–57, 244: 'Den första stora epidemin har medfört en dödlighet som sannolikt varit i storleksordningen en tredjedel eller mer. De följande två har haft en överdödlighet som varit mindre, men inte dramatiskt mycket mindre, än den första. Totalt kan befolkningen ha halverats på tjugo år.' (The big first epidemic entailed a mortality of the dimension of a third [of the population] or more. The following two had a smaller mortality rate, but not dramatically smaller than the first. In total, the population may have been diminished by half during 20 years).

The years up to *c.* 1350 were characterized by several attempts to reform sections of Swedish society. While conducting the *Eriksgrata*, the tour through his kingdom that every newly elected Swedish king had to make (see Map 4), Magnus decreed the abolishment of slavery (in Västergötland and Värmland) in 1335 and a kingdom-wide public peace (*landsfred*).⁵ The fact that he was not only the king of Sweden but also of Norway forced him to institutionalize the government to a higher degree than his predecessors so that it could continue to function when he stayed in his other kingdom. For this purpose, he created the position of the *officialis regis generalis* in 1344 and decreed how the government should work during his periods of absence.⁶ In addition, in the mid-1340s, preparations began to draw up a new legal system that was supposed to be valid across the whole kingdom (*landslag*) and to replace the regional laws (*landskapslagar*). At the same time, laws were developed that were to be applied to Swedish towns (*stadslag*).⁷ Both sets of lawcodes came into effect in the early 1350s.

Magnus had two sons, Erik and Håkan. Erik was elected co-ruler and Magnus's successor in Sweden and Skåne in 1344, while his brother became the ruler of Norway after his coming of age in 1355 and it seems that he was able to act with a greater degree of independence from his father than his brother. Erik, the elder brother, also wanted an autonomous rulership and he therefore started an uprising against his father in 1356 with the support of a number of magnates, among them Duke Albrekt II of Mecklenburg. This confrontation ended in a division of the kingdoms of Sweden and Skåne between Magnus and Erik. This division, however, became obsolete in 1359 when Erik died suddenly. The rule of Magnus was again contested when the Danish King Valdemar Atterdag allied with Magnus's brother-in-law, Duke Albrekt II of Mecklenburg, and conquered Skåne in 1360 as well as the island of Gotland in 1361. Magnus's and Håkan's alliance with eleven Hanseatic cities led to an unsuccessful military expedition to reconquer Skåne in 1362. After this failure, the two monarchs appear to have drawn closer to King Valdemar. Håkan broke his betrothal with the North German Elisabeth of Holstein and married Margareta Valdemarsdotter instead (to whom he had already been engaged

⁵ SDHK, 4113, 4197.

⁶ SDHK, 5077.

⁷ The precise date of when the commission that was supposed to hand in a draft of the new laws started its work is uncertain, but in 1347 a note of protest (SDHK, 5399) was given to the commission which can serve as a *terminus ante quem*. See Lennerstrand, 'Medeltidens lagkommissioner', pp. 312–14; Strauch, *Mittelalterliches nordisches Recht bis 1500*, pp. 536–37; *Magnus Erikssons Landslag i nysvensk tolkning*, trans. by Holmbäck and Wessén, pp. xiii–xvi.

between 1359 and 1361). The Swedish magnates, under their leader Bo Jonsson (Grip), apparently did not appreciate this new formation of alliances, and therefore offered the Swedish crown to Albrekt, the son of Duke Albrekt II of Mecklenburg and Magnus's sister Eufemia, in 1363.

King Albrekt was elected king of Sweden in 1364. This election was followed by a war between Albrekt on one side and Magnus and Håkan on the other that lasted until 1371, in the course of which Albrekt lost most of his credit among the Swedish population by pawning large parts of the land to German nobles.⁸ The pawning of land had been utilized earlier under the Bjälbo kings when there was an urgent need of money. However, under Albrekt's rule this financial instrument became the most common means of filling the king's war chest. This resulted in a situation where large parts of the kingdom were pawned to a few nobles who fought on the side of King Albrekt, and were thereby compensated for their military costs.⁹ The civil war ended with a peace treaty according to which Håkan received the territory of the bishopric of Skara, while the head of the *riksråd*, Bo Jonsson (Grip), was granted supremacy over the rest of the realm. Bo Jonsson was the greatest landowner Sweden (and Finland) had ever seen. He owned approximately 2000 farms spread over the whole kingdom. In the years after 1371, he was in many respects more powerful than the king himself.¹⁰

King Albrekt's rule is remembered as being that of a weak king.¹¹ The reasons for this are firstly, the great influence exerted by his father on his decision making and, secondly, the power of sections of the Swedish nobility led by Bo Jonsson (Grip). The actual position of King Albrekt's father, Duke Albrekt II, as a person with considerable influence on Swedish politics, is epitomized by his firm grip on the three-crowns banner in the depiction of father and son in Ernst von Kirchberg's *Mecklenburgische Reimchronik* (Fig. 16), while King Albrekt himself appears to hold the flag very loosely. The Duke's imposing

⁸ Nordman, *Albrecht, Herzog von Mecklenburg, König von Schweden*, pp. 93–95; Fritz, *Hus land och län*, 1, 120–29.

⁹ Fritz, *Hus land och län*, 1, 121.

¹⁰ Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia*, p. 105; Nordman, *Albrecht, Herzog von Mecklenburg, König von Schweden*, pp. 152–54 suggests that King Albrekt held only a minor role in the political decisions of his party. Albrekt's weak position relatively to Bo Jonsson is already suggested simply by the number of charters in which Bo Jonsson is mentioned. They amount to 745, while there are only 530 charters to which King Albrekt contributed.

¹¹ For more literature on the reign of King Albrekt, in addition to those works already quoted, see Kattinger, 'Schweden am Vorabend der Kalmarer Union'.



Figure 16. King Albrecht of Mecklenburg (left) and his father Duke Albrecht of Mecklenburg (right) in Ernst von Kirchberg's *Mecklenburgische Reimchronik*, Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin, LHAS 1.12–1 Chroniken, Nr. 1 fol. 1^v, c. 1378. Courtesy of the Landesamt für Kultur und Denkmalpflege Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

influence also had an economic basis: he was the German noble to whom King Albrekt had pawned the highest amount of landed property in Sweden.¹² The strong influence of the Swedish nobility was institutionalized in 1371 in a royal pledge that left large parts of the political responsibility in the hands of the *riksråd*. One of the main points of dispute between Duke Albrekt and King Albrekt on one side, and the Swedish nobility on the other, was the question of who had the right to be appointed to a position as a royal bailiff. During his reign Magnus Eriksson had already started to appoint Germans to these important administrative positions. The new German monarch quite naturally tried to fill these positions with men he knew and trusted (and who, therefore, came from Germany), while the Swedish nobles wanted the politically and economically important positions to be shared among themselves. The members of the monastery of Vadstena appear to have shared the opinion of the latter, since the entry in *Diarium Vadstenense* for 1365 reads: 'That was when the birds of prey came down from the mountain tops, for the Germans tyrannized the land for many years'.¹³

King Albrekt's father died in 1379, and when the leader of the *riksråd*, Bo Jonsson (Grip), died a short while later in 1386, King Albrekt saw a chance to strengthen his position by trying to gain possession of as much of Bo Jonsson's property as possible. Since a strengthened position for Albrekt would mean a weakened position for the Swedish aristocracy, the nobles, as they did in 1363, resorted in 1388 to offering the crown to a foreign ruler, this time, to Queen Margareta of Denmark, the widow of Håkan Magnusson, who had died in 1380. This led to the battle of Åsle near Falköping in February 1389, in which the troops of Margareta won the victory. Since Margareta's son Olaf, grandson of Magnus Eriksson, had died in 1387, she adopted her grand-nephew Bogislav, son of Vartislav VII of Pommern-Stolp, born in 1381 or 1382, who changed his name to Erik.

¹² Nordman, *Albrecht, Herzog von Mecklenburg, König von Schweden*, pp. 95–97; Engström, *Bo Jonsson*, pp. 93–102. According to Fritz, *Hus land och län*, II, 21, 45–53, 98, he held the bailiwick over the castles of Kalmar, Nyköping, and Stäkeholm, as well as over a large area in Mid-Sweden including Hälsingland, Dalarna (including Kopparberget), and large parts of Södermanland and Västmanland.

¹³ *Vadstenadiariet*, ed. by Gejrot, p. 35: 'Tunc aves rapaces preoccupaverunt cacumina monicum. Nam Theutunici tyrannizaverunt in terra multis annis'. The composition of the *Diarium Vadstenense* was started in 1392. For the time of Albrekt's reign it is, therefore, a nearly contemporary source.

It has been suggested that this change of name was intended to make Erik of Pomerania more popular in Sweden, because of the great prestige enjoyed by St Erik in the kingdom.¹⁴ It should, however, also be noted that it was a necessary step for Margareta to display Erik's affiliation to the dynasty of Bjälbo in order to strengthen his hereditary claims to all three Nordic crowns. As has been discussed above, the name 'Erik' was one of the leading names of the Bjälbo dynasty from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards. By adopting this name, the new heir to the throne was therefore stressing the genealogical continuity on the Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish thrones seeking to disguise the fact that this continuity could only be maintained through the female line. The reason why 'Erik' became one of the leading names inside the house of Bjälbo was — as shown above — the attempt to claim a kinship between St Erik and the descendants of Birger Jarl. The connection between St Erik and Erik of Pomerania is, therefore, clear but indirect.¹⁵

In 1389 Erik of Pomerania was chosen as king of Norway. But it was only in 1396 that he was elected king of Denmark and of Sweden in two separate elections. Those elections led to the meeting in Kalmar in 1397, where a union of the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, known as the Kalmar Union, was decided upon. This union was supposed to be a permanent institution, in contrast to earlier (personal) unions between the Scandinavian kingdoms.

St Erik as Patron Saint of the Swedish Kingdom

In the second decade of the fourteenth century, a number of expressions of veneration towards the Swedish royal saint could still be found: in 1314, Johannes Erlandsson Ängel, one of the brothers of Israel Erlandsson, included a donation in his testament in favour of the chapel of St Erik inside the cathedral, where he chose his burial place.¹⁶ In the same year, Archbishop Nils Kertilsson gave a similar donation *ad exteriorem cappellam beati Eriki in pede montis* ('the chapel of St Erik outside [the cathedral] at the base of the mountain'), although

¹⁴ Carlsson, 'Erik av Pommern', p. 269.

¹⁵ A particularly telling example of the purposeful naming of future kings can be found with the two sons of Magnus Eriksson. He named his older son 'Erik' (the foremost Swedish king's name) and his second son 'Håkan' (the name of his Norwegian predecessor and grandfather), thereby predetermining their later roles in the two kingdoms. See Nyberg, 'Birgitta politikern', p. 91.

¹⁶ SDHK, 2598.

he chose the site of his grave in the chapel of St Mary inside the cathedral of Uppsala.¹⁷ In 1316, Anders Andersson (And), dean of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala, nephew of Archbishop Jakob Israelsson and cousin of lawspeaker Birger Persson, donated land in the villages of Staby and Balingsta to build the chapel of St Erik.¹⁸ The last evidence for a special veneration of St Erik outside the royal dynasty of Bjälbo and the cathedral of Uppsala is the seal of the prior of the Dominican convent in Sigtuna. His seal showed the royal saint accompanied by St Mary and St Lars between 1321 and 1325.¹⁹

In contrast to this, during the time of the minority of King Magnus Eriksson (1319–c. 1331), the signs of a flourishing cult of St Erik diminished. In 1320, the former dean of Forsa (Uppland) bequeathed his horse to St Erik in his will.²⁰ In 1321, the ageing Israel Erlandsson consecrated the church of Lima in Dalarna and dedicated it to St Michael, St Lars, St Erik, and St Scholastica, and in 1327 he presented the table of the Archbishop of Uppsala *ad laudem gloriose virginis et beatorum Laurencij et Eriki martyrum* (For the praise of the glorious virgin and the saints and martyrs Lars and Erik) with land in the villages of Husby and Ekeby.²¹ Only two people are known to still have shown St Erik on their seal during this period: Archbishop Olaf Basatömer of Uppsala and the Dean of Ångermanland, Olof of Nordingrå (Fig. 10). The latter certified the donation of a farm to the Archbishop in 1324, with his seal showing St Olaf and St Erik.²²

Like his aristocratic subjects, the new Bjälbo-king, Magnus Eriksson, did not leave any (extant) sources that would point to a veneration of St Erik from the time of his minority. While he issued many charters in the first twelve years of his reign, for example, in none of these did he mention St Erik. It is in a charter from the year 1331, perhaps one of the first after his coming of age, that Magnus names St Erik for the first time. From this charter it becomes clear that — despite the scarce appearances in the sources of the 1320s — the cult of St Erik had continued to develop. In this charter King Magnus requested the dedication of one third of all tithes from the inhabitants of several parts of

¹⁷ SDHK, 2615.

¹⁸ SDHK, 2758.

¹⁹ *Svenska sigiller från medeltiden*, ed. by Hildebrand, andra serien, PL 15, no. 206.

²⁰ SDHK, 2996.

²¹ SDHK, 3064, 3495.

²² SDHK, 3291 (or. perg., RA 0101). Olof of Nordingrå (whose seal is depicted in Fig. 10) is identical with Olof of Hillesjö, discussed above in chap. 5.

Uppland (Tiundaland, Attundaland, Fjärdhundra, Roslagen and Gästrikland) for three years to the building fund of the cathedral in Uppsala. This was to be done 'because of reverence to almighty God and to the saints Lars and Erik, the patrons of this church and of our whole kingdom.'²³ The term *patroni regni* is what is of specific interest here and thus far, this particular charter has not been sufficiently recognized in research into the 'patrons of the realm', a group of saints (with varying members) who officially received their own feast day only in 1474.²⁴ According to Sven Helander, the foundation for the introduction of this feast day was already laid through the masses *pro Domino Rege et statu Regni* and *pro statu Carēlie*, mentioned earlier, which Archbishop Nils Allesson ordained (in about 1300) should be celebrated annually by every priest in the archbishopric of Uppsala.²⁵ The first appearance of the term *patroni regni* has, until now, been assumed to be in a charter from 1371. In this charter, which reads 'Our God Jesus Christ and his beloved mother St Mary, St Peter, St Paul, St Lars, St Erik, St Sigfrid, St Henrik and St Eskil', these saints are called 'patrons of the realm.'²⁶ The charter of 1331 marks an in-between step towards the introduction of this feast day. In this charter, the term is used for the first time, but it is confined to St Lars and St Erik, the patron saints of the cathedral of Uppsala.

Magnus Eriksson is, moreover, the first Swedish king for whom evidence has survived that he actually made the tour, known as the *Erikskata*, through his realm. In a charter issued in Skara in 1335, in which he amended the law of Västergötland, Magnus himself states that he was at the time on his *Erikskata*.²⁷ The notion of a circular ride through all provinces of the realm was first mentioned in the *Äldre Västgötalag*, but the term *Erikskata* is first used in the *Östgötalag* from c. 1290.²⁸ It is only briefly referred to here, and no explanation is given, which suggests that at this time, the term was already in common use. It

²³ SDHK, 3826: 'ob reuerenciam dei omnipotentis, et beatorum Laurencij et erici, ipsius ecclesie, tociusque regni nostri patronorum'.

²⁴ *Statuta synodalia veteris ecclesie Sveogothicae*, ed. by Reuterdaahl, p. 178.

²⁵ SDHK, 1822; Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 166, 208–10; Berglund, *Guds stat och maktens villkor*, pp. 64–69.

²⁶ SDHK, 9850: 'wårom Gudhi Jesu Christo och hans kera modher sancta Marie, sancte Pedher, sancte Pauale, sancte Laurintze, sancte Erike, sancte Sigfride, sancte Henrice, och sancte Eskille'.

²⁷ SDHK, 4113: 'Pa wir Magnus Kononger, hertugh Erikz Son wara Erikz gatu ridhum'.

²⁸ *Östgötalagen och Upplandslagen*, ed. by Holmbäck and Wessén, *Östgötalagen*, Dräpsbalken, 5.1. On the *Erikskata* in general see Holmblad, *Erikskatan från medeltid till nutid*; Hasselberg, 'Erikskata'.

is therefore rather surprising that the first evidence that this tour actually took place can only be found in 1335, and it is likely that earlier kings performed it without leaving reference in an extant record. One possible interpretation of the name *Erikskata* is 'the way of [King] Erik', which would suggest that a ride taken by St Erik proved the model for this circuit. However, considering the roots of the name Erik, as discussed above, it is more likely that the term simply means 'the way of the ruler' and that it has no direct connection to St Erik.

In contrast to St Olaf in Norway, St Erik was never regarded as a 'national' but as a regional saint of the bishopric of Uppsala whose cult started to spread south- and eastwards during the last part of the thirteenth century and the early part of the fourteenth century. That St Erik was not venerated on a national level is unsurprising, since such a level hardly even existed before the end of the thirteenth century. After that time, however, the concept of a national identity gained more and more importance at the expense of regional identities. The fact that, in the thirteenth century, laws were still codified first as *landskapslagar*, or regional laws, reveals that the regional identity of the people living in 'Sweden' was at the time still the decisive one. However, it has been shown that from the early law codes (the *Västgötalag* probably around 1220) to the later ones (*Upplandslag* in 1296), a development can be observed that led to a stronger sense of unity between the Swedish regions.²⁹

This development of national identity reached its first outcome with the election of Magnus Eriksson as king of Sweden in 1319.³⁰ It is, therefore, a logical extension that under his rule, the idea of St Erik as a *patronus Sveciae* should first appear. It should also be borne in mind that Magnus Eriksson was not only king of Sweden but also of Norway. It is, therefore, likely that he became acquainted with St Olaf as the patron saint of Norway and realized the practical value of having a saint whose main attention was turned to the protection of a kingdom. In the light of this insight, the idea of entrusting the royal saint of his other kingdom with a corresponding function must have been obvious. It is even possible that in the 1330s the special veneration of St Erik became a royal prerogative for a short time. Up to that time, the promotion of the cult of St Erik had been a joint venture between the Church of Uppsala and the Bjälbo kings. It is, therefore, surprising that Olaf Basatömer, Archbishop of Uppsala from 1314–32, was the last archbishop for more than thirty years to feature St Erik on his counter-seal. The three archbishops who followed him, Petrus

²⁹ Lindkvist, 'Schweden auf dem Weg in die Kalmarer Union', p. 38.

³⁰ Lindkvist, 'Att skapa ett kungarike', p. 83.

Filipsson (1332–41), Hemming Nilsson (1341–51), and Petrus Torkilsson (1351–66), all chose other motifs for their seals.

The connection between Magnus Eriksson and St Erik and the attempt to install the latter as a *patronus regni* is visible in a number of further sources from the 1340s. Probably around the middle of that decade, King Magnus Eriksson gave the order to prepare two new laws, one *landslag* (law for the country) and one *stadslag* (law for the towns), which were to be implemented across his whole kingdom and which would replace the regional laws of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In the earlier regional laws, the election of a new king was not regulated, while in the so-called *valstadgan*, which is undated but most probably stems from 1332 or 1335,³¹ it is prescribed that the king should swear his coronation oath holding a book (the Bible) and some (unspecified) relics in his hands. He should, furthermore, supplicate God and pray through the saints St Mary and St John the Baptist and all saints and the relics in his hand for grace for his body and soul.³² It is assumed that the election of Magnus Eriksson took place in this way.

The headline of *Konungxbalken V* of Magnus Eriksson's *landslag*, the section in which the election of the king was regulated, followed the lines of *valstadgan*: 'This is the king's oath: Firstly, he has to love God and the holy church; and he should swear his oath by the book and the relics'.³³ The exact regulations, however, differ from those in *valstadgan* on one important point: it is no longer John the Baptist who is turned to on this occasion, but rather it is St Erik who is the recipient of prayers, standing in third place after God and St Mary.³⁴ A very

³¹ *Södermannalagen och Hälsinglagen*, ed. and trans. by Holmbäck and Wessén, p. xxiii.

³² *Valstadgan* is only known through a later addition to *Södermannalagen*: *Södermannalagen*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, p. 187: 'Nu agher konunger eð sin suæria a book ok hælghodomum. hand sinne haldne. biðiane sik sua guð hullan baðe til sial ok lijf. ok iumfru sanctæ mariu. ok sanctæ iohannem baptiste. ok all hælghon ok hælghædomar the han a halde'. (Now shall the king swear his oath holding his hand on the book and the relics, begging to God for grace for both soul and body and the Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist). Concerning the author of *valstadgan*, it has been assumed that he was identical with that of *Konungastyrelsen*, a Swedish king's mirror from about the same time. See Moberg, *Konungastyrelsen*, pp. 138–41.

³³ *Konung Magnus Erikssons Landslag*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, p. 3: '[...] þesse æru kunungx eþæ, först æt han skal ælska guþ ok þe hælgho kirkio ok aghær eþ sin suæria a bok ok hælgho doma'.

³⁴ *Konung Magnus Erikssons Landslag*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, 5.8: 'Nu agher kununger eþ sin suæria a bok, ok helghodoma i hand sinne halda ok sua sighia: sua biþer iak mik guþ hullan baþe til lif ok sial, sancta maria ok sanctæ erik kunung ok al hælghon ok þe helghodoma iak a halder'. (Now, the king shall swear his oath and hold the book and the relics in his hand

similar oath swearing loyalty to the king was prescribed for the law-speakers and for ordinary people.³⁵ This invocation of the patron saint has a parallel (or probably rather a predecessor) in the law that was issued in 1274 by Magnus Eriksson's great-grandfather, Magnus Håkansson 'Lagaböter', for the kingdom of Norway and that was still valid when Magnus Eriksson was king there. The newly chosen Norwegian king had to swear to adhere to the Christian law that was introduced by St Olaf.³⁶ In the Norwegian law only subjects, rather than the king, had to swear their oaths on (unspecified) relics. The parallel between the Norwegian law of 1274 and the Swedish law of c. 1350 appears in the reference to the royal patron saint of the kingdom, although it is expressed in different ways. This parallel strengthens the hypothesis that Magnus Eriksson took the idea of making St Erik the patron saint of Sweden from Norway and from the veneration of St Olaf as that country's patron saint.

This hypothesis is further strengthened through a charter of Magnus Eriksson from the year 1342. In this charter, issued in Kalmar but written in Old Norwegian, the Swedish and Norwegian king ordered the dean and chapter of the royal chapel of St Mary in Oslo to celebrate the feast day of St Erik on 18 May with the highest grade of feast (*totum duplex*). For this celebration, the clerics were to receive three barrels of good beer from the *fehirdi*, the royal treasurer.³⁷ The decision to celebrate the feast of the Swedish royal saint in

and he shall say: 'So I beg to God for grace for my body and soul, St Mary and St Erik the king and all saints and the thing I am holding in my hand.')

³⁵ *Konung Magnus Erikssons Landslag*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, 6.5: 'Siþan skal laghmaþer ok alder almoghe eþa þera suæria a bok ok helghodoma; þa agher laghmaþer hand sina a halda, biþiandi sik ok allum almoghanum sua guþ hullan baþi til lif ok siæl, iumfru sancta maria, sanctæ erik kunung ok all helghon ok helghodoma þe han vp a halder'. (Then may the lawspeaker and all folk swear their oaths on the book and the relics. The lawspeaker shall hold his hand on them and thereby supplicate for himself and for the whole community grace from the Virgin Mary, St Erik the king and all saints and the holy thing he is holding in his hand).

³⁶ *Norges gamle love indtil 1387*, ed. by Keyser and Munch, 1: *Norges love aldre end Kong Magnus Haakonssøns regjeringstiltredelse i 1263*, (1846), Christendomsbalk, 2.8: 'at ek skal þau kristin logh hallda sem hinn hælgi Olavr konungs hov' (that I may keep this Christian law which [derived from] the court of King St Olaf). This oath of the king has, as in Sweden, its equivalent in the oath of the lawspeakers (*Norges gamle love indtil 1387*, ed. by Keyser and Munch, 1: *Norges love aldre end Kong Magnus Haakonssøns regjeringstiltredelse i 1263*, (1846), Christendomsbalk, 2.11) and the peasants (Christendomsbalk, 2.12).

³⁷ SDHK, 4755: 'J. Capello vare .a. atianda dagh Maii. manadar. þat er .a. fi[mt]anda kalendas Junii hatið sem kallazst totum duplex af hinum hæilaga Eiriki kononge. ok Martire. sem hwilir J. vpsalakirkju J. swyiariki'. (In our chapel on the eighteenth day of the month of May,

the king's chapel in Oslo has to be regarded as an active attempt by Magnus Eriksson to encourage and promote the veneration of St Erik in Norway. In this way, he obviously intended to create a sense of solidarity between his two kingdoms. A similar celebration of St Olaf in Sweden, however, was not necessary, since he was the Nordic saint who had been most intensely venerated in Sweden since the twelfth century (see Chapter 3 above).

The efforts to venerate St Olaf and St Erik in parallel become even more obvious in the two wills that Magnus Eriksson and his wife, Blanka of Namur, issued in 1346 and 1347, one for Sweden and one for Norway. The will and testament for the kingdom of Sweden was issued in Lödöse, a prospering town situated near the border between Sweden and Norway on the Swedish side, close to modern Gothenburg.³⁸ This document is written in Old Swedish and includes, in addition to a high number of donations and the promise to build the monastery of Vadstena, the order to set up an altar for St Olaf and St Erik in the church of this monastery and to equip the altar with three sets of altar linen, three outfits for preachers, one gilded goblet worth two silver marks, one corporal, one missal, and two silver jugs. In return, an eternal mass was to be celebrated for the two founders every week.³⁹ In the corresponding will for the kingdom of Norway, issued in 1347 in Lödöse and written in Latin, an altar in Christchurch in Niðarós was founded in honour of St Olaf and St Erik.⁴⁰

that is the fifteenth calends of June, shall a feast which is called totum duplex [be celebrated] of the holy Erik, king and martyr, who rests in the church of Uppsala in the kingdom of Sweden).

³⁸ On medieval Lödöse and its position as mediating place between the two kingdoms, see Harlitz, *Urbana system och riksbildning i Skandinavien*; Harlitz-Kern, 'The Norwegian Origins of the Swedish Town of Lödöse'.

³⁹ SDHK, 5307: 'Jtem til altaræ sanctorum olaui et erici, þry par altaræ klæpe, oc þry par messu klæþæ prestens En forgyltæn calk af twa mark sylfs. eet corporale. enæ messubok, oc twa. ampla af sylf. oc þer scal sighiæs en mæssæ af þøm baþum i. hwarri viku æwærpelica'. On the regulations in the charter, see Fritz, 'Ödeläggelsen av Vadstena kungsgård', p. 15; Fritz, 'Vadstena klosterkyrka och kung Magnus' testamente 1346'; Fritz, 'Det medeltida Vadstena', pp. 62–64.

⁴⁰ SDHK, 5459: 'vnumque, altare jn eadem ecclesia [ecclesie sancti olaui. in nidhrosia, dicte cristkirkui] fundabitur, jn laudem et honorem sanctorum olaui, et erici, regum et martyrum, ibique quatuor misse, jn qualibet septimana, videlicet jn secunda feria, pro animabus nostris, et omnium fidelium defunctorum, feria quarta, de sanctis olauo et erico, sexta de sancta cruce, sabbato de domina, per possessorem illius prebende, vel per alium suo nomine, in perpetuum debeant celebrari' (And an altar in the same church [the church of St Olaf in Nidaros, called Christchurch] will be founded, in praise and honour of saints Olaf and Erik, kings and martyrs. And there, four masses must be celebrated for all times every week. Namely,

This parallel, visible in both documents, has already been highlighted in earlier research.⁴¹

The cathedral in Östra Aros, the building of which was started in the second half of the thirteenth century, was dedicated to St Lars and St Erik. It has been suggested that it was intended to make St Olaf an additional patron saint of the new cathedral in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.⁴² One of the arguments used by Sven Helander to support this claim is the existence of three stone sculptures situated at the three portals of the cathedral, depicting St Lars, St Erik, and St Olaf.⁴³ He further points out that in the synodal statute of Archbishop Nils Allesson from 1297, it is decreed that the feast days of *laurencii erici & olaui martirum* should be celebrated. A third piece of evidence that could be cited in favour of Helander's suggestion is the fact that St Erik shared his choir and his chapel, which is named for the first time in 1301 or 1304, with St Olaf.⁴⁴

Helander assumes that the interest of Archbishop Nils Allesson in St Olaf was motivated by an income, the *St Olafsgården* from Ångermanland, Hälsingland, and Medelpad, which traditionally was paid to the archbishop of Niðarós out of veneration to St Olaf. This income was in 1314, during the reign of Archbishop Nils Allesson's successor, Nils Kettilsson, claimed for the support of the prebend *Votum Olaui* situated at the chapel of St Olaf and

on Mondays [one mass] for our souls and all the faithful deceased, on Wednesdays [one mass] for the saints Olaf and Erik, on Fridays [one mass] for the holy cross, on Saturdays [one mass] for the holder of the prebend or for all who bear his name).

⁴¹ See, for example, Berglund, *Guds stat och maktens villkor*, pp. 68–69.

⁴² Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 120, 243–44.

⁴³ Doubt has been cast on this claim by Bengtsson ('Övriga altarpopsatser', pp. 71–73) who suggests that the iconography of the figure placed at St Olaf's feet (*underliggare*) would date the stone sculpture later than it is claimed by Helander. In the case of the statue of St Olaf in Uppsala Cathedral, this figure represents a jester. Bengtsson states that the use of this iconographic version of the *underliggare* is otherwise not known from the thirteenth century, while 'from the first decades of the fourteenth century several examples are known'. He therefore dates the erection of the statue to between 1314 and 1344. However, if one consults the respective table in Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, pp. 345–52, only one further reliable Swedish example from 1300 to 1325 can be found (the statue in the church of Haraker). It has been further pointed out by Nilsén ('Byggnadsskulptur', pp. 311–13) that the statues of St Olaf and St Lars were made of the same material, which suggests a common origin (both in space and time). The claim of the later addition of the statue of St Olaf to the statues of St Lars and St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala must, therefore, be rejected.

⁴⁴ SDHK, 1939, 2608.

St Erik inside the cathedral of Uppsala.⁴⁵ Further efforts to draw both pilgrims and their income away from Niðarós might have been intended. This led to a conflict between the two archbishops, which most probably began as early as the 1310s, since a charter from King Birger Magnusson decreed in 1313 that Archbishop Nils of Uppsala had the right to handle the income as he liked.⁴⁶ The first extant source to give evidence of this quarrel, however, is a papal bull from 1336, written in response to an earlier (unpreserved) appeal by Archbishop Paul of Niðarós.⁴⁷ This charter is followed by a number of letters that were exchanged between the two archdioceses in 1344.⁴⁸ There is no extant charter that records the outcome of this conflict, but the income seems to have remained in Uppsala, since no noteworthy change in the furniture of the prebend *Votum Olavi* becomes apparent throughout the Middle Ages.⁴⁹

Although the foundation of a prebend in honour of St Olaf was obviously sufficient to divert the St Olaf tax from the archbishop of Niðarós, it remains unclear why St Olaf did not become one of the patrons of the cathedral of Uppsala, if this was indeed what Archbishop Nils Alleesson had intended. Instead, St Henrik became the third patron saint of the cathedral in 1435.⁵⁰ The connection between Henrik and Uppsala is clear. In his legend, he is said to have been bishop of Uppsala and, furthermore, the one who consecrated the cathedral in Gamla Uppsala. Moreover, he had a strong connection with St Erik. In the legends of both saints, it is stated that they undertook a crusade together to Finland (see Chapter 5 above). If there is something odd about St Henrik's nomination as the third patron saint, it is the question of why it had not happened earlier.⁵¹

⁴⁵ SDHK, 2605 (Angermanland), 2607–2608 (Medelpad), 2611 (Hälsingland). The duties of the priest who held the prebend financed by the St Olaf's tax are regulated in SDHK, 2608 and 2610; see Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnhav*, p. 97.

⁴⁶ SDHK, 2570.

⁴⁷ SDHK, 4209.

⁴⁸ SDHK, 4979, 4985, 4986; On the conflict see Lundegårdh, 'Kampen om den norrländska Olavskulten'; Jacobsson, *Beställare och finansörer*, pp. 289–92.

⁴⁹ The prebend received further income in 1344 and the prebendary had to read an additional mass for this extra income. See Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnhav*, p. 97.

⁵⁰ The statement that Olaf became the third patron saint in 1435 (see, for example, Nilsson and others, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, I, 134) has no backing in the sources.

⁵¹ Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, p. 245.

The intention and subsequent failure to make St Olaf the third patron saint has often been regarded as a conflict between St Erik and St Olaf.⁵² A competition between the two saints seems to be self-evident at first glance since the two royal saints are very similar in their style and appearance (in their depictions), as well as sharing a number of characteristics. To start with, both are royal saints modelled after the *rex iustus* ideal that arrived in Scandinavia in the wake of Anglo-Saxon missionaries. They were both seen as ancient law-givers, protectors of their respective kingdoms, and miracle workers. However, given the developments outlined above, no conflict between the spheres of interest of the two saints can be detected in the early fourteenth century and St Olaf remained one of the most popular saints in Sweden during the rise of the cult of St Erik. Both depictions of St Olaf, as well as churches and altars dedicated to him, are far more numerous than those of St Erik.⁵³ Even the monastery churches in Strängnäs and Askaby, as well as the Dominican convents in Skara, Skänninge, and Åbo, were dedicated to St Olaf, an honour which has never been given to St Erik.

In addition, the cult of St Erik was mainly supported by members of the top layer of Swedish society. Veneration of the Swedish royal saint at the level of the farmers can be proven in only a few cases. In contrast to this, the cult of St Olaf was characterized by a strong element of popular piety.⁵⁴ This gave his cult a much broader basis than that of St Erik, since approximately 95 per cent of the medieval population were neither of aristocratic origin nor appointed to an ecclesiastical position. But maybe the whole idea of saints competing against each other is built on a rather modern way of thinking. There are a number of sources which suggest that there was a place for several saints of similar design even within one single mind. If a medieval person was unsure which saint would be the appropriate intercessor at the heavenly throne, there were different methods that they might employ to find the saint willing to help. One could, for example, direct prayers to different saints, waiting to see who would be ready to help, or one could draw lots.⁵⁵

⁵² Lundegårdh, 'Kampen om den norrländska Olavskulten', pp. 118–21.

⁵³ See the respective tables in Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, pp. 353–70; Pegelow, *Helgonlegender i ord och bild*, pp. 92, 208–09, 285–87, 314–16.

⁵⁴ Bø, *Heilag-Olav i norsk folketradisjon*; Lindkvist, 'Erik den helige och det Svenska kungadömet framväxt', p. 121.

⁵⁵ Krötzl, *Pilger, Mirakel und Alltag*, pp. 297–306; Krötzl, 'How to Choose a Saint', pp. 381–87.

Magnus Eriksson's Crusade, St Birgitta, and St Erik

As mentioned above, the institutional and personal veneration of St Erik came together in the person of King Magnus Eriksson. To give an impression of the latter, it is important to consider both the general framework of his reign and the role St Birgitta played in it. St Birgitta, the most intensely venerated Swedish saint of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was the daughter of the Upplandian lawspeaker Birger Persson and Ingeborg Bengtsdotter, who was in turn the daughter of the lawspeaker of Östergötland, Bengt Magnusson.⁵⁶ Thus, 'she [Birgitta] belonged to the uppermost social echelon of her time'.⁵⁷ Birger Persson, in addition to holding the office of lawspeaker, was a member of the *riksråd* and of the council that ruled Sweden during the minority of Magnus Erikssons. Birgitta was born in the year 1303. In 1316, she married Ulf Gudmarsson, the son of Gudmar Magnusson, who was a councillor of the realm and lawspeaker in Västergötland, and she was widowed in 1344. She had an important position at the court of King Magnus Eriksson and Queen Blanka of Namur, being appointed to the role of personal attendant of the queen in 1335. In 1339, she was additionally made the educator of the young Prince Erik Magnusson. However, probably because she criticized the behaviour of the royal couple, she was released from her offices in 1340. Thereafter, the relationship between Birgitta and King Magnus developed from intimate and trusted, to critical (in the 1340s), to openly hostile.

While in Sweden it seems that Birgitta limited herself to criticizing the lifestyle of the Swedish royal couple. However, around 1361, by which time she resided in Rome, she went as far as to call for the replacement of Magnus Eriksson as monarch.⁵⁸ One main element in her early criticism of King Magnus was that he had not undertaken a crusade in order to spread the faith among the infidels. In her *Revelationes*, book VIII, revelation two she advised an (unnamed) Swedish king:

⁵⁶ The number of publications on St Birgitta is huge, since research into Sweden's most important saint has been the focus of medieval research in the country since the nineteenth century. The statements here on both Birgitta and her religiousness are taken from Bergh, *Heliga Birgitta*; Morris, *St Birgitta of Sweden*; Heß, *Heilige machen im spätmittelalterlichen Ostseeraum*; Flemmig, *Hagiographie und Kulturtransfer*; Nilsson, and others, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, I, 59–69.

⁵⁷ Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia* p. 97.

⁵⁸ Ferm, 'Heliga Birgittas program för uppror mot Magnus Eriksson'; Hergemöller, *Magnus versus Birgitta*, pp. 110–33.

[...] that he shall send his vassals and servants to the pagan lands where the Catholic faith and love can be spread. His vassals have been killed in the city of Copenhagen because he strived after a part of another Christian kingdom.⁵⁹

From the second sentence, it becomes clear that Birgitta was referring to Magnus Eriksson, who had fought Denmark for the possession of Skåne. She criticized the wars between Christian kingdoms, and instead advised the king to send his forces against 'the pagan lands'.

Magnus reacted to this reproach by promising a crusade in his and his wife's joint testament of 1346. However, if he should die without having fulfilled that promise, the executors of the will were ordered to arm a hundred men with full battle equipment and whatever else was required by a military expedition, and to send them against the adversaries of God.⁶⁰ Birgitta is therefore considered as having been very influential in the articulation of Magnus Eriksson's crusade ideas.⁶¹ In her demand for a crusade, Birgitta drew the picture of an ideal model king, which she then juxtaposed with that of the deficient Magnus Eriksson. However, from her accounts, it is not possible to positively identify the king whom she envisaged. Possible candidates for this model king include St Olaf and St Erik: both were venerated as *reges iusti* in Sweden and both were included in Birgitta's personal feast days, which were named in her canonization documents.⁶² It would, however, seem more natural to assume that St Erik was the model in this case, since he was credited by his legend with having undertaken a crusade, whereas St Olaf was not.

⁵⁹ *Sancta Birgitta: Revelationes Lib. VIII*, ed. by Aili, p. 88: 'Tercium est, quod ipse mittat vasallos suos et gentes ad illa loca infidelium, ubi fides catholica et caritas augeri potest. Nam ideo vasalli sui interfecti fuerunt in ciuitate Hampnis, quia ipse ambiuit partem regni alieni Christianorum'.

⁶⁰ SDHK, 5307: 'Ælleghis ærum vi konungh magnus skyldughi enæ reysu vt sændæ. a. mot guþz owinum. oc kunnum wi franfalla. før æn han ær giorþ. þa sculu vare executores hund-raþa mæn med fullum tyghum oc androm þem þyngom som reysæn tilsigher. utsændæ þer þe qwæmelicæst gita a mot guþz owinum, oppa warn kost, scaþaløsn. forlust. oc fangenscap. oc þer byndom wi þem til. vndi þerræ syæl. oc værældz heþer'. (Moreover are we, King Magnus, obliged to send an expedition against the adversaries of God. And if we should fall down [i.e. die] before this is done, then the executors of our will shall, in the best way they can, send out 100 men with full war-equipment and the other things that a military expedition needs against the adversaries of God [and] on our cost [shall also be] compensations for damages and [money] for ransom and to this we bind them by their soul and worldly honour).

⁶¹ Lind, 'Magnus Eriksson som birgittinsk konge i lyset af russiske kilder'; Lindkvist, 'Med Sankt Erik konung mot hedningar och schismatiker', p. 20.

⁶² Flemmig, *Hagiographie und Kulturtransfer*, p. 119.

Birgitta's relationship to St Erik as a saint seems to have been rather positive. In the tenth revelation of book VI, the Mother of God reveals to her how a certain 'deceased friend of yours for whom you are sorrowing can be saved from the seven torments'.⁶³ One of the measures Birgitta was required to undertake was to

[...] send some faithful and upstanding Christians to take an offering to the chief shrines in the kingdom of Sweden where people tend to gather out of devotion and for the sake of gaining indulgences, such as the shrine of Saint Eric, Blessed Sigfrid, or similar ones.⁶⁴

The sixty-sixth revelation of the same book is about a deceased man who suffers punishment. The very end of the revelation says: 'My daughter, this revelation was gained for you by your patron, Saint Erik, to whom this soul had devotion'.⁶⁵ This very sentence was quoted by Nicolaus Ragvaldi, monk in the monastery of Vadstena after 1476 and confessor-general in 1501–06 and 1511–12.⁶⁶ Of this quote, he commented: 'Look at this reason! Therefore, this soul was not condemned'. The intercession of St Erik was obviously esteemed not only by Birgitta herself but also by the leading members of her order in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In the twenty-seventh of her *Revelationes extravagantes*, in which God declares King Magnus Eriksson unworthy to build the monastery of Vadstena, St Erik is given the title of God's *amicus* (friend) and St Olaf that of his *dilectus* (beloved).⁶⁷ Furthermore, one of her confes-

⁶³ *The Revelations of St Birgitta of Sweden*, ed. by Searby and Morris, III: *Liber Caelestis. Books 6–7*, p. 28; *Sancta Birgitta: Revelationes Lib. VI*, ed. by Bergh, p. 71: 'Quomodo ille amicus tuus defunctus, de quo tu doles, saluari potest de septem plagis'.

⁶⁴ *The Revelations of St Birgitta of Sweden*, ed. by Searby and Morris, III: *Liber Caelestis. Books 6–7*, p. 30; *Sancta Birgitta: Revelationes Lib. VI*, ed. by Bergh, p. 72: 'Pro tertio mittat oblacionem suam per aliquem fidelem et iustum ad precipuos sanctos in regno isto Suecie, vbi conuentus populi ex deuocione et causa indulgenciarum fieri solet, vtputa sancti Eri, beati Sigfridi et similium'.

⁶⁵ *The Revelations of St Birgitta of Sweden*, ed. by Searby and Morris, III: *Liber Caelestis. Books 6–7*, p. 139; *Sancta Birgitta: Revelationes Lib. VI*, ed. by Bergh, p. 226: 'Ecce filia, hanc reuelationem promeruit tibi patronus tuus sanctus Ericus, cui hec anima seruiuit'.

⁶⁶ On Nicolaus Ragvaldi, see Silverstolpe, *Klosterfolket i Vadstena*, pp. 94–95. The quote is taken from a sermon included in codex C 302, fols 354^r–365^v, fol. 363^v: 'Vbi vide rationem, quare anima illa non condemnabatur'.

⁶⁷ *Den heliga Birgittas reuelaciones extrauagantes*, ed. by Hollmann, p. 138: 'Sed nec memoria eius erit vt dilecti mei Olaui, nec coronabitur vt amicus meus Ericus, sed senciet iusticiam, quia noluit misericordiam, et arabo terram in iudicio et tribulacione, donec inhabitants discant petere misericordiam.' (But neither will his memory be like that of my beloved Olaf nor will he

sors, magister Mathias, mentioned St Erik in a poem on Uppsala.⁶⁸ From those statements by St Birgitta and people close to her, it can be concluded that her attitude towards St Erik was positive at the least.

While we cannot conclusively decide who the precise model was for the ideal king described by Birgitta, the account of the crusade which Magnus Eriksson undertook between 1348 and 1351 gives a better idea of which ideal king the Swedish ruler was trying to live up to. There are a number of Russian sources, which all narrate the beginning of the attack by the Swedes in a similar way.⁶⁹ The account of the First Novgorod Chronicle, chronologically the closest of the extant Russian sources, states that the campaign began when Magnus, King of the *Svei*, sent envoys to the men of Novgorod saying:

Send your philosophers to a conference, and I will send my own philosophers, that they may discuss faith; they will ascertain whose faith is the better; if your faith is the better, then I will adopt your faith, but if our faith is the better, you will change to our faith, and we shall all be as one man. But if you do not agree to uniformity, then I will come against you with all my forces. [...] Adopt my faith, or I will march against you with my whole force.⁷⁰

In terms of military efficiency, it seems incomprehensible that someone who had managed to advance to the border of the kingdom he intends to conquer, instead of doing so, sends envoys to propose a theological debate, thereby revealing his intentions and wasting the momentum of surprise. With such an unfavourable strategy from a militarily perspective, there must have been another motivation.

These words in St Birgitta's revelation no. 43 in book VIII, recording the advice that Christ gives to 'the kings who go against the pagans', could have been Magnus Eriksson's inspiration:

The king who seeks the advantage of the souls and who will go to war against the pagans shall have two banners. On the first banner shall my suffering, which characterizes my charity, be depicted, and on the other, my just sword. When the king arrives among the pagans, he shall first put up the banner of charity and offer them

be crowned like my friend Erik, but he will feel justice since he has disdained mercy. And I will work the land in trial and effort until those living there have learned to pray for mercy,).

⁶⁸ Schmid, 'Erik den helige i liturgin', p. 155.

⁶⁹ For an assessment of the Russian sources that treat Magnus Eriksson's expedition, see Fennell, 'The Campaign of King Magnus Eriksson against Novgorod in 1348'.

⁷⁰ *The Chronicle of Novgorod*, ed. and trans. by Michell and Forbes, p. 141.

its peace. When they refuse to receive that, he shall put up the banner of justice.⁷¹

There is, however, an earlier text that could have served as the model for St Birgitta's account. This appears in the legend of St Erik and reads as follows:

When, as we have said above, the church was finally built and the kingdom was well-tilled, he [St Erik] turned to the enemies of the faith and of his people. He collected an army, took the saintly bishop of Uppsala, Henrik, with him, and directed his expedition against the Finns. He offered them the Christian faith and peace, but when they offered resistance and rebellion, he attacked them and, avenging Christian blood, he defeated them and won the victory.⁷²

It certainly is difficult to decide which of the two accounts King Magnus had in mind when he first sent envoys to convince the Novgorodians of the rightfulness of the Roman Catholic version of the Christian faith. Only after their refusal to discuss religious questions with him and their reference to the patriarch of Byzantium, did he use his military force to attack them. Considering the expressions of veneration of St Erik by King Magnus Eriksson during the 1330s and 1340s discussed above, it seems plausible that the king knew the account of the legend and through his actions in 1348 tried to follow the example of his holy predecessor and ancestor. At the same time, it is clear that St Birgitta was descended from a family that had a close relationship to St Erik, and she herself seems clearly to have accepted St Erik as a saint. The legend of the royal saint is, therefore, a plausible model for her advice to Magnus Eriksson. Thus it cannot be decided if Magnus Eriksson directly followed the example of St Erik or if he intended to be a 'Birgittine king', as John Lind has suggested.⁷³ Both motivations are possible. The model of a crusader king that King Magnus followed was, however, most likely influenced by the legend of St Erik, either directly or as the ideal behind the accounts in St Birgitta's revelations.

⁷¹ *Den heliga Birgittas reuelaciones extrauagantes*, ed. by Hollmann, pp. 170–71: 'Rex, qui lucra animarum querit et ad paganos egredi, habeat duo vexilla. In primo vexillo depicta sit passio mea, que notat misericordiam, in secundo gladius iusticie mee. Veniens igitur rex ad paganos erigat primo primum vexillum misericorie, offerendo pacem eis. Qui si recipere noluerint, erigat postea vexillum iusticie'.

⁷² 'Postremo vero vt supra diximerimus edificata ecclesia ordinato regno ad inimicos fidei et hostes populi sui conuertens coadunato exercitu et assumpto secum ex ecclesia vpsalensi beato henrico episcopo versus finnonnes expedicionem dirigit · ipsosque fide Christi prius oblate ac pace exhibita renitentes et rebelles in vlcionem sanuiniis christiani manu vlida aggreditur ac bello deuictos victor prostrauit'. (see Appendix 1).

⁷³ Lind, 'Magnus Eriksson som birgittinsk konge i lyset af russiske kilder'.

The State of the Veneration of St Erik in the Fourteenth Century

From the 1330s onwards, a number of people, other than the king, stand out in our source material for their donation of property to one of the altars of St Erik. In 1335, for example, the otherwise unknown cathedral *custos*, Halvard Claviger, donated property in two charters to the two altars of St Erik in Uppsala, one inside the cathedral and the other outside.⁷⁴ The priest Ingevald of Åkerby did the same three years later, and Ingrid Gisledotter followed suit in 1345.⁷⁵ Ingrid Gisledotter was a member of the Upplandian family Sparre av Aspnäs.⁷⁶ It was through her brother, the knight Magnus Gislesson, that we find the first recorded evidence for a chapel dedicated to St Erik, in the cathedral of Linköping, in a charter of 1358.⁷⁷ In this Gislesson certified that *sancti Eriks capelie j Lönkøpungs kirkio* owned property in Utvär (Västmanland) where he too had property. In a later charter he exchanged some of his lands with the holder of the prebend at St Erik's chapel in Linköping.⁷⁸

Following the death of Archbishop Olaf Basatömer in 1332, there was no seal that featured St Erik for several decades. The reintroduction of St Erik's depiction on this medium was made by Ringvid Nilsson, Archdeacon of Uppsala. He had the royal saint displayed on his seal from 1360 onwards.⁷⁹ The archbishops' practice of depicting St Erik on their counter-seal was only resumed in 1366, by Archbishop Birger Gregersson.

The above list of people who donated goods in honour of St Erik could be expanded.⁸⁰ It is, however, not possible to regard the benefactors of his cult as a network of aristocratic venerators as was the case in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. In comparison to the support for the cult of St Erik during the time of the Kalmar Union, as discussed in the next chapter, it should

⁷⁴ SDHK, 4168, 4173.

⁷⁵ SDHK, 4436, 5186.

⁷⁶ Gillingstam, 'Sparre av Aspnäs'.

⁷⁷ SDHK, 7406.

⁷⁸ SDHK, 7920.

⁷⁹ SDHK, 7842 (or. perg., RA 0101).

⁸⁰ SDHK, 3927 ('schoolmaster' in Uppsala Johan Karlsson, in 1333); SDHK, 5312 (Henrik, canon in Uppsala, in 1346); SDHK, 5681 (Johan Ragvaldsson, curator in Skeppstuna, in 1348); SDHK, 6061 (Peter Olofsson, curator in Öster-Våla, in 1350); SDHK, 6171 (Archbishop Hemming, in 1351): 'pro factura scrinii beati Erii ibidem XL marcas puri'; SDHK, 7842 (Ringvid Nilsson, Archdeacon in Uppsala); SDHK, 7863 (Ingeborg Eskilsdotter (Lejonlilja), in 1360); SDHK, 12652 (Karl Magnusson (Örnfoth)).

be pointed out that of those who made donations to the cult site of St Erik, a significant proportion were members of the church of Uppsala. Moreover, eight donations were made by clerics, whereas only three were made by members of the secular nobility.

Håkan, the older of the two sons of King Magnus Eriksson, took over the rule of Norway when he came of age in 1355, and in 1363 he renewed and confirmed his father's request to celebrate the feast day of St Erik in the royal chapel at the church of St Mary in Oslo.⁸¹ His brother Erik was co-ruler of the kingdoms of Sweden and Skåne from 1344 onwards, but he seems to not have enjoyed the same amount of freedom in his decisions as his brother.⁸² This disparity led to his rebellion in 1356, which resulted in a factual division of the kingdom between Magnus and his son Erik in 1357. As part of the peace agreement, Erik received Skåne, Blekinge, southern Halland, Småland (except for Finnveden), Östergötland, and Finland. In Östergötland, he decreed in 1358 that the prebend of St Erik at the cathedral of Linköping, which had been founded by Bishop Karl Båt (1307–38), should receive certain revenues.⁸³ This prebend is called 'chapel' by the knight Magnus Gislesson later that year and Erik Magnusson also used that term in 1359.⁸⁴ The fact that the young King Erik drew up charters for that chapel suggests that he felt an obligation towards his saintly namesake. His early death in 1359, however, makes it impossible to verify this assumption.

After Albrekt of Mecklenburg was elected king of Sweden in 1364, there were even fewer signs of veneration of St Erik than under the rule of Magnus Eriksson.⁸⁵ King Albrekt referred to the Swedish royal saint in a number of charters, but all of these were connected to the cathedral of Uppsala alone, and not to the kingdom of Sweden.⁸⁶ Albrekt thus appears to have accepted St Erik as the patron saint of both the cathedral and the bishopric of Uppsala, but it is not possible to discern any continuation of Magnus Eriksson's promotion of

⁸¹ SDHK, 8340.

⁸² Engström, 'Erik Magnusson': 'det finns intet spår av att han av fadern fått någon del i riksstyrelsen'.

⁸³ SDHK, 7340.

⁸⁴ SDHK, 7406, 7521.

⁸⁵ SDHK, 9984 (1371, Bengta Magnusdotter); SDHK, 10,760 (1376, Peter Ålänning); SDHK, 12,083 (1382, relics of St Erik are given to the church of Vingåker by Archbishop Birger on request of the knight Peter Porse); SDHK, 12,652 (1384, Karl Magnusson (Örnfot)).

⁸⁶ SDHK, 8849, 10,170, 10,685.

St Erik as the patron saint of the Swedish kingdom by the new Swedish king. Nor did the Bjälbo faction refer to St Erik during the civil war that waged in Sweden from 1364 to 1371.

The evidence of the liturgical fragments from the MPO-project for the fourteenth century shows that in the course of this century, the veneration of St Erik gained a stronger hold in those areas where it had already been established during the thirteenth century (particularly in the dioceses of Uppsala and Linköping).⁸⁷ A first missal in which a mass for St Erik's day was included is extant from the fourteenth-century diocese of Västerås.⁸⁸ The first prebend for St Erik outside Uppland was founded by Bishop Karl of Linköping in his cathedral church in honour of the namesake of Duke Erik shortly after the Duke's death in 1318.⁸⁹

One region to which the veneration of St Erik spread comparatively early was Finland. The legend of St Henrik, most probably composed in Åbo between 1286 and 1289 (see Chapter 5 above), provides the first known evidence for the knowledge of the existence of the cult of St Erik in Finland and his first extant depiction can probably be found here on a seal from 1309. This early evidence is complemented by two calendars that were in use in the diocese of Åbo in the fourteenth century and that contain an entry for St Erik's Day. The first of them, the *Calendarium Upsalense ad usum Aboensem aptatum*, was produced in the bishopric of Uppsala but was revised for use in Finland. There the entry *Erici regis et martyris* is made in red ink (indicating a high grade of feast) and belongs to the original entries from the early fourteenth century.⁹⁰ In the *Calendarium Dominicanum Dioecesis Aboensis*, several saints' names have been added to the original entries around 1332. The names include those of St Erik and St Olaf.⁹¹ The first dating of charters after St Erik's feast day also occurs relatively early in Finland, in 1331.⁹² Bishop Hemming of Åbo (r. 1338–66) decreed in the synodal statute of 1352 that the feast day of St Erik should be a day of rest like those of St Lars, St Henrik, and St Olaf.⁹³ The first evidence for

⁸⁷ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, pp. 116–18; Uppsala: Fr 27,673; Linköping: Fr 26,891; Fr 25,272; Fr 9088.

⁸⁸ Brunius, *Atque Olavi*, p. 119, Fr 26,362.

⁸⁹ Schück, *Ecclesia Lincopensis*, p. 422.

⁹⁰ Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 408, 415–17.

⁹¹ Malin(iemi), *Der Heiligenkalender Finnlands*, p. 82.

⁹² SDHK, 3799.

⁹³ FMU, 614: 'Festa ab hoc laborerio excepta sunt hæc: omnes dies dominici, exaltacio et



Map 5.
The distribution of depictions of
St Erik during the fourteenth century.
Map by the author.

the choir of St Erik and St Henrik in the cathedral of Åbo is given by a charter from Peter Ålänning, a member of the council of Stockholm, who donated a parcel of land in Stockholm to that choir in 1376.⁹⁴ He and his wife additionally founded a prebend in the cathedral of Åbo in 1386 ‘to the honour and glory of God, our Lady and St Erik’.⁹⁵

The dating of charters after the feast day of St Erik became more common and widespread during the fourteenth century. As early as 1319, Christina, the granddaughter of the canon Björn of the cathedral of Linköping, had dated a charter issued in Linköping *In die beati erici martiris*. In 1331, this same formula appeared for the first time in Finland (i.e. the diocese of Åbo/Turku), and it was used again in 1332 in the bishopric of Strängnäs, and in 1335 in the diocese of Västerås.⁹⁶ The charters in which St Erik’s day is used for the dating are shown

inventio sancte crucis, omnia festa beate virginis, Laurentii et Henrici, Eri et Olai’. (The feasts which exclude work are those: all days of the Lord, exaltation and location of the [holy] cross, all feasts of the saintly Virgin, Lars and Henrik, Erik and Olaf.).

⁹⁴ SDHK, 10,760.

⁹⁵ SDHK, 13,175: ‘j Gudz heder ok aero ok wara ffru ok sancte Ericx’.

⁹⁶ SDHK, 3799, 3885, 4155.



Map 6.
The distribution of charters
dated by St Erik's feast day,
1319–50. Map by the author.

in maps 6 and 7. The distribution of depictions of St Erik is harder to describe than that of the charters since the dating of images cannot be as exact as with charters

(except for cases in which an inscription dates a picture). The number of extant images of St Erik from the fourteenth century is very limited (Map 5). The way in which St Erik was depicted remained consistent throughout the late thirteenth century and into the fourteenth century. He was invariably depicted wearing plain clothes and a crown in addition to the attributes with which he was associated. Significantly, while the globe and the sceptre remained his usual attributes throughout the fourteenth century, no image of the saint has survived from the period under discussion in this chapter that shows St Erik holding a book. In an image from the early fourteenth century, from the church of Hubbo



(Västmanland), however, a new attribute appears. There the saint is for the first time depicted holding a sword. This attribute was to become his most characteristic one during the fifteenth century.

In some cases it is debatable whether a picture actually shows St Erik. The most prominent case of such an uncertain depiction from the fourteenth century is the city-seal of Stockholm, first used in 1376 (Fig. 18). It shows a beardless crowned head; the circumscription reads: SECRETUM CIVITATIS STOCHOLMENSIS. No particular allusion to St Erik is made. Nevertheless, the seal has been assumed by numerous researchers to be a depiction of the saint and based on this assumed depiction the claim has been made that Erik was adopted as the patron saint of Stockholm by the second half of the four-



Figure 17. The city-seal of Stockholm.
Circumscription: '+SECRETUM
CIVITATIS STOCHOLMENSIS';
Stockholm, 1376. Courtesy of Riksarkivet.

teenth century.⁹⁷ However, this has been contradicted by a number of other researchers, who claim that it could be any king depicted on the seal since there is no definite allusion there to St Erik.⁹⁸ In support of the latter view, it must be stated that the first reference to St Erik as the patron saint of Stockholm does not appear until the early seventeenth century, in Johannes Messenius' *Stockholmskrönika*.⁹⁹ In addition, the style of the crowned head depicted on the seal was very common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It was used on several coins during



Figure 18. Örtug of King Albrekt
of Mecklenburg (1364–89).
Circumscription: 'ALBERTVS REX'.



Figure 19. Örtug of King Erik
of Pomerania (1397–1439).
Circumscription: 'ERICUS REX';
Stockholm, Kungliga Mynt-
kabinettet. Photos courtesy of
Kungliga Myntkabinettet.

⁹⁷ For example Dahlbäck, *I medeltidens Stockholm*, p. 26; Nevéus, Heim, and Westling Karlsson, *Medeltida småkonst*, p. 24.

⁹⁸ For example Regner, *Det medeltida Stockholm* p. 84; Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 201; Ahnlund, *Stockholms historia före Gustav Vasa*, p. 216.

⁹⁹ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 201: 'till sköldemärke den by gav | ansiktet Sankt Erik av, | som var Sveriges rikets patron, | med långt hår, det har en gullkron'. (As coat of arms of that place was given | the face of St Erik | who was the patron of the Swedish kingdom | with long hair that has a golden crown).

the reigns of different Swedish kings and in all these cases it is considered to be a depiction of the contemporary king, and not of the royal saint (Figs 18–19). As such, the image is not included in the catalogue of depictions of St Erik in the present study.

Summary

During the time under discussion in the present chapter, it becomes clearer than in previous periods that we have to distinguish between at least two forms of veneration of St Erik. The first form is that of private veneration, displayed through donations to a chapel or an altar of the saint, through a donation to the cathedral church of Uppsala *ad honorem Sancti Eriki*, through including the image of the saint on a personal seal, or through the issuing of paintings in a church. The second form might be called institutional veneration. Once a saint made it into the calendar of a diocese, he or she became an integral part of its liturgy and a special effort was then needed to remove that saint from this position or to replace him or her with another saint. In this second category, there are signs that St Erik was included in the liturgy of almost all bishoprics of Sweden by the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The cult of St Erik may have remained on a rather low level outside the diocese of Uppsala, but it nonetheless seems to have been consolidating, as indicated by liturgical fragments, references in dates of charters, and the spread of pictorial sources.

One person in whom personal and institutional veneration were combined in the fourteenth century was King Magnus Eriksson. On the basis of his personal devotion towards St Erik — best exemplified in his decision to give away a tactical advantage at the start of his crusade to Russia in order to show an *imitatio Eriki* — the saint's status changed from that of the dynastic saint of the house of Bjälbo to the foremost *patronus Sveciae*. Once this had happened, his veneration became the particular business of the Swedish king, no matter who held that office. While this attitude was not adopted by Albrekt of Mecklenburg, it certainly established itself among the rulers of Sweden who succeeded him. In this way the introduction of a *patronus regni* helped to depersonalize the royal office, just as the introduction of St Olaf as *rex perpetuus Norwegiae* had done in Norway around the middle of the twelfth century. The second institution that showed devotion towards St Erik by way of being 'his' institution was the church of Uppsala. It is, however, noteworthy that during the same decades (the early 1430s to the mid-1460s), members of the church appear to have made little effort to further St Erik's cult. In the list included in

the *Registrum ecclesiae Upsalensis*, which documented the relics in possession of the cathedral, the *corpus integrum beati erici regis et martiris* is listed only in eighteenth position.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, only a few members of the cathedral chapter donated goods to one of the chapels of St Erik in Uppsala or showed their veneration towards the saint in any other way.

¹⁰⁰ SDHK, 4953.

ST ERIK AND THE KALMAR UNION (1389–1520)

Historical Background

Birger Jarl and his sons had created a strong royal power, but afterwards the tide turned, leading to a strengthened aristocratic element in Swedish society that was for many years characterized by the quarrel between King Birger and his brothers, the dukes Erik and Valdemar. Therefore, in 1319, the Archbishop of Uppsala and a large number of bishops and magnates issued a charter that has since often been called the Swedish *Magna Carta*, the purpose of which was to restrain royal power. The Swedish aristocracy, and particularly the *Drots* Bo Jonsson (Grip), exercised even greater power during the time of the reign of Albrekt of Mecklenburg. The king was entirely dependent on the approval of the *riksråd*, a dependency that he was pressured to put into writing in three charters, issued in 1371, 1375, and 1378. After the death of the two people most influential in ruling Sweden, King Albrekt's father, Duke Albrekt II of Mecklenburg, in 1379, and Bo Jonsson (Grip) in 1386, King Albrekt tried to repeal the aristocracy's power. He wanted to take over the guardianship of Bo Jonsson's widow and the tutelage of his children in order to acquire Jonsson's possessions. To prevent this, the executors of the last will of Bo Jonsson asked Queen Margareta of Denmark and Norway for help. Her intervention led to the Battle of Åsle in 1389. During this battle, King Albrekt and his son Erik were taken prisoner by the Danes and stayed in prison for seven years.

Queen Margareta ruled Norway and Denmark on behalf of her son Olof.¹ When he died in 1387, it seemed for a short period of time that the house of

¹ This account of Sweden's political history during the period under discussion in this chapter is mainly based on Fröjmark, *Sverige under Kalmarunionens tid*; the essays in *Margrete I*.

Mecklenburg, having already seized the Swedish crown, would succeed to the Danish and Norwegian thrones as well. But the Danish aversion towards this family led to the acceptance of Margareta 'as almighty lady and husband and guardian for the whole kingdom of Denmark [...] until the day when she and we agree to elect and appoint a king' only one week after the surprising and sudden death of Olof.² The Norwegian nobles paid homage to her with almost identical wording, with the difference that she was to stay queen 'for all the days of her life'.³ Finally, a charter of the same content was issued by a group of Swedish nobles.⁴ In this charter, a number of landed properties and castles that had previously belonged to Bo Jonsson were now put under her control. Margareta, for her part, promised to keep the Swedish laws and guaranteed that the properties of Swedish nobles in Denmark and Norway would not be appropriated.⁵ Although the queenship was offered without time limit in Sweden, as it had been in Norway and Denmark, Margareta worked for the acceptance of her (as yet under-age) grand-nephew, Erik of Pomerania, as her successor in all three kingdoms.

The choice of Erik was the most advantageous from a genealogical perspective, since in his person the lines of the Danish dynasty of Valdemar Atterdag and of the dukes of Mecklenburg, the dynasty of King Albrekt, were united, although only through the female line: his grandparents on his mother's side were Duke Henrik III of Mecklenburg and Queen Margareta's sister, Ingeborg. The change of name from Bogislav to Erik, as discussed above, also drew on the traditions of the Swedish royal dynasty of Bjälbo, to which he was related only very distantly through his great-grandmother Eufemia, the sister of Magnus Eriksson. A possible explanation as to why Queen Margareta presented Erik as the future king to the three kingdoms is given by the *Karlskrönika*, a rhyme chronicle written for Karl Knutsson (Bonde) and finished in 1452 in the following way: 'When the nobles were assembled| she said to them: "If you take a

Regent of the North, ed. by Grinder-Hansen; Etting, *Queen Margrete I (1353–1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union*; Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid*; and Olesen, 'Die Alleinherrschaft Eriks von Pommern'.

² DD, iv. Række, 3. Bind, no. 222: 'tel futlmechtech fruwe ok tel husbunde ok tel gantz righens af Danmark formynder [...] alt tel then dagh thet hun ok wi endrechtlich wüthe thes yuer ene en kong at keese ok at haue.'

³ DN, iii, no. 477: 'j alla hænnæ liifsdagha'.

⁴ SDHK, 13,403 (Middle Low German), 13,404 (Old Danish); printed in: DD, 4. Række, 3. Bind, nos 360, 361.

⁵ SDHK, 13,405; printed in: DD, iv. Række, 3. Bind, no. 362.

king, while we [i.e. Margareta] live | then the kingdoms will stay together”⁶. This is, of course, a statement taken from a late and biased source. However, the statement is congruent with Margareta’s attempts to plan the union of the three Scandinavian kingdoms as a lasting institution. Moreover, the prospect of having a proper king in the not-too distant future may have calmed any voices that might otherwise have begun to attack the acceptance of Margareta as queen. Her rise to power had no precedent and was not anticipated in any law of the three kingdoms. By 1389 Erik was accepted as hereditary king of Norway with Margareta as his custodian until he reached his majority.⁷ In Sweden and Denmark he was elected king in 1396, again with Margareta as his custodian.⁸ His independent rule began, however, not when he came of age in 1400, but only after the queen had died in 1412.

Although Margareta had been accepted as the ruler of Sweden, the mostly German inhabitants of Stockholm resisted her claims to power and still considered Albrekt of Mecklenburg to be their king. They received supplies based on the seaway from the ships of the Duke of Mecklenburg and from the Hanseatic cities of Wismar and Rostock. In addition, a pirate fleet, led by the so-called ‘Vitalie brothers’ attacked ships on the Danish trade routes in the Baltic in order to keep Stockholm supplied with provisions.⁹ However, when those pirates did not limit themselves to attacking Danish ships but began to plunder every ship they could capture, with the result that the herring trade of the Hanseatic League almost came to a halt in 1391, the Hanseatic cities withdrew their support from Albrekt’s cause. Not before 1395 did negotiations between Queen Margareta, the Hanseatic League, and the Duke of Mecklenburg enable King Albrekt to be released on the condition that he was either to pay the vast sum of 60,000 silver marks by 29 September 1398 or else to deliver the town of

⁶ *Svenska Medeltidens Rim-Krönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II: *Nya eller Karls-krönikan* (1866), vv. 75–78: ‘tha the herra til samman äre | sagdhe hon til thöm there | faen idher en konungk medhan wi liffua | tha man riken saman bliffua’, transl. in Etting, *Queen Margrete I (1353–1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union*, p. 65. The *Karlskrönika* as an historical source will be discussed below.

⁷ DN, XVIII, no. 34.

⁸ The charters for those acts are not preserved. The first mention of Erik being King of Denmark is made in DD, IV. Række, 6. Bind, no. 20 (22 February 1396). The first charter referring to Erik’s election in Sweden is SDHK 42,541 (1 September 1396), printed in BSH, II, no. 14.

⁹ Etting, *Queen Margrete I (1353–1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union*, pp. 68–69; Ahnlund, *Stockholms historia före Gustav Vasa*, pp. 204–07.

Stockholm to the Queen's rule by this date. When Albrekt failed to scrape this money together, Stockholm was put under the rule of Margareta in 1398.

Approximately one year before these events, in the summer of 1397, a meeting was held in Kalmar during which, on 17 June, Erik of Pomerania was crowned king of the so-called 'Kalmar Union', named after the meeting place.¹⁰ The rest of Margareta's rule over the Kalmar Union was characterized by her ambition to strengthen and consolidate the power of the monarch and to uphold internal peace across the three kingdoms. In Sweden she attempted to establish a strong royal power by confiscating aristocratic and church property that had formerly (in the years before 1363) belonged to the crown. The basis for this policy was laid down in the so-called *Nyköping recess*, a piece of legislation that she had issued in connection with Erik's election as Swedish king in 1396. The very first article of this law code states that '[those] who have lost goods under the feud and war which raged between the kingdoms [of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway] should come again into possession of their goods'.¹¹ This sentence does not sound particularly exciting, but its actual meaning was that every transaction of landed property carried out during the rule of King Albrekt was to be countermanded. Since Albrekt had pawned most of the royal domain during his reign, the main beneficiaries of this regulation were the new rulers, King Erik and Queen Margareta. In addition, all titles that had been granted during Albrekt's rule were retracted. These very harsh regulations inevitably met with a lot of resistance from the Swedish nobles and prevented warm relations between the Queen and the Swedish nobility in the following years. The legality of her rule, however, was never questioned.

The transition of royal power to Erik of Pomerania after Margareta's death in 1412 took place without problems in all three kingdoms, and he was to steer the fortunes of the Kalmar Union for 27 years. Erik had married Philippa, the daughter of the English king Henry IV, in 1406. This marriage with a member of one of the leading royal houses of Europe illustrates the high prestige which the union of the Scandinavian kingdoms had attained in Europe. Yet, Erik wanted to raise the importance of his union kingdom still further and intended to extend his control over large parts of the Baltic Sea and its adjacent regions.

¹⁰ SDHK, 14,836, printed in DD, iv. Række, 6. Bind, no. 344. The charter which regulated the conditions within the union, the so called *unionsbrev*, was issued on 20 July (SDHK, 14,837, printed in DD, iv. Række, 6. Bind, no. 345).

¹¹ DD, iv. Række, 6. Bind, no. 145: '[...] som therä godz wmborit hawa i thässe orlogh oc kryk som waret hawa mællan riken at hwar kome til sit i geen medh rætta oc nywta thet medh rætta hær epter'.

He intended to strengthen the position of the native Scandinavian trade towns and traders.¹² The natural adversary of this policy was the Hanseatic League, whose members had no intention of abandoning their economic and military power without a fight. However, for a fairly long time King Erik succeeded in playing the various Hanseatic cities off against each other by giving them privileges, including different rights.¹³

Another conflict that demanded a large amount of Erik's time and attention, as well as of his financial and military resources throughout his reign was that waged with the counts of Holstein concerning the status of the duchy of Schleswig. The counts of Holstein tried to keep the duchy independent from the Danish realm while Queen Margareta and King Erik wanted the region back under the rule of the Danish kings. In 1410 King Erik led a military expedition to Schleswig, and this was followed by a number of quarrels in various courts of justice (in the *Danehof* in 1413 and the German King Sigismund's court in 1415). However, the military conflict continued — albeit with intermissions — until 1432. The conflict with the counts of Holstein was intertwined with the conflict between King Erik and the Hanseatic League. Erik accused the town of Lübeck of supporting his adversaries in the conflict at his southern border, and on those grounds, he refused to renew their privileges in his kingdoms. This led to a trade blockade against all three Nordic kingdoms in 1422 and to a sea war between the Hanseatic League and Denmark in 1426.

In Sweden, the accession to power of Erik of Pomerania was followed by less strict policies concerning the enforcement of the *Nyköping recess*. This shift won him the sympathies of the Swedish nobility. These sympathies were, however, weakened when it became clear that King Erik intended to rule in Sweden via Danish and German bailiffs to a far greater extent than his mother's aunt had done. The enfeoffment of foreigners with royal castles had been the main controversy between the Swedish nobles and King Albrekt of Mecklenburg. Of course, every king intended to people the castles with those he could trust, since the castles were the centres through which royal power (and taxation) was enforced across the country. Therefore, the king 'depended on servants who would obey without question. It was increasingly important that administrative fortresses be manned by biddable servants who understood the fine art of extracting revenue'.¹⁴ The renewed application of this ruling-policy made the native aristo-

¹² Olesen, 'Die Alleinherrschaft Eriks von Pommern', p. 215.

¹³ Olesen, 'Die Alleinherrschaft Eriks von Pommern', p. 220.

¹⁴ Larson, *Reforming the North*, p. 93.

crats fear for their position. 'Around 1430 the situation was such that practically all the castles that administered the districts were in foreign hands'.¹⁵

The foreign bailiffs were particularly unpopular since they enforced royal taxation.¹⁶ To be able to carry on his conflicts with the counts of Holstein and the Hanseatic League, Erik of Pomerania needed large amounts of money. He tried to satisfy this demand by raised taxes and by depreciating the precious metal content of his coins (=inflation). This worsened the economic situation of his subjects, and representatives of the Swedish church also began to protest against Erik's war taxation in 1427.¹⁷ For the townspeople who engaged in trade, and for the miners, the situation was further worsened by a trade blockade of the Hanseatic League that made it hard for them to sell their goods. The resulting dissatisfaction culminated in the rebellion of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson between 1434 and 1436.

After early disturbances in Dalarna in 1432 and 1433, an uprising began in June 1434. It was led by the spokesman of the miners of Dalarna, Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, who was also a member of the lower gentry. According to a letter of Berndt Ochsenbrügge — the servant of Hans Kröpelin, the bailiff of Stockholm — to the council of Gdansk, Engelbrektsson raised 40,000–50,000 men with whom he took many castles, towns, and villages, before besieging Stockholm in late July of the same year.¹⁸ From a sociohistorical point of view, it is remarkable that this uprising was the first political movement led by someone who was not a member of the high aristocratic circles of the kingdom and it was also the first time that the 'common man' engaged in Swedish politics in this way.¹⁹ For a long time, the view prevailed that the rebellion had predominantly nationalistic motivations. 'The uprising that Engelbrektsson led in the summer of 1434 was considered 500 years later, from the national point of view as an epoch-making event'.²⁰ In contrast to the perspective of earlier research, it

¹⁵ Linton, 'Sweden in the Union', p. 44.

¹⁶ Ferm, *State-Formative Tendencies*.

¹⁷ Olesen, 'Die Alleinherrschaft Eriks von Pommern', p. 233.

¹⁸ SDHK, 22,213; printed in BSH, II, no. 103.

¹⁹ During the remaining time of the Kalmar Union, it was a permanent means of pressure of King Karl Knutsson (Bonde) and the *riksföreståndare* who came after him to be able to raise such an army of farmers and miners. The base for their political power was the fact that in Sweden — in contrast to the other two Nordic countries — approximately fifty-five per cent of the landed property was in the hands of independent, tax-paying farmers (*skattebonde*) and that the farmers and miners were allowed to bear weapons. See Larson, *Reforming the North*, pp. 6–7.

²⁰ Lönnroth, 'Engelbrekt', p. 1. The climax of this nationalistic view of the Engelbrekt

has more recently been pointed out that the uprising more likely was caused by the economic difficulties mentioned above. To these were added the discontent of the Swedish nobility due to the high number of Danish and German bailiffs and the conflict between King Erik and the Church of Uppsala over the election of a new archbishop in 1432/34.²¹

Up to this point, the *riksråd*, in spite of disagreements about royal taxation policy and the contested election of a new Swedish archbishop in 1432, had sided with King Erik in regard to foreign affairs. However, after the diplomatic position of the king was severely weakened by Engelbrekt's uprising, the councilors met with Engelbrekt and then wrote a letter of refusal to Erik of Pomerania in August 1434.²² The *riksråd* took over the lead of the kingdom and Engelbrekt was officially elected as the captain of the kingdom (*rikshövitsman*) in January 1435 at a meeting in Arboga. At the same meeting, the *riksråd* was considerably enlarged. Engelbrekt's rebellion, however, was directed not against the union of the three Nordic kingdoms but against the King's rule which was, in the eyes of the revolt participants, no longer conducted in accordance with Swedish law.²³ In October 1435, the 'unionist faction' within the *riksråd* seems to have gained the upper hand and an agreement was made with King Erik that he should return to the Swedish throne;²⁴ but by January 1436, most probably influenced by Engelbrekt, it changed its mind again and sent a second letter of refusal to the King. A new campaign, under the lead of Engelbrekt, began against the royal castles. This time Engelbrekt had to share the office of *rikshövitsman* with the ambitious young Karl Knutsson (Bonde). However, in early May that year, on his way to a meeting in Stockholm, Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson was murdered by Magnus Bengtsson (Natt och Dag), with whose father Engelbrekt had been in conflict. In the following disorder, Karl Knutsson (Bonde) managed to get rid of Engelbrekt's closest associate, Erik Puke, who was executed in

uprising was Henrik Schück's, *Engelbrekt* from 1915, in which he assumed that the aim of the uprising was to split up the union and to found a national Swedish state. (p. 157: 'hans program: unionens sprängning och upprättandet af en nationell svensk stat').

²¹ Jexlev, 'Erich von Pommern'; Lindkvist, 'Schweden auf dem Weg in die Kalmarer Union', p. 32. On the election of a new archbishop in 1432, see Ferm, 'Bengt Jönsson (Oxenstierna)', pp. 84–87, pp. 132–35; Nilsson, and others, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, II, 130–37. The sources are collected in Lindblom, *Akter rörande ärkebiskopsvalet i Uppsala 1432*.

²² SDHK 22,217; printed in DN, v, no. 644.

²³ Larsson, 'A Man Called Engelbrekt', p. 83.

²⁴ SDHK 22,453; printed in *Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*, ed. by Rydberg, III: 1409–1520, no. 473.

early 1437 during a period known as the *Pukefejd* ('Puke-feud'). At a meeting in Kalmar in summer 1438, Karl Knutsson was elected regent of the realm (*riksföreståndare*), a position that he held until 1441.

After Erik of Pomerania lost power in all three kingdoms around 1440, it became clear that the Swedish aristocracy did not intend to abolish the Kalmar Union. The reason for this adherence was most probably the fact that close connections, particularly between the border regions of the three kingdoms, had been established during the Norwegian–Swedish union (1319–55), the union between Sweden and Skåne (1332–60), and the Danish–Norwegian union (since 1380). These connections included the acquisition of property by the aristocrats of one kingdom in another kingdom; they of course profited from a political structure in which there were no administrative barriers to hinder their access to their property.²⁵ After the dethronement of Erik of Pomerania, they therefore chose not to elect a new Swedish king. Instead, Kristofer of Bavaria, a nephew of Erik of Pomerania, was accepted as king in all three kingdoms of the Kalmar Union between 1440 and 1442.²⁶ The basis of his rule was, however, quite different to that of Queen Margareta and King Erik of Pomerania. These first two union monarchs had profited from the prevailing view among the aristocracy that — after a long period of internal and external conflicts during the rules of Magnus Eriksson and Albrekt of Mecklenburg — a stronger royal power was needed in order to establish stable conditions in their kingdom. Erik Lönnroth named this form of government *regimen regale*.²⁷ After the uprising of Engelbrekt and the dethronement of King Erik, Kristofer of Bavaria was made king of both Sweden and Denmark only under the condition that he would share his power with the aristocrats to a far greater extent than his two predecessors had.²⁸ This form of rule has been labelled *regimen politicum*. For the purpose of the present study, it is important to note that from this point onwards, the Kalmar Union as a whole, as well as the Swedish part of it in particular, had a distinctly aristocratic imprint.²⁹

²⁵ Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia*, pp. 113–15.

²⁶ Gustafsson, 'A state that failed?'; Enemark, *Fra Kalmarunionen til Stockholms blodbad*, p. 12.

²⁷ Lönnroth, *Sverige och Kalmarunionen 1397–1457*, pp. 10–14.

²⁸ In a document from 26 April 1441, the participation of the Swedish nobility was defined: SDHK, 23,794; printed in *Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*, ed. by Rydberg and others, III: 1409–1520 (1895), no. 480.

²⁹ Schück, 'Sweden as an Aristocratic Republic'.

The reign of Kristofer of Bavaria has been characterized as a hiatus of internal peace between two turbulent periods.³⁰ He obviously endeavoured to rule the union in accordance with the councils of the three kingdoms and found solutions for many of the conflicts that had dominated the rule of Erik of Pomerania. Kristofer gave Schleswig as hereditary fief to Duke Adolf VIII of Holstein in 1440, and in 1441 he freed the towns of the Hanseatic League from the Öresund-toll. However, his relationship to the Hanseatic League worsened during his reign to the point that in 1448 the council of Lübeck believed that he was preparing war against them. Kristofer's armament, however, was more probably directed against Gotland, from where he intended to expel Erik of Pomerania. Since his deposition in 1438, Erik had been based there and had been engaging in piracy. However, before King Kristofer could embark on a military expedition to Gotland, he died suddenly in 1448, at only 31 years of age, and without leaving an heir.

Karl Knutsson (Bonde) was enfeoffed in Finland after he had to leave his office as *riksföreståndare* in 1440 and from 1442, he resided in the castle of Viborg (Viipuri).³¹ After King Kristofer's death in January 1448, he sailed with an armed force of several hundred men to Stockholm in May of the same year. Bengt Jönsson (Oxenstierna) and his brother Nils had been made *riksföreståndare* after the death of King Kristofer and Bengt's son Jöns had succeeded Nils Ragvaldsson as archbishop of Uppsala.³² In spite of this concentration of power in the hands of the Oxenstierna family, Karl Knutsson was able to push through his election as Swedish king in June 1448.³³ As a result, the question of royal succession was handled far more quickly in Sweden than in either Denmark or Norway. In an attempt to take advantage of the undecided political situation in the other two Scandinavian kingdoms, Karl Knutsson tried to incorporate Gotland, Skåne, and Norway into his domain. He succeeded in having himself accepted as king of Norway in 1449 by one of the Norwegian aristocratic factions, but another Norwegian faction elected Kristian of Oldenburg, a nephew of Duke Adolf VIII of Holstein, to the royal office in

³⁰ Kumlien, 'Kristofer'.

³¹ On Karl Knutsson (Bonde) see Kumlien, 'Karl Knutsson (Bonde)'; Kumlien, *Karl Knutssons politiska verksamhet 1434–1448*; Sawyer, 'Karl III. (Knutsson)'.

³² Ferm, 'Bengt Jönsson (Oxenstierna)', pp. 107–09; Gillingstam, *Ätterna Oxenstierna och Vasa under medeltiden*, pp. 278–83, 354–58.

³³ On the elections in Denmark and Sweden and the positions of the different aristocratic factions, see Olesen, 'Die doppelte Königswahl 1448 im Norden'.

the same year. Kristian I had already become king of Denmark in autumn 1448 and his trustee Olof Axelsson (Tott) was able to lay claim to Gotland, thereby blocking the aims of Karl Knutsson. During a meeting of the two kings in Halmstad in May 1450, it was agreed that Karl Knutsson should leave Gotland and Norway to Kristian I.

King Kristian I had married the widow of his predecessor, Dorothea of Brandenburg, in October 1449, and after the meeting in 1450, he claimed in her name her dowry properties in Sweden, which included mining areas in Närke and Värmland. To have the Danish king collecting revenues from the richest Swedish mining areas was, of course, not an idea that Karl Knutsson and the Swedish aristocrats particularly liked. The resultant hostility led to a war that started in 1452 and continued until 1457, at which time Archbishop Jöns Bengtsson changed over to Kristian's side and Karl Knutsson was forced to flee to Gdansk. The domestic political measures taken by Karl Knutsson were mostly made with the intention of strengthening the insufficient royal resources. In May 1449 he issued a decree on coinage and followed this in September 1453 with a statute on toll and (money) exchange.³⁴ In addition, he also tried to lay his hands on certain properties belonging to the church and the aristocracy in order to finance his war against King Kristian I and he used his own private resources to buy landed property. Those measures did not serve to improve his relationship with the aristocracy of his kingdom (particularly with the families of Vasa and Oxenstierna), and this finally led to them siding with King Kristian. But financial problems were not the only obstacle to Karl Knutsson's rule. A further difficulty was his weak claim to the Swedish throne. He was not of royal stock and his election in 1448 was neither in accordance with the arrangements made under the rule of King Kristofer, nor with the regulations of the Swedish *landslag*. In order to compensate for his weak claim, King Karl became a most active propagandist. He attempted to connect himself genealogically to St Erik (see below) and gave his propaganda an anti-Danish nationalistic tone, which he knew would fall on fertile soil with the common people, who had felt exploited by the foreign bailiffs during the rule of the union kings.

After Karl Knutsson's flight to Gdansk, King Kristian I was elected king of Sweden in June 1457. In addition, he became Duke of Schleswig in 1460. Winning the duchy was, however, accompanied by high costs since he had

³⁴ Liedgren, 'Kontrakten med myntmästarna i Stockholm och Uppsala'; SDHK, 26,328, printed in FMU, 2931.

to pay off his relatives. Therefore, he was in need of money, which resulted in him demanding high taxes from the Swedes. This measure alienated those Swedish nobles who had offered him the Swedish crown in 1457, and so in 1464 they invited Karl Knutsson to return to the Swedish throne in Kristian's stead. Karl's second period as reigning king of Sweden, however, only lasted about six months since the Vasa/Oxenstierna faction within the *riksråd* gained ground once again. Until his third period as Swedish king (1467–70), three different men held the office of the *riksföreståndare*: Bishop Kettil Karlsson (Vasa) of Linköping assumed the office at the end of January 1465 but died in August 1465 and was succeeded by his cousin, Archbishop Jöns Bengtsson (Oxenstierna), while Jöns, in turn, was driven out of office by Erik Axelsson (Tott) in September 1466. After King Karl Knutsson was summoned twice to return to Sweden in 1467, he followed the call in the autumn of the same year and remained on the throne until his death in 1470.

In order to negotiate the question of King Karl's succession from a position of power, King Kristian I of Denmark and Norway sailed to Stockholm in 1471 accompanied by a large military force. His army was defeated by Sten Sture the Elder, one of the former military commanders of Karl Knutsson — and the son of his half-sister Birgitta Stensdotter (Bielke) — at the Battle of Brunkeberg on 10 October 1471 within sight of (medieval) Stockholm.³⁵ Sten Sture had taken the title of *riksföreståndare* after the death of Karl Knutsson and the victory at Brunkeberg gave him an independent position of power. He remained *riksföreståndare* until 1497. His relationship with Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson was fairly good, particularly at the beginning of his reign, and resulted, for example, in the joint foundation of the University of Uppsala by these two leading potentates of Sweden in 1477. Throughout his reign, negotiations were led with the union kings Kristian I and his successor, his son Hans, about Sweden's official re-entry into the Kalmar Union. However, for a long time, Sten Sture managed to avoid this. Sten — as Karl Knutsson had been — was very popular among the lower social strata thanks to his anti-Danish propaganda, which found its expression in the *Sturekrönika*, St George's altar in Stockholm's *Storkyrka*, and in the altarpiece on the altar of St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala called *S:t Eriks tavla* (see below). The ability to raise an army consisting of several thousand miners and farmers formed the main basis of his power.

³⁵ On Sten Sture see Schück, 'Sten Sture'.

After Russian attacks on the Swedish castle of Viborg (Viipuri), Sten Sture set out on a 'crusade' against Russia in 1495.³⁶ For this purpose, despite the conflict with Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson that had ensued in the meantime, he borrowed the flag of St Erik from the cathedral of Uppsala. Sten's military expedition should, however, be considered as defensive rather than offensive, and the fact that Knut Posse and Svante Nilsson commanded the army and not Sten Sture himself, weakened his position to the extent that the *riksråd* was able to enforce his deposition in 1497. King Hans led a military expedition to Sweden and Sten Sture recognized Hans's kingship. However, in the years that followed, King Hans's actions, and in particular his policies concerning the enfeoffment of Swedish nobles, met strong resistance among the Swedish aristocracy and led to a reconciliation between the different factions of the aristocracy, the *riksråd*, and Sten Sture. In November 1501 Sten Sture was again appointed *riksföreståndare* by the *riksråd* and spent the remaining two years of his life trying to expel the Danish troops — who noticeably retained possession of the castles of Kalmar and Borgholm — from Sweden. He died on 14 December 1503.

As Sten Sture's successor, the *riksråd* appointed Svante Nilsson (Natt och Dag).³⁷ He had been active in Swedish politics since he became a member of the *riksråd* in 1482, taking part in Sten Sture's 'crusade', where he, together with Knut Posse, led the troops who defended Finland against a Russian attack and conquered the Russian castle of Ivangorod. After Sten Sture refused to refund his war expenses, Svante sided with the *riksråd* that had dismissed Sten Sture as *riksföreståndare* in 1497 and, together with Danish troops, fought against the men from Dalarna mobilized by Sten Sture to challenge his dismissal. When large parts of the Swedish aristocracy became dissatisfied with the rule of King Hans, Sten Sture and Svante Nilsson reconciled under the mediation of Hemming Gadh, *electus* of Linköping.³⁸ As *riksföreståndare*, Svante Nilsson

³⁶ The letter about the situation in Finnland from Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson is printed in FMU, 4574. Lindkvist, 'Med Sankt Erik konung mot hedningar och schismatiker', pp. 22–26.

³⁷ On Svante Nilsson see Westin, 'Svante Nilsson Sture'.

³⁸ Hemming Gadh represented a new way of making a political career in the Late Middle Ages. He was of low birth but studied in Rostock and Rome (where he became *doctor iuris utriusque*) and was for many years the *procurator* of Sten Sture the Elder at the papal curia. During the reigns of Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger, he was *electus* of Linköping but could never assume the office, since he failed to gain papal approval. Instead, he acted as military commander and successfully besieged the castles of Stockholm and Kalmar. He was executed on the order of King Kristian II shortly after the 'Bloodbath of Stockholm' in 1520. For further

inherited Sten Sture's problem that Danish troops still held some important castles in Sweden, and after failed attempts at negotiations, war officially broke out in 1505. After some years riding the changing fortunes of war, the *riksråd* started negotiations with King Hans. An agreement was reached, according to which the Swedes were either to accept Hans as their king or else pay him a yearly tribute. Svante was able to avert the realization of this agreement by mobilizing the farmers and miners. The opposition against him inside the *riksråd* grew stronger, but shortly before a meeting in January 1512, during which Svante Nilsson would most probably have been deposed from his office, he died around New Year in 1512.

A new *riksföreståndare* therefore had to be appointed when the *riksråd* next met in 1512, and Erik Trolle was appointed to the office. However, when Svante's son Sten (Sten Sture the Younger) arrived at the meeting, he convinced the assembly to annul the election and, at a meeting in June/July of the same year, Sten himself was elected as the new *riksföreståndare*.³⁹ His reign was dominated by conflicts with two individuals: the first was Gustav Trolle, the son of Erik, who became archbishop of Uppsala in 1515 and who intended to strengthen the *libertas ecclesiae* as well as the *riksråd*'s role in ruling Sweden.⁴⁰ The second was with the union king, Kristian II, who followed his father King Hans to the royal office in 1513. Sten Sture tried to deal with the first of these two conflicts by building up a counterweight to the powers of the archbishop and the *riksråd* and exploiting the political and military weight of the farmers and miners to an even larger extent than his two predecessors. He used their military power in 1517 to capture the archbishop's castle in Almarästaket (near Stockholm) and after that he tried to depose the archbishop at an assembly of the Swedish estates in Stockholm later that year.⁴¹ This blatant interference with canon law earned him a papal excommunication and interdict over the whole of Sweden in early 1519. The interdict — which (theoretically) forbade the administration of sacraments and the performance of masses across the whole of Sweden — weakened the position of Sten Sture. King Kristian II led mili-

detail on Hemming, see Carlsson, 'Hemming Gadh'; on the new way of making a political career through juridical education, see e.g. Gramsch, *Erfurter Juristen im Spätmittelalter*.

³⁹ Westin, 'Sten Svantesson Sture'.

⁴⁰ On Gustav Trolle, see Åsbrink and Westman, *Svea rikes ärkebiskopar från 1164 till nuvarande tid*, pp. 179–89. Gustav also had a personal *vendetta* against Sten, since the latter had effected the deposition of Gustav's father as *riksföreståndare*.

⁴¹ The term 'assembly of estates' is used because not only the lords of the *riksråd* were summoned but also representatives of the farmers, miners, and burghers.

tary expeditions to Stockholm in 1517 and 1518, which Sten Sture was able to block. The end of the latter expedition was, however, marked by the loss of five noblemen, among them Hemming Gadh, whom King Kristian had requested as hostages during negotiations. When the hostages were delivered, Kristian disappeared with them rather than entering into any negotiations. Kristian's land campaign of 1519 was more successful than his previous naval expeditions. He defeated the Swedish forces — which mainly consisted of farmers and miners — in a battle near Bogesund. Sten Sture himself was severely wounded by a cannonball and died on the retreat to Stockholm.

The *riksråd* and Archbishop Gustav Trolle welcomed King Kristian II, and Archbishop Gustav thanked the king in a letter for having 'freed [us] from the power and regime of that hot-tempered and ferocious man, the late Mr Sten Svantesson'.⁴² The defenders of the castle of Stockholm, led by Sten Sture's widow Christina Nilsson (Gyllenstierna), handed over both castle and town to King Kristian in exchange for his promises of amnesty and of a rule that would abide by Swedish law and the *Kalmar recess*.⁴³ However, when all those who had taken part in the attempt to depose Gustav Trolle as archbishop in 1517 were proclaimed heretics, Kristian II no longer felt bound by his promises. Many of the supporters of Sten Sture had remained in Stockholm in order to pay homage to the new king. They were caught and executed during the celebrations that followed Kristian's coronation in November 1520. There are differing statements in the sources as to the exact number of people executed.⁴⁴ The property of the murdered men was confiscated. This move against the supporters of Sten Sture has been recorded in historical writings as the 'Bloodbath of Stockholm'. King Kristian II obviously attempted to stamp out all possible resistance to his rule, and he continued to execute everybody he suspected to

⁴² SDHK, 42,849; printed in BSH, v, no. 501: 'frelst och lost haar ifraa thes hidzskelige oc omilde manss, dödde her Stens Swantessons, welde oc regemente'.

⁴³ The *Kalmar recess* had been negotiated between the Swedish *riksråd* and King Hans in 1483 and ensured a large share of power for the aristocracy in the Swedish part of the union-kingdom.

⁴⁴ Olaus Petri names fifty men but states that more than these were executed (Olaus Petri, 'En Swensk Cröneka', pp. 293–94), the Dane Poul Helgesen records in his chronicle that over seventy people were executed (Poul Helgesen, 'Den skibyske Krønike', p. 45), while Olaus Magnus gives a count of ninety-four executed men ('Ex Olai Magni archiepiscopi Upsalensis historia de gentibus septentrionalibus excerptum', p. 77). The number ninety-nine is mentioned in the chronicle of the German Reimar Kock writing in Lübeck ('Ex Chronico Lubecensi Reimari Kock excerpta', p. 272).

be a threat during the following months, for example during his *Erikskata* in December 1520.⁴⁵

The first time that we hear of Gustav Eriksson (Vasa) is in 1518 when he was one of the Swedish hostages with whom Kristian II disappeared back to Denmark. He managed to flee from Denmark, travelling first to Lübeck and then in May 1520 heading back to Sweden. He refused to take part in Kristian's coronation ceremony, a decision that most probably saved his life. His father, his brother-in-law, and two maternal uncles were all killed during the 'Bloodbath of Stockholm' while his mother, three sisters, his maternal grandmother, and an aunt were taken hostage. Gustav went to Dalarna, the region in which the *riksföreståndare* traditionally had the greatest backing. In January 1521 he was elected leader of those who were outraged by Kristian II's actions and he started to raid the royal properties of the region. To counter the raiders — who rapidly gained a foothold in northern and middle Sweden — Archbishop Gustav Trolle was elected *riksföreståndare* under Kristian II in June 1521. But the supporters of King Kristian became fewer and fewer, particularly after two of his most important helpers, Ture Jönsson, Lawspeaker of Västergötland and Hans Brask, Bishop of Linköping, changed sides and defected to join Gustav Vasa, who was elected counter-*riksföreståndare* in Vadstena in August of the same year. Gustav's troops conquered many important castles in Sweden and Finland. The young regent received help from Lübeck, which entailed a higher degree of independence from the old Swedish factions of the *riksråd* and the Sture, both of which were beginning to recover from the effects of the 'Bloodbath of Stockholm' and were about to re-enter the political game.

Although the support of Lübeck had to be paid for with money that Gustav Vasa did not have, and although he was forced to agree to a combined naval expedition of Hanseatic and Swedish vessels to the Öresund, he finally emerged as the winner of the power struggle. In this, he was unexpectedly and unintentionally supported by King Kristian II, against whom the Danish *riksråd* had revolted in January 1523 and who had been forced to flee to the Netherlands. Danish interests in Sweden were thus no longer represented. Gustav seized the moment when his military aims inside Sweden were suddenly fulfilled, and he ordered Bernhard von Mehlen to occupy Blekinge and to prepare for an invasion of Skåne. On 6 June 1523, Gustav Vasa was elected king of Sweden in Strängnäs. This day is usually considered to mark the end-date of the Kalmar Union.

⁴⁵ Ericson Wolke, *Stockholms blodbad*, Skyum-Nielsen, *Blodbadet i Stockholm og dets juridiske maskering*; Weibull, 'Stockholms blodbad'.

The Cult of St Erik Revived around 1400

After the intensive cult of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the period between *c.* 1320 and *c.* 1390 saw a decline in the veneration of St Erik, particularly among the lay aristocracy. However, the two leading lay and ecclesiastical institutions of Sweden, namely the kings and the archbishops and cathedral chapter of Uppsala, at least during certain phases, continued to venerate the Swedish royal saint. Royal support of the cult was considerable during the reign of Magnus Eriksson but decreased under his successor, Albrekt of Mecklenburg; during the period between 1332 and 1366, however, the archbishops of Uppsala showed few signs of venerating the royal saint. Such signs became more numerous again towards the end of the fourteenth century and it is noteworthy that at this point it was no longer only the rulers, aristocrats, and members of the church of Uppsala who had an interest in the cult — a member of the council of Stockholm, Peter Ålänning, and his wife Kristina Petersdotter, were among the most active donors to cult sites of St Erik as early as the 1380s.⁴⁶

St Erik was described in the *Upplandslag* of 1296 as the earliest law-giver of Uppland, but thereafter, we know of no other reference to St Erik or 'St Erik's law' for over a century. However, the notion of St Erik as law-giver must have survived, since in 1398 a charter was issued by Johan Fot and his son Håkan, which documented a land exchange 'in accordance with the law of St Erik'.⁴⁷ Similarly, Queen Margareta alluded to the legal habits of 'the time of St Erik' in a charter from 1403.⁴⁸ It seems that the centre of this renewed veneration of the Swedish royal saint was once again the region of Uppland, just as it had been during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Two new prebends at the cathedral of Uppsala were founded in honour of St Erik, among others, by two Upplandian nobles: Helga Anundsdotter (Rörik Birgersons ätt) in 1396 and Karl Ulfsson (Sparre av Tofta) in 1397.⁴⁹

The strongest sign of the renewed importance of the cult of St Erik in the Uppsala bishopric, however, was the introduction of a new feast day in this diocese, the feast *translatio sancti Erici* on 24 January. The new feast is first men-

⁴⁶ SDHK, 13,175, 15,464; printed in *Registrum Ecclesiae Aboensis eller Åbo Domkyrkas Svartboks*, ed. by Pispala, no. 290.

⁴⁷ SDHK, 14,973 (or. perg. RA 0101): 'æpthir sancta erics konugs lagom'.

⁴⁸ SDHK, 16,083: 'som the giorthæ i sancti Eriks konungx daghæ'.

⁴⁹ SDHK, 14,547, 14,821.

tioned in a bull of Boniface IX from the year 1401 in which an indulgence is granted for visitors to the cathedral of Uppsala *in translatione sancti Eriki regis et martiris, que est vicesimaquarta die mensis Januarij* (at [the day] of the translation of the king and martyr St Erik, which is the twenty-fourth day of the month of January).⁵⁰ Although the new feast day is first mentioned by a pope, it is unlikely that the introduction of the *translatio* feast was made on papal initiative; popes did not grant indulgences without being asked to. This means that a now-lost petition must originally have been directed to Boniface, probably by the archbishop of Uppsala, which was answered and granted by the extant bull. Henrik Karlsson was archbishop from 1383 to 1408 and it was probably he who initiated the introduction of the new feast day and who wrote to the pope in order to promote the feast day through a papal indulgence.⁵¹ In connection with the new feast day, the Office of St Erik was added to in about 1400. The authorship of the two additional nocturnes *Opem* and *Pugil* has been ascribed to Nils Hermannsson, Bishop of Linköping 1374–91, by Toivo Haapanen.⁵² It is therefore possible that the introduction of this new feast day in fact predated the papal bull from 1401 by several years.

After this revitalization of the cult of St Erik around the year 1400, there is surprisingly little evidence for a continued veneration of the royal saint until the 1430s. The custom of dating charters according to his feast day continued without visible interruption, and the number of references to his new feast day, the *translatio sancti Eriki*, also attests to its continued observance. However, there are no signs that particular attention was paid to the cult of the Swedish royal saint during the second and third decades of the fifteenth century. Only with the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson did the cult of St Erik reach a truly national level.

⁵⁰ SDHK, 15,593.

⁵¹ On Henrik Karlsson, see Åsbrink and Westman, *Svea rikes ärkebiskopar från 1164 till nuvarande tid*, pp. 121–25; Gillingstam, ‘Henrik Karlsson’.

⁵² Haapanen, ‘Olika skikt i S:t Eriks metrisk officium’, p. 76; his view is supported by Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, p. 177; *S:t Eriks hystoria* = *The historia of St Erik, king and martyr, and patron saint of Sweden*, ed. by Nilsson, p. 21. On Nils Hermannsson, see Schück, ‘Nicolaus Hermann’.

*The Rising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson
and the Rule(s) of Karl Knutsson (Bonde)*

In 1432 Archbishop Jöns Håkansson, who had been chosen by King Erik of Pomerania in 1421 from three candidates presented to him by the cathedral chapter, died and a new archbishop had to be elected.⁵³ The cathedral chapter elected its dean, Olof Larsson, as archbishop, this time without asking Erik of Pomerania for his approval. The king protested against this procedure and appointed his own candidate, the Dane Arendt Klemmenson, who had become bishop of the Norwegian diocese of Bergen only in 1431. On the very day of this election, Olof had set out for Rome to gain papal affirmation of his own election. As a result, Arendt did not meet his adversary when he came to Uppsala in October 1433. The cathedral chapter denied him access to the premises of the archbishop. Arendt managed to enter the archbishop's residence by force, but thereafter, he retreated to the island of Arnö in Lake Mälaren, where he suddenly died in the spring of 1434.

One of the places in which the conflict about the new investiture of the archbishop's seat of Uppsala played out was the papal curia in Rome and it is interesting to see that St Erik was mentioned in the argumentation of those who supported Erik of Pomerania's right to appoint the bishops in his kingdom. In several letters to Pope Eugenius IV in 1432, written variously by 'the bishops of the province of Dacia', King Erik of Pomerania, and Archbishop Peder Lykke of Lund, the opinion is voiced that the king of Sweden had the right to appoint the bishops of his realm. The basis of this right, according to the authors of the letters, was the foundation of the church of Uppsala by St Erik. In this argument, the bishops and King Erik follow the logic of the *Eigenkirchenwesen*, which had been predominant in Europe for centuries:

These churches founded in Sweden are erected and stand solemnly enriched from their first foundation by the venerable kings of the realm. This goes first and foremost for the church of the archdiocese of Uppsala, which was founded and enriched through the exemplary donation of St Erik, once king of Sweden. Because of the way they were founded, those who are kings in the aforementioned realm

⁵³ On Johan Håkansson see Åsbrink and Westman, *Svea rikes ärkebiskopar från 1164 till nuvarande tid*, pp. 133–34. On the election in 1432 see Ferm, 'Bengt Jönsson (Oxenstierna)', pp. 84–86; Larsson, *Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson och 1430-talets svenska uppror*, pp. 132–36; Nilsson, and others, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, I, 130–37.

for the time being have the right to nominate suitable persons as archbishops or bishops when these churches have become vacant.⁵⁴

St Erik is seen in a very different light in the *Karlskrönika*, where the events surrounding the conflict are told retrospectively. The *Karlskrönika* is a verse chronicle written in the chancellery of King Karl Knutsson and finished in 1452, designed to glorify the deeds of this king and to serve as a tool of propaganda against his political adversaries.⁵⁵ Since Arendt Klemmensson was the candidate of King Erik of Pomerania, who was the representative of the union kingship and therefore King Karl Knutsson's adversary, the *Karlskrönika* sided with the cathedral chapter and Olof Larsson:

quickly they [the cathedral chapter] elected another again | that was a good, well-educated man | Master Olof was his name | [...] | when the king heard of that | he became full of wrath | He there had a chaplain | Sir Arendt Klemmensson was his name | There was no priest who was more evil | as his life best proves | [...] | without the consent of the clerics should he become bishop | and thus he had to travel to Uppsala | when he came to the door of the church | St Erik's wrath met him there | his deadly disease he quickly received | and thus he went home sick | Then he went back to Arnö | for expensive doctors he sent | [but] this could not help him | [because] God and St Erik wanted to overturn him | On Arnö he had to endure pain | there then, the unrightful bishop died.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Lindblom, *Akter rörande ärkebiskopsvalet i Uppsala 1432*, no. 14: 'Ipse namque ecclesie per Sweciam collocata a primeua fundacionis earum origine per divos regnj reges erecte ac solempniter existunt dotate, precipue autem et singulariter ecclesia Vpsalensis metropolitana per gloriosissimum olim regem Swecie sanctum Ericum quodam prerogative dono fundata existit et dotata. Racione vero et pretextu fundacionis huiusmodi reges dicti regnj pro tempore existentes habent nominare certas et ydoneas personas in archiepiscopum sive episcopos, quociens ecclesias ipsas vacare contingat'.

⁵⁵ Ferm, 'Karlskrönikan'.

⁵⁶ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II: *Nya eller Karlskrönikan. Början av unionsstriderna samt Karl Knutssons regering, 1389–1452* (1866), pp. 20–21: 'strax welde the en annan j gen | thz war en god wel lärder man | mestar olof swa heter han | [...] | tha konungin thz spordhe | fulwredh han sik giordhe | han haffde the en capellan | her arend clemitson swa heet han | Argere boffwa war ey tha en prest | som hans liffuerne beviiste mesth | [...] | vtan klärkana tak sculle han biscop wara | och saa monde han til vpsala fara | tha han kom for kirkiona dör | sancte erix wredhe mötte honom ther | Sinna hielsooth han strax fik | och siwkar heem tedan gik | til arnöö the han ater forde | epter dyra mestara han spurde | thz matte honom jnkte hielpa | gudh och sancte erik wilde honom stielpa | J arnöö tholde han then nödh | ther bleff then orätta biscop dödh'.

In contrast to the argumentation of the Danish bishops and King Erik of Pomerania, the *Karlskrönika* explains the disease of the unworthy Arendt Klemmenson as being the result of the wrath of St Erik, who clearly did not approve of the king exercising the right to appoint bishops in Sweden, but rather acted as defender of the *libertas ecclesiae*, which in this situation meant the right of the cathedral chapter to elect their bishop without external interference. The ongoing conflict as to whether the new archbishop should be appointed by the king or be elected by the cathedral chapter, was one of the causes that led to the uprising headed by Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson between 1434 and 1436. During these years, St Erik finally became the symbol of the Swedish kingdom and its *rex perpetuus*.

There are two sources suggesting that Engelbrekt and his followers saw themselves in the succession of St Erik. The first is an open letter written by Engelbrekt in September 1434 in which he describes the progress made by himself and his followers and states that he, 'with the help of God and St Erik', would continue until he would reach the *Örasundh*.⁵⁷ The second source is a letter from 1 August 1434 from Bernhard Ochsenbrügge, secretary to Hans Kröpelin, the bailiff of Stockholm castle, written to the council of Gdansk in which he reports on Engelbrekt's uprising, among other things. With regard to the motives of the farmers and miners for their participation in the uprising, he states:

It is particularly the will and opinion of the people from Dalarna that they want to have a king in Sweden and that they want to expel the king of Denmark from the three kingdoms and want to be lords themselves. They all do this, because they want the conditions here in Sweden to be as they had been in the past, in the time of King Erik, who is now a saint and who is venerated in this country. At that time, there were no burdensome tolls, taxes, or duties as of today and thus they want the rights and privileges that they had in the past.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Handlingar rörande Skandinaviens historia*, ed. by Samfundet, VIII, (1820), pp. 3–5, p. 4: 'medh gudz hielp och St Erich'.

⁵⁸ BSH, II, no. 103: 'besunders de Dalekerles begerunge vnde menunge is . se willen eynen konynk in Sweden hebben vnde willen den konynk van Denmarcken vte den dren riken vordriuen vnde willen sulff heren wesen. Dit doen se alle ymme des willen dat ed hir in Sweden sal also wedder stan alz et in uortijden by konynk Erix tiden stunt de nu gar hillich is den man hir im lande erbarliken viret. do en was hir gen tollen noch gene beschattunge edder beswerunge, der gebure nicht alz nu is also dat se ere gerechticheit wedder willen hebben gehat. gelijk in vorledenen jaren'.

The peasants and miners obviously saw the time of St Erik as the ‘good old days’, when the laws were just and no heavy taxes and tolls burdened them and Sweden was ruled by a king who did not exploit his subjects.⁵⁹ St Erik presented himself as the saint who would aid them in their fight against royal exploitation and Danish predominance for several reasons. The first and most important reason was that St Erik was by then widely accepted as patron saint of the kingdom of Sweden. Thus, in the eyes of Engelbrekt and his followers, everything done in favour of the realm was most likely to find his approval. This probability was raised still further when considering the two episodes from his legend in which he refused money voluntarily offered by his subjects with the words ‘what is mine is sufficient for me’ and in his final battle against the Danish pretender to the Swedish throne, Magnus Henriksson. In the mind of the participants in the uprising, a king who refused to take money that his subjects wanted to give to him would surely not agree with the high taxes of the present king, and one who had fought against a Dane who had wanted to steal his throne would surely also support their fight against a foreign king who suppressed the Swedish people through his Danish and German bailiffs. As the guarantor of Swedish law, St Erik would surely agree with their attempts to re-establish the law and customs that had persisted since his times. Finally, it was stated in the legend of the saint that it was against Swedish customs to have foreigners ruling the kingdom.

No reference to St Erik is made in the letters of the *riksråd* during the time of the uprising, but the seal of the kingdom that was first used by the council in 1439, after Erik of Pomerania was conclusively deposed as king of Sweden, signifies the important role now held by St Erik as a symbol of integration for the kingdom (Fig. 21). The seal, called the *riksklämma*, shows St Erik in armour wearing a crowned helmet with a sword on his belt. In his hands he bears (St Erik’s?) banner and a shield. On the shield the coat of arms of the three crowns is depicted. The three crowns were first used by King Albrekt as the coat of arms of Sweden (see below). The circumscription reads: *Sanctus ericus Sweorum Gothorum rex Sigillum regni Svecie* (St Erik king of the Swedes and Goths. Seal of the Swedish kingdom). It was common practice in the Middle Ages that ‘a juristic person was represented in its seal by its patron, a certain piece of architecture or the like’,⁶⁰ and it has been rightly assumed that St Erik, in the context of the uprising of Engelbrekt and the interregnum that followed

⁵⁹ Ferm, *State-Formative Tendencies*, p. 11.

⁶⁰ Kahsnitz, ‘Bildnis. V. Siegel’, col. 171.



Figure 20.
Seal of the realm of
Sweden (the *riksklämma*).
Circumscription: 'Sanctus ericus Sweorum
Gothorumque rex Sigillum regni Svecie', first
used in 1439, Stockholm.
Photo courtesy of Statens
historiska museum.

it, ascended to the rank of Sweden's *rex perpetuus*, reaching the same position that St Olaf had held in Norway since the middle of the twelfth century.⁶¹ A close connection between the *riksklämma* and the rule of the *riksföreståndare* is evident. The seal stayed in use until 1523, when Gustav Eriksson (Vasa) founded a new hereditary kingship in Sweden and replaced it.⁶² In terms of the iconography of the seal of the realm, it is interesting to note that it is one of the first depictions to show St Erik wearing armour instead of plain clothes,

⁶¹ Schück, 'Sweden as an Aristocratic Republic', p. 67.

⁶² Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten', p. 139.

thereby emphasizing his standing as (knightly) protector of the kingdom of Sweden. This manner of depicting St Erik became very common during the rest of the fifteenth century, although depictions showing him in plain clothes continued to be common too (see Appendix 4).

By 1436 Archbishop Olof Larsson had replaced the archiepiscopal seal showing St Mary, St Lars, and St Erik with a seal on which only St Erik was depicted. Because of this, it was suggested that Archbishop Olof was the person who initiated the introduction of the *riksklämman*.⁶³ This assumption is very plausible given the conflict between Archbishop Olof and the Uppsala Cathedral chapter on one side and King Erik of Pomerania and his candidate Arendt Klemmenson on the other, which had delayed Olof's claim to the archiepiscopal office for four years. However, regarding the rising status of St Erik among Engelbrekt's followers, the role of Archbishop Olof should not be overestimated. In making St Erik the symbol of the restoration of good law and old customs, there was most probably great consensus among all those who participated in the opposition to King Erik.

The *riksklämman* is the first example in which St Erik is depicted presenting the coat of arms with three crowns on his shield to the viewer. In the further course of the fifteenth century, St Erik and the coat of arms of the Swedish kingdom became so closely connected that they can be regarded as almost synonymous symbols for Sweden, both as an autonomous kingdom and as a part of the Kalmar Union. For this reason, the emergence of the coat of arms featuring the three crowns merits a brief description.⁶⁴ The first ruler who is known to have used the three crowns in the design that has endured up to the present day was King Albrekt of Mecklenburg. He first used it in 1364 on a seal attached to a charter for the monastery of Julita (Fig. 24).⁶⁵ The circumscription of the seal reads: *secretum alberti dei gracia sueor[um] gotor[um]q[ue] regis* (Seal of Albrekt by the grace of God king of the Swedes and the Goths). The circumscription around his main seal adds Skåne to the areas over which he claimed rulership: *SIGILLVM ALBERTI D[ei] G[ratia] R[ex] SVECVRVM GOTO[rumque] ET DOMINVS SCANIE* (Seal of Albrekt by the grace of God king of the Swedes and the Goths and Lord over Skåne).⁶⁶ Therefore, it has been assumed that the

⁶³ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', pp. 180–82.

⁶⁴ Bartholdy, 'De tre kronor og korset'; Bartholdy, 'Der macht- und dynastiepolitische Inhalt des dänischen Königswappens'; Seitz, *De tre kronorna*.

⁶⁵ SDHK, 8550; *Svenska medeltida kungasigill*, ed. by Fleetwood, II, 63.

⁶⁶ *Svenska medeltida kungasigill*, ed. by Fleetwood, II, 53.



Figure 21. Örtug of Albrekt of Mecklenburg showing the coat of arms of the three crowns. Circumscription: 'ALBERTVS REX'.



Figure 22. Örtug of Erik of Pomerania showing the coat of arms of the three crowns. Circumscription: 'ERICUS REX'.

Stockholm, Kungliga Myntkabinettet. Photos courtesy of Kungliga Myntkabinettet.

three crowns refer to the three Swedish regions of Svealand, Götaland, and Skåne. King Albrekt also used the three crowns on some of his coins (Fig. 22), as did his successor, Erik of Pomerania (Fig. 23).

A flag showing the three golden crowns on a blue background symbolizing the Swedish kingdom of King Albrekt is also depicted in Ernst of Kirschberg's famous picture, *Mecklenburgische Reimchronik*, painted in 1378 (Fig. 16). On the coat of arms of Karl Knutsson (Bonde) the three crowns symbolized Sweden, while the lion bearing St Olaf's axe represented the kingdom of Norway, which Karl briefly ruled. The boat in the middle section is his family's coat of arms (Fig. 24).⁶⁷ As a symbol of the kingdom of Sweden, the three crowns also found entrance into the coats of arms of the union monarchs. A good example of a union monarch's seal is that of Kristian I (Fig. 25).⁶⁸ The circumscription reads: *Secretum Cristierni dei gra[tia] dacie swecie norvegie sclavorum gothoru[m]q[ue] Regis ac comitis d[e] aldeborch et delmenhorst* (Seal of Kristian by the grace of God king of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and of the Slavs and Count of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst). The four sections in his coat of arms correspond to his *regni*: the three leopards for Denmark, the three

⁶⁷ *Svenska medeltida kungasigill*, ed. by Fleetwood, II, 88–90; the picture showing Karl Knutsson leaning on his shield was originally part of the ensemble of St George's altar in Stockholm's *Storkyrka* made by Bernt Notke.

⁶⁸ *Svenska medeltida kungasigill*, ed. by Fleetwood, II, 93–95.



Figure 23. Seal of
Albrekt of Mecklenburg.



Figure 24. Seal of
Karl Knutsson Bonde.



Figure 25. Seal of
King Kristian I.

Images from *Svenska medeltida kungasigill*, II, ed. by Harald G. Fleetwood, (1942)

crowns for Sweden, the lion with St Olaf's axe for Norway, and the dragon for the Slavonic and Gothic regions.

The importance of the three crowns as a symbol for the Swedish kingdom is further emphasized by the *Karlskrönika*. Here, the different banners of Karl Knutsson's troops are described: 'On the shooter's banner one could see | St Erik and St Olaf standing there, painted'.⁶⁹ The banner of the lightly-armed men depicted St George and the main banner the Virgin Mary with child. The three crowns were depicted on every banner: 'and whatever was painted on the banner | the three crowns should be there as well'.⁷⁰ This description of Karl Knutsson's military banners in the *Karlskrönika* clearly shows the central symbolic importance of the three crowns coat of arms. In addition, the banner showing St Erik together with St Olaf is evidence for Karl Knutsson's attempt to have his twin kingdoms symbolized by showing the two saints, much as King Magnus Eriksson attempted to do in the fourteenth century. Finally, the depiction of St George is an expression of Karl Knutsson's particularly strong veneration of that saint. The close connection between St Erik and the three crowns emerges further when considering the banner of St Erik (*S:t Eriks baner*). On the *riksklämma*, St Erik himself had this coat of arms on his shield and it is reasonable to assume that the banner of St Erik showed the three crowns on a blue background, similar to the image in Ernst of Kirchberg's *Mecklenburgische Chronik*. It is not mentioned before 1495, but at that point it had most prob-

⁶⁹ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II (1866), p. 294.: 'J sköttebanridh man sa | sancte eric oc sancte olaff malade staa'.

⁷⁰ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II (1866), p. 295: 'ok huat i baneren malat äre | iij cronor skulle joo mädher wäre'.

ably already been housed for some time in the cathedral of Uppsala.⁷¹ Dating from some point in the first two decades of the sixteenth century, three wooden sculptures are extant that show St Erik holding his banner.⁷² On all of these banners the three crowns coat of arms is depicted.

In addition to the reference to St Erik being depicted on one of the banners of Karl Knutsson, as described in the *Karlskrönika*, a further hint can be found concerning Karl Knutsson's relation to the holy king. As the *Karlskrönika* was being written, an attempt was made to connect it to the first Swedish verse chronicle, the *Erikskrönika*,⁷³ by adding a new introduction and a poem named the *Förbindelsdikt* that connected the two chronicles. The new introduction to the *Erikskrönika* attempts to connect Karl Knutsson genealogically to St Erik:

And to begin with, there was a king called Erik | he had all Sweden under himself |
his father was King Erik Knutsson | and St Erik's grandson | King Erik had three
sisters | Lord Knut of the Folkungar married one of them | her name was Elin and
another was Märetha | she married Sir Nils of Tofta | [...] | with her he conceived
Sir Abjörn Nilsson | from him was born Sir Ulf Abjörnsson | from Ulf was born
Sir Karl of Tofta.⁷⁴

With *her Karl j tofta*, the genealogy had arrived in the early fifteenth century and the author of the new introduction of the *Erikskrönika* obviously assumed that the rest of the chain leading to Karl Knutsson (Bonde) was known to his readers. According to Hans Gillingstam, Karl Ulfsson (Sparre av Tofta) married Ingrid, the daughter of Erik Boberg and Birgitta Knutsdotter (Algotssönernas ätt).⁷⁵ With her, he had a son Knut who died without issue in 1389, and a daughter Margareta, who married the knight Knut Bonde around 1408 and became the mother of Karl Knutsson.⁷⁶

⁷¹ SDHK, 33,304; printed in FMU, 4631.

⁷² According to the iconographic catalogue of *Riksantikvarieembete* and *Vitterhetsakademien* the sculptures were situated in the churches of Knivsta (Uppland, around 1500), Arboga (Västmanland, 1510–1520), and Rasbokil (Uppland, 1520–1530).

⁷³ Ferm, 'Erikskrönikan'.

⁷⁴ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, 1 (1865), p. 165: 'Och böria aff en konung heth erik | han haffde alt swerike vndher sigh | hans fadher war konung erik knwtzson | oc sancte eriks sonason | konungh erik haffde systra tree | her knwt aff folkunga fik ena aff the | hon heth elin oc annar märetha | henne fik her niels aff tofta | [...] | mz henne fik han her abiorn nielsson | aff honom föddis her wlf abiornsson | Aff wlfte föddis her karl j tofta'.

⁷⁵ Gillingstam and Liljeholm, 'Sparre av Tofta', pp. 87–88.

⁷⁶ See the genealogical tables 'The Origin of Karl Knuttson (Bonde) according to the

There are most probably errors in the genealogy of the new introduction to the *Erikskrönika*. As far as is known from other sources, the two daughters of King Erik Knutsson were named Sofia and Ingeborg and married Henrik III of Rostock and Birger Jarl, respectively. Furthermore, the father of Abjörn was not named Nils but Sixten, and Sixten was not married to Märetha but rather to Ingrid Abjörnsdotter of Våxtorp.⁷⁷ It thus appears that Lady Märetha was the invention of the author of the new introduction to the *Erikskrönika*, created to provide a connecting link between the families of Sparre av Tofta and the royal dynasty of St Erik, and so between St Erik and Karl Knutsson (Bonde).

Considering the way in which St Erik is depicted in the *Karlskrönika*, it is interesting to see that he is addressed not only as the patron saint of the Swedish kingdom but also of the cathedral and archbishopric of Uppsala. The first matter in which St Erik was involved, according to the *Karlskrönika*, was the dispute in 1432–34 surrounding the new archbishop of Uppsala, as discussed above. Here, the patron saint, St Erik, took his responsibility as guardian of the archbishopric seriously and arranged the immediate death of the unworthy archbishop, Arendt Klemmensson. He acted as the protector of the regional church of Uppsala against an un-canonically appointed bishop. In connection with this, it is worth noting that in the *Karlskrönika*, St Erik takes on a dual function. In the first, together with St Olaf, St George, St Mary, and Christ, he is one of the holy figures whose images lead the Swedish troops into battle and he also carries responsibility for choosing the new king.⁷⁸ His second function, however, is to act simultaneously as the regional patron saint of the cathedral of Uppsala and its bishopric.

Through the accounts in the *Karlskrönika*, it becomes clear that the anti-Danish politics practised by Karl Knutsson could be bolstered by referring to St Erik. The saint had become the *rex perpetuus* of Sweden after the rising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, and he remained so throughout the reign(s) of Karl Knutsson. Karl in particular followed the practice established by his fourteenth-century predecessor, Magnus Eriksson, in reigning over two kingdoms, Sweden and Norway, which were represented by their two saintly kings, respec-

'New Introduction to the *Erikskrönika*' and according to modern research' in Appendix 6.

⁷⁷ Gillingstam and Liljeholm, 'Sparre av Tofta', p. 84.

⁷⁸ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II (1866), p. 130: 'Ok siger iak ider wthen fare | ider konungh wil iac ey ware | wi wiliom ther til en bonde taka | hwem sancte erik wnnar oss rake' (And if I defeat you without danger | I [still] do not want to become your king | for this we will take a farmer [wordplay with the name of Karl Knutsson (Bonde), bonde=farmer] | whom St Erik will spot among us).

tively St Erik and St Olaf. What is more, the episodes of the saint's legend that told of St Erik's restraint in levying taxes upon his subjects, and of his death at the hands of a Danish claimant to the Swedish throne, made him a perfect tool of propaganda against the union kings.

The Sture-Riksföreståndare — the Climax of St Erik's Veneration as a Political Saint

'Three outstanding figures — Sten Sture the Elder, Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger — continued the work that Karl Knutsson had initiated in the sequel of the Engelbrekts-feud'.⁷⁹ They did so not only in the sense that they continued Karl's policy of independence from the union monarchs, but also in their utilization of the cult of St Erik to forward these policies. After the Battle of Brunkeberg had been won by the troops led by Sten Sture the Elder in 1471, an altar was consecrated to St Erik, St Lars, St Botvid, St Henrik, and St Birgitta in Uppsala Cathedral in 1472.⁸⁰ The diplomatic material does not name a founder for the altar, but it is known that Sten Sture presented the altar with an eternal burning light in 1477, which was to hang in front of it, and that he donated a large number of goods to the altar.⁸¹ In return, it was pledged that a weekly mass for St Erik and the patron saints of Sweden should be read. Among other people who engaged in equipping the new altar were Elsaby Kristofersdotter, from one of the leading burgher families of Uppsala, who donated a basement in return for a weekly mass for her soul at the altar in 1472, and Erik Gregersson (Örnflycht), who bestowed property to the altar for the same purpose in 1482.⁸²

St Erik's altarpiece (*S:t Eriks tavla*), which featured a series of thirteen pictures showing scenes from the legend of St Erik, has been dated to the second half of the fifteenth century and was most probably situated on top of the altar

⁷⁹ Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia*, p. 124: 'Tre framträdande personligheter — Sten Sture den äldre, Svante Nilsson och Sten Sture den yngre — fortsatte det arbete som Karl Knutsson inlett i efterdyningarna av Engelbrektsfejden'.

⁸⁰ Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*, pp. 25–27. The altar was consecrated 'in honorem sanctorum martyrum erici patroni nostri, laurencii, henrici et botuidi necnon sancte birgitte vidue' (to the honour of the saintly martyrs Erik, our patron, Lars, Henrik and Botvid and the widow St Birgitta).

⁸¹ SDHK, 30,315; see Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnnehav*, pp. 140–41.

⁸² SDHK, 29,496, 31,105.

consecrated to the saints Erik, Lars, Botvid, Henrik, and Birgitta.⁸³ The first eight scenes were worked as reliefs that form the top of the middle section of the altarpiece, while the four last scenes were painted on the wings of the altarpiece. Under some of the reliefs, the coat of arms of Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson (r. 1470–1515) was depicted. Scenes nine to twelve are supposed to have been painted on the side wings of the altar, while the thirteenth scene represented the image on the back of the left wing. A conjectured fourteenth picture on the back of the right wing, as well as the corpus of the altarpiece, are not preserved.⁸⁴ The whole altarpiece was destroyed in the fire of 1702, but copper engravings published by Johan Peringskiöld in 1719 give an impression of how it looked. In addition to the copper engravings, sketches from the late seventeenth century featuring some of the scenes are extant.⁸⁵ The first picture shows the coronation of St Erik, who holds a sceptre and globe, by St Henrik, who is identified by the inscription: '*prima materia coronatione per sanctum henricum episcopum*' (first item: coronation by Bishop St Henrik). In the second picture, an episode from the legend of St Erik is depicted in which he refuses to accept one third of the kingdom's fines that actually belong to the *fiscum rei publice*, but that the people had offered him for his own purse. On a banner coming from the head of the king the words '*s[anctus] ericus ipse respondet michi mea sufficiunt*' (Saint Erik answered himself: 'What is mine is sufficient for me') can be read, while a comment below the scene reads '*secunda materia quomodo populus offert sibi pecuniam*' (second item: how the people offered their money). In the background, a coat of arms showing the three crowns of the Swedish king is visible, as well as a banner showing the coat of arms of the Bielke family. The third picture illustrates the claim in the legend of St Erik that its protagonist built the cathedral in (Gamla) Uppsala and furnished it with clerics. Together with St Henrik, St Erik is depicted standing in front of

⁸³ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavlå', pp. 45–46. The altarpiece is first mentioned in a written source from 1577, which records that the mason Olof Murmästare was appointed to 'rip down the grave of St Erik' and to 'rebuild it again in order to put the altarpiece upon it' (Lovén, Bengtsson, and Gejrot, 'Domkyrkan i det skriftliga källmaterialet till 1600-talets början', p. 124: 'Atth nidbryta sancta Eriks graff och mura wp igen till att sättie tafflan offuan wppå'. In the same work on p. 122 it is also stated that 'Kalk och Tegell kom till ath Mura undher Sancte Erixx Taffla fremst j koren' (Chalk and brick were used to build [the foundation] under St Erik's altarpiece, furthestmost in the choir).

⁸⁴ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavlå', pp. 45, 57.

⁸⁵ Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*. The sketches are depicted in Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavlå', pp. 51–52, figs 26–28.

a church on which a craftsman is still working, while two people look out of one of its large windows and another person on the roof seems to be preaching. The inscription for the scene reads: '*Tertia materia quomodo edificatur ecc[les]ia et [...] et sacerdotes*' (third item: how the church is built and the priests [...]). In the background, a number of armed men and banners are visible, one of which shows the three crowns.

The fourth image depicts the sailing expedition from Uppsala to Finland where St Erik and St Henrik intended, according to both their legends, to undertake a crusade in order to evangelize the pagan Finns. The picture is explained by the caption: '*quarta materia de navigatione regis et episcopi in finlandiam*' (fourth item: on the sea passage of the king and of the bishop to Finland). The ship is equipped with two banners showing the three crowns. On the fifth image, the victory of the Swedes in a battle against the Finns is depicted. This image has the caption: '*Quinta materia quomodo pugnatur et prosternitur finones*' (fifth item: how he fought and threw down the Finns). St Erik is holding a shield with the three crowns and the inscription '*S[anctus]: ericus*'. In the background, a number of banners are visible, one of which shows the coat of arms of the family Gyllenstierna. In the sixth picture, St Henrik can be seen preaching to the Finns, while St Erik sits and watches, in a scene entitled '*sexta materia quomodo facit predicare fidem*' (sixth item: how it is made that the faith be preached). In the seventh image, St Henrik is again the protagonist. He baptizes two Finns while St Erik stands at the back with a banner featuring the three crowns flying over his head. Two more banners can also be discerned, that of the family of Sture, and that of the family of Gyllenstierna. The caption reads: '*septima materia quomodo sanctus henricus finones baptizat*' (seventh item: how St Henrik baptized the Finns). On the last of the relief images, the final mass of St Erik is depicted, showing him surrounded by armed men sitting in a pew. His attention is directed to one of his men, who probably brings the news of the approaching military force of Magnus Henriksson. Again, the coat of arms with the three crowns is visible in two places, once on a shield and once on a banner.

The two next scenes should be seen as one picture, as shown by the lance of a knight in the foreground that reaches across from the right into the left picture (Fig. 26). The small group of knights who follow St Erik appear in the centre of the image, surrounded by an overwhelming superiority of Danish troops, who bear the coat of arms featuring three leopards on their shields and banners. These troops approach St Erik's followers from both the left and right. The followers of the Swedish king have bunches of straw attached to their helmets. According to the *Sturekrönika*, this was a sign of identification said to have been

used at the Battle of Brunkeberg by the fighters of Sten Sture the Elder.⁸⁶ As a sign of defeat, St Erik's banner with the three crowns lies broken on the ground, as does his shield, which bears the same coat of arms. Two of the knights who fight in the company of St Erik show their own coats of arms to the viewer and thus identify themselves as Sten Sture the Elder and Karl Knutsson (Bonde). The eleventh picture shows the situation immediately after the decapitation of St Erik, from whose body and head blood keeps streaming, while his decapitator replaces his sword back into its scabbard. The two miracles that occurred in connection with St Erik's martyrdom are depicted next to his dead body. From the place where his blood touches the ground, a small creek flows down out of the picture, while a person kneeling next to the dead king represents the poor and blind widow who regains her eyesight by touching her eyes with the blood of the martyr. The one eye she touches at the moment the picture shows is already open (=seeing) while the other eye is still closed (=blind). The two men standing next to the widow have bunches of straw on their helmets, like the Swedish fighters in pictures nine and ten, and one of them holds a banner featuring the three crowns. In the last scene St Erik is carried on a bier into a town (Gamla Uppsala). One of the six people bearing the bier is displaying the sword which killed the saint. The last picture, which was on the reverse of the left wing of the altarpiece, is included in another copper engraving by Peringskiöld. Here, the enormous shrine of St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala (Östra Aros) is depicted with two banners showing the three crowns.⁸⁷

While the banner of the three crowns has been discussed above, the coats of arms on a number of the pictures on *S:t Eriks tavla* deserve some background information. Two coats of arms are depicted twice: that of Sten Sture's family (Sture) and that of the family of Gyllenstierna. Two other coats of arms are depicted once: that of the families of Bielke and of Bonde (Fig. 27). The significance of the depictions of the coats of arms of the Sture and the Bonde dynasties are discussed below in detail. The depiction of the coat of arms of the family of Bielke could be a reference to the family of Birgitta Stensdotter, the mother of Sten Sture. The last coat of arms, that of the family of Gyllenstierna, is harder

⁸⁶ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, III (1868), pp. 76–77: 'somliga hadde quista och somliga halm | saa komma the oppa norra malm' (some of them had bunches and some had straws | that way they came up to Norrmalm); see Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavla', p. 55.

⁸⁷ It has been debated which of the at least three medieval shrines is depicted there. Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavla', pp. 55–56; Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks skrin', pp. 133–35; Bygdén, 'S:t Eriks skrin genom tiderna', pp. 340–45; Källström, 'Sankt Eriks skrin som kunsthåndverk', pp. 408–10.



Figure 26. The picture from the (lost) altarpiece of St Erik showing the last battle of the saint.
Reproduction by Johannes Periongskiöld (1719).

to interpret. Sten Sture was not related to this family. He did, however, work with several of its representatives (Erik Eriksson the Elder, Nils Eriksson, and Erik Eriksson the Younger).⁸⁸

The picture showing the last battle of St Erik is of great interest for the present study since it provides the most explicit clue to the intention behind the foundation of the whole altar. The question discussed by earlier research, as to whether the image can in fact be connected with the Battle of Brunkeberg, can be considered as settled, since Herman Bengtsson observed that the followers of St Erik have bunches of straw on their helmets in what is a very clear allusion to the *Sturekrönika*'s account of the battle.⁸⁹ The connecting thought between the two battles is the idea that on both occasions, a Swedish ruler fought

⁸⁸ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavla', p. 58.

⁸⁹ Bengtsson, 'Sankt Eriks tavla', p. 55. On the earlier scholarly discussion see Boëthius and Romdahl, *Uppsala domkyrka 1258–1435*; Paatz, *Bernt Notke und sein Kreis*; Nilsén, *S:t Eriks tavla*. On the *Sturekrönika*, see Hagnell, *Sturekrönikan 1452–1496*; Nilsson, 'De medeltida rimkrönikor', pp. 51–52; Ferm, 'Sturekrönikan'.



Figure 27. Coats of arms of the families of Sture, Bielke, Gyllenstierna, and Bonde.
Drawn by the author.

against a Danish claim to the Swedish throne. At the same time, the connection between the last battle of St Erik and the Battle of Brunkeberg cannot be the only level on which the image should be interpreted, since the two knights, who can be identified by their coats of arms, are Sten Sture the Elder and Karl Knutsson (Bonde), and the latter did not take part in the battle of 1471, as he had died shortly before it.

In my opinion, on another more abstract level, the picture has to be seen as an expression of the anti-Danish propaganda that was promoted by Karl Knutsson (Bonde), Sten Sture the Elder, and the two *riksföreståndare* who followed after him. The purpose was to depict the Swedish fight for freedom from Danish power claims, a fight that was waged first by St Erik and his men in his last battle against the military force of the Dane Magnus Henriksson. In the painting, the two Swedish rulers of the fifteenth century, *riksföreståndare* Sten Sture the Elder and King Karl Knutsson, follow in the saint's tradition of fighting the threat of Danish supremacy over the Swedish kingdom. This fight thereby takes on a religious justification. Furthermore, the altar was placed in the largest church of Uppland, which was also the one most frequented by pilgrims. This position ensured a maximum of public attention for the pictures. The battle scene on St Erik's altarpiece must thus be interpreted as part of the political strategy of the *riksföreståndare* to direct the political power of the 'common man' against the claims of the union kings and against factions among the Swedish aristocracy allying with them.

The idea of Danes fighting Swedes at the Battle of Brunkeberg is, however, quite a simplification.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ This has frequently been stated in earlier research. See, for example, Wallin, 'Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 1: Unionspolitiska, personhistoriska och birgittinska aspekter', p. 27; Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid*, pp. 322–24.

It is important to note that in the ‘Danish’ party

there were many Swedes with King Christian, namely Erik Karlsson [Vasa], Sir Ivar Gren [Gren], Sir Trotte Karlsson [Ekaätten], Sir Ture Turesson [Bielke], Erik Kromedick, Staffan Bengtsson [Vinstorpaätten], Sir Erik Nilsson [Oxenstierna], Sir Erik Ottesson the Younger [Björnram från Västergötland], Bengt Kristiernsson [Oxenstierna] and his brother [Hans Kröpelin or Sten Kristiernsson].⁹¹

Also, a contingent of farmers from Uppland joined the army of King Kristian I.⁹² In contrast to some researchers who stated that Danes and Swedes fought on both sides, I could not find any sources reporting Danes fighting with Sten Sture.⁹³

St Erik was connected with the Battle of Brunkeberg, not only on the altar-piece in Uppsala Cathedral, but also in the account given of the battle in the *Sturekrönika*, which reports a powerful sign. After the battle had been won by the troops of Sten Sture, they celebrated their victory:

The Swedes all sang in the evening | drank and amused themselves | thanked God for his mercy | and for so few casualties | many saw there God’s mighty power | and also his mighty strength | so when the Swedes assembled | they saw a burning sword

⁹¹ Olaus Petri, ‘En Svensk Cröneka’ p. 239: ‘Och woro monge Suenske med konung Christiern, Nemligha Eric Karlson, her Iwar green, her Trotte Karlson, her Ture Tureson, Eric Kromedick, Staffan Benctson, her Eric Nielson, her Eric Otteson then yngre, Benct Christerson och hans brodher’. Olaus Petri’s account of the battle seems to be quite independent from the *Sturekrönika*. The family names in square brackets are taken from Gillingstam, *Äterna Oxenstierna och Vasa under medeltiden*, p. 908 (Erik Karlsson); Gillingstam, ‘Gren’, pp. 59–60 (Ivar Gren); Nordström and Gillingstam, ‘Ekaätten’, pp. 225–26 (Trotte Karlsson); Carlsson, ‘Ture Turesson (Bielke)’; The family of Krummediek is actually from Schleswig-Holstein. A branch of it made a career in the service of the Danish kings. The statement that Erik Krummediek was a Swede is, therefore, rather dubious. Lindholm, ‘Vinstorpaätten’, pp. 104–05 (Staffan Bengtsson); Gillingstam, ‘Erik Nilsson (Oxenstierna)’; Gillingstam, ‘Björnram från Västergötland’, p. 21 (Erik Ottesson); Gillingstam, *Äterna Oxenstierna och Vasa under medeltiden*, p. 904 (Bengt Kristiernsson).

⁹² Olaus Petri, ‘En svensk cröneka’, p. 241: ‘Och hade han [King Kristian] en stoor hoop bönder med sigh i lägred, bådhe the som kompne woro til at köpa salt, och woro förhåldne, så och the bönder som Eric Karlsson, her Trotte, och her Iwar green församblat hade’ (And he [King Kristian] had a large group of farmers with him in his camp, both those who had come to buy salt and had been detained and those farmers who had been assembled by Erik Karlsson, Sir Trotte, and Sir Ivar Gren).

⁹³ The only researcher who specified this claim was Wallin, ‘Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 1: Unionspolitiska, personhistoriska och birgittinska aspekter’, p. 27 who names on the ‘Swedish’ side a Danish noble (Johan Åkesson (Tott)). I was not able to verify this statement in the sources.

waver over them | St Erik the king who is Sweden's guardian | surely let his sword
waver there.⁹⁴

There can be no doubt that the author of the *Sturekrönika* intended to bring in St Erik in connection with the victory. The sword had become St Erik's foremost attribute in art during the fifteenth century, and to see it burning in the sky after a victorious battle against the Danes could only be interpreted as a powerful sign of St Erik's wrath against the defeated and the support and approval of 'Sweden's guardian' for the winners. The idea that St Erik helped the troops of Sten Sture win the Battle of Brunkeberg was first voiced by Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson on the very day after the battle. In a letter that he wrote from his castle, Almarästaket, c. thirty kilometres north-west of Stockholm, he stated his belief 'that our friends, with the particular favour and grace of God and St Erik, had the upper hand' in the fight against King Kristian I.⁹⁵ The same idea can be found in a letter from the Swedish to the Danish *riksråd* from the following year.⁹⁶

Another saint was also connected to the Battle of Brunkeberg by the *Sturekrönika*. While approaching the battle site, the 'Swedish' troops reportedly sang the song of St George.⁹⁷ He was the most important saint for European knights, and among the Swedish nobles he is known to have been particularly venerated by Karl Knutsson.⁹⁸ It is thus no great surprise that he was the saint

⁹⁴ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, III (1868), p. 82: 'the swänke om qwällen alla qwadho | drukko och giorde siik alla gladha | takkadhe gudh för sine naadhe | och saa för lithen skadhe | manga saghe tha gudz werdoghe makth | och saa hans werdugha krafft | saa opta the swänka monde siik sanko | the saaghe eeth brynnande swärdh öffuer siik wanka | sancte erik konungh som är sweriges wärdh | leeth tha wisseligha wanka siith swärdh'.

⁹⁵ Reuterdaahl, *Swenska kyrkans historia*, III: *Sverige under Calmar-unionen* (1863), p. 550: 'at wore wanner med gudz ok sancte Ereks besynderlige gønst ok nadh behølte offerhanden'.

⁹⁶ *Missiver fra Kongerne Christiørn Is og Hans's tid*, ed. by Christensen, II: *Missiver fra brevskrivere uden for den danske Kongefamilie* (1914), no. 58: 'att Gudtt oc her sanctt Erick koninge gaff oss thenn løcke oc synn werduge naade thertiil, att wii behulde marckenn modt ether herrer' (that God and St Erik the king gave us this luck and their mighty grace to the effect that we stood ground against your masters).

⁹⁷ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, III, (1868), p 76: 'och giorde siik godhan liisa | och qwaadho sancti örians wysa' (and they made a good rest/and sang St George's song).

⁹⁸ Svanberg and Qvarnström, *Sankt Göran och draken*, p. 30. According to the *Karlskrönika*, St George was depicted as one of only three saints on one of the battle standards of Karl Knutsson (see above).

whose song the fighters sang before the battle. In Sweden, St George and St Erik were the most important saints for knights. Therefore, it also comes as no surprise that the author of the *Sturekrönika* chose to frame his account of the Battle of Brunkeberg with detail about these two saints: St George is the saint who was called upon before the battle while St Erik provided the spectacular vision of his burning sword in the battle's aftermath. Taking this composition of the *Sturekrönika* into account, it is hardly a surprise that after the victorious battle, the *riksföreståndare* Sten Sture donated altarpieces to the same two saints. After he furnished the altar of St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala, he commissioned a most precious altarpiece in honour of St George in Stockholm's *Storkyrka*.⁹⁹

The ensemble in the *Storkyrka* is a figural representation of a story from the legend of St George in which he rescues a princess by killing a dragon. It consists of one large sculpture, which includes St George, his horse, and the supine dragon, and two smaller sculptures. The first of these shows a princess, and the second, Karl Knutsson (Bonde) leaning on a shield on which his coat of arms is painted. Bernt Notke used very precious materials for the altar and Sten Sture is said to have paid 4000 silver marks for the whole ensemble, which was an enormous sum at the time.¹⁰⁰ The story of St George's fight against the dragon is usually taken to be an allegory of the fight between good and evil, with the dragon representing the Devil.

There are, however, a number of details that suggest a second interpretation, in which the statue of St George can be identified as representing Sten Sture. The clues are similar to those used at the altarpiece in Uppsala: the horse of St George bears St George's cross on its bridle but is branded with the coat of arms of the Sture family. The colours of St George (red and white) as well as those of Sweden (yellow and blue) decorate the egret on its head. The whole ensemble (St George killing the dragon and thereby saving the princess) has convincingly been interpreted as representing Sten Sture's victory over the Danish evil (the dragon), thereby saving Sweden (the princess).¹⁰¹ Moreover, every year the statue of St George was carried in a procession from the *Storkyrka* to Brunkeberg on the date the battle took place in 1471.¹⁰² Both the altar of St Erik in Uppsala and the altar of St George in Stockholm were primarily sites of veneration of the respective saints. However, through the placement of iden-

⁹⁹ On this altarpiece, see Svanberg and Qvarnström, *Sankt Göran och draken*, pp. 43–45.

¹⁰⁰ N.N., 'Den stora "Jörianen" i Stockholms storkyrka.'

¹⁰¹ Svanberg and Qvarnström, *Sankt Göran och draken*, pp. 58–60, 63; Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid. Från drottning Margareta till Kristian II*, pp. 318–19.

¹⁰² N.N., 'Den stora "Jörianen" i Stockholms storkyrka.'

tifying marks clearly associated with himself or other members of his political faction, Sten Sture managed to connect his political program to the two saints. In order to accentuate the common origin of the two altarpieces, it is worth noting that both were made by the famous north German artist Bernt Notke. In addition, they were placed in the two largest churches of Uppland, Uppsala Cathedral and Stockholm's *Storkyrka*, giving them a maximum public impact.

In the two altarpieces, Sten Sture envisaged himself as the ideal knight. Aware of King Karl Knutsson's propaganda through the *Karlskrönika*, Sten issued a similar verse chronicle that he could use to promote his view of the political situation among the wider public. In the *Sturekrönika*, he is often called *den unge riddaren herr Sten* (the young knight Lord Sten), even when actions from the 1480s are described, by which stage Sten Sture had passed his fortieth birthday and was far from being a 'young knight'. But youth was part of the knight's ideal.¹⁰³ The description of the Battle of Brunkeberg in the *Sturekrönika* gives full credit for the victory to Sten Sture who was the leader of the main force. The two other commanders, Knut Posse (who was nearly killed) and Nils Sture, are mentioned but they are not credited with any part in the victory. 'Through the ballad on the Battle of Brunkeberg and later through the *Sturekrönika*, he [Sten Sture] created the history-myth according to which the incidents of 1471 were a national war of freedom against a Danish king.'¹⁰⁴

In this context a further occurrence has to be considered. As mentioned above, in the statute that followed the synod of Arboga in 1474, it was decided that the feast day of St Erik should be celebrated with the highest feast grade (*totum duplex*). At the same synod, the patron saints of Sweden officially received their own feast day, and this day was also ordered to be celebrated as *totum duplex*.¹⁰⁵ This means, as Björn Tjällén has pointed out, that 'this cult affirmed that Sweden was a political entity sanctified by God, a notion that in the context of the contemporary inter-union conflicts was replete with political significance'.¹⁰⁶ The significance of the official foundation of the cult of the patron saints of Sweden must have been even greater when we consider the fact that the feast of the *rex perpetuus* of Sweden was upgraded at the same synod.

¹⁰³ Svanberg and Qvarnström, *Sankt Göran och draken*, pp. 59–61.

¹⁰⁴ Ericson Wolke and others, 'Brunkeberg 1471', p. 31: 'Genom balladen om Brunkebergsslaget och senare Sturekrönikan skapade han [Sten Sture] den historiemytologi, enligt vilken händelserna 1471 varit ett nationellt frihetskrig mot en dansk kung.'

¹⁰⁵ *Statuta synodalia veteris ecclesiae Sveogothicae*, ed. by Reuterdaahl, p. 178.

¹⁰⁶ Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, p. 81.

If we take into account the two altarpieces, the *Sturekrönika*, Sten Sture's various donations, and the close collaboration with Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson in the statute of Arboga, it can be concluded that Sten Sture the Elder clearly used the cults of St Erik and St George in order to popularize his proto-nationalistic policy, which aimed at the consolidation of his own power and endeavoured to counter the claims of the union king to the Swedish throne.

In addition to the accounts of the Battle of Brunkeberg, Sten Sture also positioned himself on another occasion as the political heir of St Erik, when Russian troops threatened Finland in 1494. Tensions on the eastern border of Sweden had been ongoing since the 1470s, and these were amplified by Swedish engagement in the conflicts inside the territory of the Teutonic Order on the other side of the Baltic Sea. The aim of the Swedish engagement was an alliance with the Livonic master of the Order, which was directed against their common enemy, Ivan III of Moscow, who had conquered the principality of Nowgorod in 1471. However, this alliance never came into being. Ivan, on his part, succeeded in agreeing upon a contract with the union King Hans in 1493, which was directed against Sweden and the Hanseatic League. In 1494 Russian troops harried in Finland, and this was followed in 1495 by a larger attack that included the siege of the Swedish castle of Viborg. Within Sweden, Sten Sture the Elder's situation had worsened considerably since his victory at the Battle of Brunkeberg. His relationship with Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson had become incrementally worse and support for a union king also saw a gradual increase among the Swedish aristocracy by the mid-1490s. The Russian attack was, therefore, a two-edged sword. On one hand, it was an external threat added to the already strained domestic politics and had the potential of ending the political career of Sten Sture. On the other hand, if this foreign menace were channelled in the right way, it could be used to unite the quarrelling parties within Sweden. This potential must have been very clear to Sten Sture, since he strove to ensure the Russian attack had the latter impact.

In a letter written on 5 November 1495, he tried to convince the Archbishop that if he could take the banner of St Erik with him on 'the journey to Finland [...] it would be a great comfort for our friends and its reputation would be a great discouragement for the enemies of us and of Christendom' since it was 'St Erik who first evangelized those lands'.¹⁰⁷ The Archbishop

¹⁰⁷ SDHK, 33,304; printed in BSH, IV, no. 131 and FMU, 4631: 'the finska reso [...] thet skulle mykith nyttigh wara bade för ty at thet schulle wara waara wener til en ganske stoor trösth oc warum ok cristendomens fyndom til en stoor wantrösth, ther ryktedh ther aff wtkome. [...] sancte Eric, som then landzända kom först til cristindom'.

obviously agreed with Sten's arguments and loaned him the banner. This is documented by a number of charters. Sten Sture thanked Archbishop Jakob Ulvsson for the loan and promised to deliver the undamaged banner back in due course.¹⁰⁸ Around 20 November of that year, he wrote to the Archbishop to say that he was about to set out on the crusade and once again thanked him for the banner.¹⁰⁹ However, the Archbishop seems not to have been convinced that Sten Sture would treat it with the necessary care and therefore he wrote to the bishop of Åbo/Turku and asked him to guard the banner and to see to its safe return to Uppsala. He included a similar order in a letter to the dean of the cathedral chapter of Åbo/Turku.¹¹⁰ In January 1497, Jakob Ulvsson wrote to Sten Sture and reminded him to return the banner, if possible, before the feast day of St Erik.¹¹¹ This is the last news we have about the banner. It seems that it was never returned to the cathedral of Uppsala. Perhaps it was lost on the 'crusade'.

It already can be seen in the charter from 5 November 1495 that Sten Sture was very aware of the value of St Erik's banner as a symbol for a successful Swedish military engagement in Finland. The orchestration of the ceremony during which the banner was delivered to him gives evidence that he wished once again to represent himself as the heir of St Erik. The handing over of the flag was celebrated like a great religious feast. The *Sturekrönika* describes it in detail:¹¹²

Archbishop Jakob and the chapter saw to it | that St Erik's banner came to stand in
St Clare's monastery so that many may hear | how St Erik's banner was led [there]
from Uppsala | a great procession went out from Stockholm | when the knight
Sten received this banner | I heard there so awesome a sound | great sorrow and
great crying | of both women and men | tears running from their eyes | when the
knight Sten took this banner | the people followed him [numerous] as [trees in]
a forest | both monks and priests | knights and squires always the best | into the
town's church | many with pale chins | Sir Dean met master Erik the doctor there |

¹⁰⁸ SDHK, 33,162; printed in *Skrifter och handlingar til uplysning i svenska kyrko och reformationens historien*, ed. by von Troil, iv, (1791), p. 378; SDHK, 33,311; printed in FMU, 4633.

¹⁰⁹ FMU, 4634.

¹¹⁰ FMU, 4678, 4679.

¹¹¹ FMU, 4730.

¹¹² In the last part of the *Sturekrönika*, which deals with the years 1487–1496, a shift in perspective has been observed. The chronicle no longer glorifies Sten Sture. This has led to the assumption that the c. 800 verses describing this period of time were no longer issued by the *riksföreståndare*, but rather by Archbishop Jakob Ulvsson. See Hagnell, *Sturekrönikan 1452–1496*; Nilsson, 'De medeltida rimkrönikor', pp. 51–52; Ferm, 'Sturekrönikan'.

the banner was set down on St George's altar | the knight Sten fell down on both his knees | [and prayed that] God in heaven might have mercy on all Swedes | he claimed the banner with great pomp.¹¹³

This picturesque description gives a very authentic and lively impression of what happened in Stockholm in late 1495 and of what a spectacle the event must have been. After the banner had been deposited in the church of St Claire on Norrmalm, Sten Sture received it there himself and carried it in a procession of approximately one kilometre to the *Storkyrka*, where he laid it down at the altar that he himself had founded, which had only been consecrated six years previously, and that showed him as the protector of Sweden. Accompanied by a large crowd of people, '[numerous] as [trees in] a forest', he reinforced the connection between himself and the two saints, St Erik and St George, just as he had done in the aftermath of the Battle of Brunkeberg. In spite of this professional orchestration, the plan of Sten Sture did not succeed this time. Although the Swedish troops were rather successful in their fight against the Russian armies in Finland, neither this fact nor his high-profile instrumentalization of the two saints helped Sten Sture in his struggle to remain in his office. Instead, the *riksråd* enforced his deposition in 1497 and King Hans ruled over Sweden for the next few years (see above).

Alongside the figural representation of St Erik on the altarpiece in Uppsala Cathedral and the omen of the burning sword described in the *Sturekrönika*, the three Sture-*riksföreståndare* used yet another medium to stress their connection to the patron saint of the Swedish kingdom. Whereas the name of the issuing king was normally imprinted on royal coinage, the name of St Erik was used instead on all coins minted under Sten Sture the Elder and Svante Nilsson, as well as on some coins of Sten Sture the Younger (Figs 28–29).¹¹⁴ On the *örtugar* of Sten Sture the Elder and Svante Nilsson, the circumscription reads: *S[anct]US ERICUS REX*. As already discussed in connection with the

¹¹³ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, III (1868), pp. 126–27: 'ärchebyscop jacob oc capitelith och saa | sancti eriks baneer i clara closter ath staa | saa maagha manga ath höra | huru sancti eriks baneer leetz aff opsala föra | stor processio aff stokholm wth giik | tha ridder steen thetta baneer wnfik | jak saagh ther saa wnderligh laath | stor sorgh och storan graath | baadhe aff qwinner och man | tharor aff therom öghom wthran | tha ridder steen thetta baneer togh | honum fölgher almoghen som een skogh | baadhe munk och preste | riddare och swäna jw the bäste | i bykirkiana in | manga mz bleeke kyn | her dakin mattes mäster erik doctores twaa | thz baneer sättes a sancti örians altare thaa | ridder steen paa baadhe sin knä nidher full | gudh i hymerike ware allom swänskom hull | han thz baneer annamar mz storan staath'.

¹¹⁴ Lagerqvist, *Svenska mynt under vikingatid och medeltid*, pp. 126–35, 142–45, 146–52.



Figure 28. *Örtug* of Sten Sture the Elder. Circumscription: 'S[anct]US ERICUS REX'.

Stockholm, Kungliga Myntkabinettet.
Photos courtesy of Kungliga
Myntkabinettet.



Figure 29. *Stormynt* of Sten Sture the Younger.
Circumscription: 'S[anctus] ERICUS REX SWECIE'.

riksklämman, on these coins, St Erik as *rex perpetuus* of Sweden took the place of the actual king. His image on the seal of the kingdom and on the coins of the *riksföreståndare* legitimized their rule and compensated for the absence of an actual king. It is interesting to note that the coins struck at the mint of Åbo/Turku did not invoke St Erik but rather St Henrik. Although Finland was an integral part of the kingdom of Sweden, there seems to have been a notion that St Henrik was not only the patron saint of the diocese of Åbo/Turku but also of the Finnish part of the Swedish kingdom. He therefore replaced St Erik on those coins struck on the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia.

During the rule of Sten Sture the Younger, the depiction of St Erik on coins reached its climax with the *stormynt* (large coins) of this *riksföreståndare*. These coins went beyond the standard depiction of the royal head and an inscription identifying this head as that of St Erik, now showing his whole body wearing armour and a cloak, with a sword in his right hand and a globe in his left hand (Fig. 29). His crowned head is decorated with a gloriole, which is unique for coins that depict St Erik. The circumscription reads: *S[anctus] ERICUS REX SWECIE*. On the back of the coins is shown the coat of arms with the three crowns. At the same time, Sten Sture the Younger broke with the tradition established by his predecessors of never adding their own names on coins, but rather dedicating them all to St Erik or St Henrik. Thus on the less representative but far more frequently used coins, the *örtugar*, issued under Sten Sture the Younger, the letter 'S', sometimes furnished with a crown, can be found on the

verso of the coin while on the recto, the words 'Sten Sture Ritter' are imprinted. Some of those coins include datings from 1512 and 1515.¹¹⁵

This new coinage underlines the suspicion that Sten Sture the Younger aspired to be crowned as king of Sweden.¹¹⁶ If this were the case, a decrease in the importance of St Erik as *rex perpetuus* would very likely have resulted, since the position of the king of Sweden would once again have been held by a living person, who would still honour the saint as the king's and the kingdom's particular patron, but who would diminish the significance of the eternal king. If the evidence of those coins of Sten Sture the Younger is to be taken seriously, it would appear that the development of the cult of St Erik was beginning to lose the intensity that it had held during the rule of Sten Sture the Elder and Svante Nilsson.

Under Sten Sture the Elder, the utilization of St Erik for the political program of the *riksföreståndare* had reached its climax and his position as *rex perpetuus* of Sweden was widely acknowledged by his contemporaries. During the rules of his successors, Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger, no works of art like the altarpiece of St Erik in Uppsala Cathedral or works of literature such as the *Karlskrönika* and the *Sturekrönika* were produced in order to promote their politics or glorify the royal saint. But the veneration of St Erik found other channels during the reigns of these two *riksföreståndare*. For the historian, it is possible to reconstruct these new ways by drawing on a unique collection of letters called the *Sturearkiv*, most of which were written to Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger.¹¹⁷

In many of these letters, a final blessing (*apprecatio*) was included, which commended the soul of the recipient to the mercy of God and in many cases also to the mercy of one or several saints.¹¹⁸ Among those saints, St Erik was clearly established in the leading position. Of 332 (edited) letters that have St Erik in their *apprecatio*, 285 (86 per cent) are directed to one of the *riksföreståndare*, 15 (4.5 per cent) to the inhabitants of a larger part of Sweden, or to other larger groups of people, 4 (1.2 per cent) to the archbishop or chapter of Uppsala as well as to the *riksråd*, 3 (0.9 per cent) to the bishop of Strängnäs

¹¹⁵ Lagerqvist, *Svenska mynt under vikingatid och medeltid*, pp. 149–52.

¹¹⁶ Westin, 'Sten Svantesson Sture'.

¹¹⁷ Retsö, 'Sturearkivet'. A discussion of the value of the *Sturearkiv* for the present study was presented in chap. 2.

¹¹⁸ For example, 'Gud befalande' ('[I] recommend [you] to God') or 'Jach befaler idher Gudh, Jomfrv Maria och alt himerikes haerskap' (I recommend you to God, the Virgin Mary and all heaven's authority).

— who was the keeper of the seal of the realm — and 2 (0.6 per cent) each to the council of Stockholm, to Hemming Gadh (bishop elect of Linköping), and to Chancellor Peder Jakobsson. St Erik was also invoked in letters directed to eight other people, who received just one letter each. One group of saints among whom St Erik was pre-eminent were the ‘patron saints of Sweden’.¹¹⁹ In the case of this group of saints, 64 (86.5 per cent) out of 74 letters commending the recipient to their good will were directed to a *riksföreståndare*.¹²⁰ Four (5.4 per cent) were sent to larger groups, two (2.7 per cent) were sent to the *riksråd*, and on four occasions the patron saints of Sweden were invoked only once, for a single recipient. In both cases, whether St Erik alone was invoked, or whether he was referred to as the leading saint among the ‘patrons of the realm’, about 86 per cent of the letters using this sort of *apprecatio* were directed to a *riksföreståndare*. This shows the close connection between the eternal ‘guardian of the Swedish realm’ and the respective temporary leader of it in the mind of contemporaries.

There is, of course, a methodological problem due to the composition of the *Sturearkiv*. Since most of the letters of the collection are directed to the *riksföreståndare*, it was inevitable that these recipients automatically stood a greater chance of receiving a letter featuring Erik-invocations. To solve this problem, those letters that have other saints in their *apprecatio* can be used as a control group. The only other saint who is almost exclusively invoked in letters to the *riksföreståndare* is St George (twelve recommendations in letters to a *riksföreståndare* as opposed to one recommendation to another person). Meanwhile, the Holy Trinity is invoked eleven times in letters written to the regent and only nine times in letters written to other recipients. In letters in which other saints are called upon, the proportion is the reverse: the Virgin Mary was never invoked in any of the letters directed to one of the regents, whereas in fifteen of the letters sent to people other than the *riksföreståndare*, she was the saint to whom the soul of the receiver was recommended (0 vs. 15). Invocations of St Henrik (5 vs. 12), St Birgitta (1 vs. 6), and St Anna (3 vs. 6) are also much more common in letters directed to people other than the regents.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ On this group of saints, see Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 166, 208–10 and chap. 6 above.

¹²⁰ Those who have a formula, such as ‘Edre werdugiste verdugheter til samans her met alzmectigh Gudh och **sancte Erich met alle Swärigis patroner** ewinnelica befalandis met lifff och siel’ (SDHK, 34,851), i.e. in which St Erik is named personally, while the other patron saints of Sweden are only mentioned as a group, are counted for Erik.

¹²¹ There are also a large number of saints, who are invoked so sparsely that the frequency of

The figures of this control group thus point in the same direction as the invocations of St Erik and the patron saints of the kingdom, and they confirm the hypothesis that St Erik was almost exclusively used in the *apprecatio* of letters sent to the regents of Sweden.

While these numbers constitute an overall picture of the use of saints in the *apprecatio* of letters, there are a number of examples in which we can make the same case for other people and with different saints. The number of such letters is naturally much smaller, since for no other group of people does a collection of letters like the *Sturearkiv* exist. They confirm, nevertheless, that in communications between other people, different saints were invoked than those that featured in letters to the regents. Erik Turesson (Bielke) was the bailiff of the castles of Viborg (Viipuri) and Olafsborg (Olavinlinna) from 1499, and from 1504 of the whole of Finland and Åland.¹²² His letters to various recipients are a good illustration of the way saints' invocations were used in the *apprecatio*. From the year 1495, when he was still living in Sweden proper, there are two surviving letters written by him, one directed to his brother Per Turesson, and one to Nils Klasson, bailiff of Älvsborg. In the first letter, the formula reads 'Hereby do I commend you to God and St Anne';¹²³ and in the second, 'Hereby do I commend you and your beloved wife and children to God and the Holy Trinity'.¹²⁴ Both St Anne and the Holy Trinity are among those spiritual entities who are frequently invoked in correspondence between nobles. After having received the offices in Finland, Erik Turesson usually invoked St Henrik in the well-wishing formula, as attested in three letters to the bishop of Åbo and in one letter to the Swedish *riksråd*.¹²⁵ He also called on St Henrik once in a letter to Svante Nilsson.¹²⁶ In the other four letters that he is known to have written to this *riksföreståndare*, however, he invoked St Erik on three occasions and the 'patron saints of Sweden' once.¹²⁷ Across these eleven letters, we can find a change in the saints invoked according to the changing positions of the

their invocation has no statistical value. These are St Lars (1 vs. 1), Sts Peter and Paul (1 vs. 2), St Eskil (2 vs. 1), All Saints (1 vs. 1), St Sigfrid (1 vs. 1), St Bernhard (0 vs. 1), St John (1 vs. 0), and the three Magi (0 vs. 1).

¹²² On Erik Turesson, see Carlsson, 'Erik Turesson (Bielke)'.

¹²³ BSH, IV, no. 130: 'Her medh tigh Gud ok sancte Anne befallandes'.

¹²⁴ BSH, IV, no. 132: 'her med hider ok ider kæra hustrv ok barn Gud befallandes ok the helge trefolloghet'.

¹²⁵ FMU, 5243, 5352, 5369, 5075.

¹²⁶ *Nya källor till Finlands medeltidshistoria*, ed. by Grönblad, no. 230.

¹²⁷ FMU, 4980, 5109, 5224, 5256.

writer and also of the recipient. When Erik Turesson was a castle bailiff, residing in Stegeborg and corresponding with a family member and a fellow bailiff, he invoked St Anne, who was popular among the nobility, together with the commonly cited Holy Trinity. This changed in favour of the exclusive use of 'national' patron saints when he moved to Finland, where he became one of the higher officials of this part of the kingdom and corresponded on the highest domestic diplomatic level. Finally, in letters directed to the *riksföreståndare*, he drew on St Erik and the 'patron saints of Sweden'.

Although we lack a corpus of sources such as the *Sturearkiv* for other groups of late medieval Swedish society, there are some extant letters that can illustrate the well-wishing formulae (invocations) included in letters between people who did not belong to the political elite of the realm. There are, for example, four letters from Viktor van der Lippe, merchant and citizen of Reval (Tallin), to Pål Scheel, dean of the cathedral chapter in Åbo, in which the *apprecatio* reads, 'To Mary I commend you and to the holy woman St Anne'¹²⁸ or 'So I commend Your Grace's wellbeing and blessedness to God and Mary'.¹²⁹ In this communication between the merchant and the dean, the Virgin Mary and St Anne were thus the appropriate saints.¹³⁰ Another example of the deliberate use of specific saints in the blessing formula is represented by two letters between the monastery of Vadstena and Sven Tordsson, the confessor-general of the Birgittine monastery in Nådendal (Naantali). In each case, the formula here reads: 'You and all of them [the convent] do I commend to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary [and] our holy patrons Birgitta and Katarina until eternal times, amen'.¹³¹ In such letters between different members of the Birgittine Order, it is hardly surprising that the saintly founder of the order and her beatified daughter should be invoked.

Considering the many different ways in which the veneration of St Erik was connected with the rulers of Sweden, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the royal saint was not only the patron of the kingdom but also that he had a very special relationship with the rulers of that kingdom. On the one hand,

¹²⁸ FMU, 5832: 'Marien beffele vnde der hilgen ffrouwe sunte Anne'; similarly FMU, 5874.

¹²⁹ FMU, 5835: 'Sus juwer werdicheit God vnde Marien gesunt vnde salich beffolle'; similarly FMU, 5849.

¹³⁰ On the veneration of the Virgin Mary in medieval Sweden, see the forthcoming PhD dissertation of Camille Bataille, Caen.

¹³¹ FMU, 5402: 'Eder och them alla her met befallande warom herra Jhesu Christo, jomfrw Marie, wara helga patronis Birgitte oc Katerine til æwige tidh amen'; similarly FMU, 5414.

in his function as the patron saint of the kingdom, he was also the spiritual protector of its ruler. On the other hand, patronage of Saint Erik entailed the obligation of the ruler — no matter whether king or regent — to support the cult of their patron saint and at the same time to participate in his glory and his legitimizing potential.

The Support of the Cult of St Erik in Ecclesiastical Circles

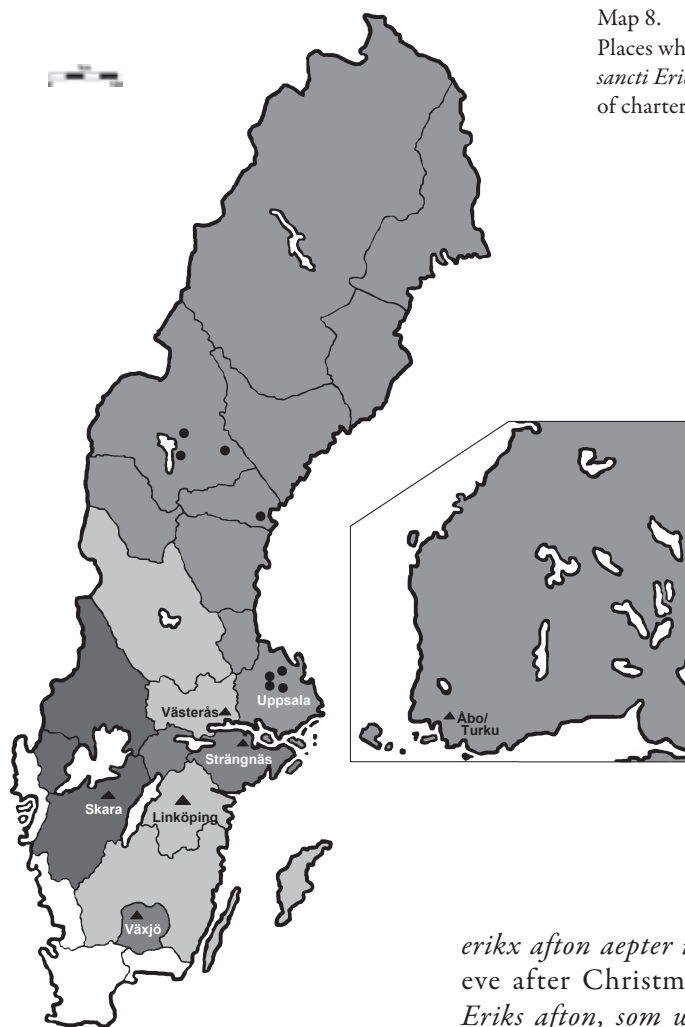
It is remarkable that only one of the five miracles that St Erik was believed to have effected in the fifteenth century was connected to his quality as patron saint of the kingdom whereas two (followed by a third miracle in 1518) were performed in defence of the church of Uppsala. The two miracles that were added to the miracle collection of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries at around 1400 were both miraculous healings (see Appendix 2). As in the late thirteenth century, the intensification of the cult of St Erik around 1400 had its starting point and its centre in Uppland. It was in the diocese of Uppsala where the new feast of St Erik's *translatio* on 24 January was introduced and it remained exclusively in this bishopric until the Reformation in the 1520s. Every extant reference to the new feast day was made in charters originating in the diocese of Uppsala (see Map 8) and it was only here that the *translatio* feast found its way into the liturgical calendar.¹³² The first reference to the feast was made in a charter from 1401, issued by Pope Boniface IX, in which an indulgence for the visitors of the cathedral of Uppsala was granted *in translatione sancti Eriki regis et martiris, que est vicesimaquarta die mensis Januarij* (at [the day] of the translation of the king and martyr St Erik, which is the twenty-fourth day of the month of January).¹³³

It is likely that the supplication for the indulgence was made by Archbishop Henrik Karlsson of Uppsala in order to promote the newly introduced feast day in his diocese via a papal indulgence (see above). References to the celebration of the *translatio sancti Eriki* are not particularly numerous, but such evidence stretches throughout the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth century. Further mention of this day can be found in documents from 1403, 1419, 1420, 1441, 1475, 1480, 1485, 1515, and 1518, mostly in the dating lines of charters.¹³⁴ In charters written in Old Swedish, terms like *om sancta*

¹³² Schmidt, 'Erik den helige i liturgin', p. 171, n. 12.

¹³³ SDHK, 15,593.

¹³⁴ 'Vita et miracula S. Eriki regis et martyris', ed. by Nelson, p. 315; SDHK, 19,280



Map 8.

Places where the feast *translatio sancti Eriki* was used for the dating of charters. Map by the author.

erikx afton aepter ivlin ('On St Erik's eve after Christmas') or *vppa sancti Eriks afton, som wm wintrin kombir* ('on St Erik's eve that comes in winter')

are used, while those written in Latin employ phrases like *in die translationis Sancti Eriki Regni Patronis* (on the day of the translation of St Erik, patron of the kingdom).¹³⁵

dates 'aa sancte Erix dagh, som wm somaren kombyr' (on St Erik's day that comes in summer) which implies the existence of another Erik's day; SDHK, 19,427, 23,730; Söderlind, 'Några suppliker från 1470-talet angående Uppsala domkyrka', pp. 42–44; SDHK, 30,669, 31,554–55, 37,672–73, 38,127.

¹³⁵ SDHK, 31,554, 19,427, 38,127.

A further sign of an intensified veneration of St Erik inside the church of Uppsala is the fact that he surpassed St Lars as the main patron of the cathedral church. The usual formula for indulgences granted by the archbishop of Uppsala, for example, reads: *Nos enim de omnipotentis dei misericordia & beatorum Laurentij & Erixi martirum eius auctoritate confisi, etc.* (We, trusting the almighty God's mercy and authority of the saints and martyrs Lars and Erik' etc.), exemplifying the position of St Erik as co-patron to St Lars during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹³⁶ In early charters, the two saints were always named together, albeit with St Lars taking the first place, and in the seals of the archbishops both saints were depicted standing next to each other, placed beneath an image of the Virgin Mary with child. This tradition of depicting the three saints together with Christ on the seal was changed by Archbishop Olof Larsson (r. 1432–38). Under his guidance, St Erik became the only saint depicted on the seal (see above) and this remained the case until 1515, when the new archbishop, Gustav Trolle, changed the archiepiscopal seal completely.¹³⁷ The cathedral of Uppsala was, for the first time, called *sancta Erikx konungx [...] domkirkio i vpsalum* in a charter from the year 1385.¹³⁸ The naming of the cathedral church after St Erik, and the omission of St Lars, became more and more common in the fifteenth century.¹³⁹ In addition, the property of the archbishop's seat — usually called the *mensa* of the archbishop — was sometimes labelled 'St Erik's courtyard' and farmers working on this property were known as 'St Erik's land-dwellers'.¹⁴⁰ The castle of the archbishop in Almarästaket was called *sancti Ericx slot Almersteg* by Svante Nilsson in 1497.¹⁴¹ By the accumulation of such labels, it becomes clear that during the fifteenth century, St Erik not only became synonymous with the kingdom of Sweden but also came to personify the church of Uppsala. This double connotation of the saint seems to have been accepted without problem.

The cult of St Erik also experienced an intensification in the fifteenth century on a local level in the city of Uppsala. Christian Lovén recently provided

¹³⁶ SDHK, 1191.

¹³⁷ For a depiction of the seal of Gustav Trolle see Nevéus, Heim, and Westling Karlsson, *Medeltida småkonst*, p. 15.

¹³⁸ SDHK, 12,911.

¹³⁹ SDHK, 15,827, 19,745, 29,218, 32,268, 33,061, 37,293.

¹⁴⁰ Ahnlund, 'Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten', p. 139; Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnehav*, pp. 175–76; Helander, *Den medeltida Uppsalaliturgin*, pp. 241–43.

¹⁴¹ SDHK, 33,503; printed in BSH, IV, no. 148.

a detailed study on the matter.¹⁴² Already during the first wave of the intensification of the cult of St Erik in the late thirteenth and the early fourteenth centuries, more than one site was created where the cult of the royal saint could be carried out (see Chapter 5 above). Inside the cathedral of Uppsala, there were four prebends and vicariates that were (co-)consecrated to St Erik during this period,¹⁴³ and in 1301, an additional chapel of the saint located outside the cathedral is mentioned for the first time.¹⁴⁴ But many sites at which St Erik could be venerated are only known from the fifteenth century and the creation of those sites has been described as an ‘investment in the cult of St Erik’, evidently made by the archbishop and the cathedral chapter with a mind to the economic importance of the pilgrims who visited the relics of the saint.¹⁴⁵ Since the identification of the chapel outside the cathedral appears to differ in different fourteenth-century sources, it is possible that more than one of such site existed.¹⁴⁶ In addition, a holy well — that which is said to have sprung from the ground at the site of St Erik’s decapitation — was venerated just to the north of the cathedral church. Furthermore, it was possible to visit the original grave of St Erik in Gamla Uppsala, as this was ‘rediscovered’ by Archbishop Nils Allesson in 1302.¹⁴⁷ As a consequence of these findings, Lovén reconstructed a cultic landscape in and around Uppsala, which offered five different sites of pilgrimage (if one counts the various stations inside the cathedral as one site) at which St Erik could be venerated. In addition to the sites for the veneration of St Erik, other saints such as St Olaf, St Barbara, or St Gertrud could be worshipped at altars and chapels consecrated to them. Even from a European perspective, Uppsala was therefore a very complex site of pilgrimage.¹⁴⁸

A further argument for Uppsala remaining the major site for the veneration of St Erik is the fact that all depictions that we know of featuring his legend were situated there.¹⁴⁹ Two of these now-lost depictions were a mural painting at Gamla Uppsala that dated from the middle of the fifteenth century and

¹⁴² Lovén, ‘Erikskulten i Uppsala’.

¹⁴³ Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnestånd*, pp. 96–97, 131–33, 138–39.

¹⁴⁴ SDHK, 1939.

¹⁴⁵ Lovén, ‘Erikskulten i Uppsala’, p. 9.

¹⁴⁶ Lovén, ‘Erikskulten i Uppsala’, pp. 20–32 with a list of the respective sources.

¹⁴⁷ Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Uplandiae*, p. 192.

¹⁴⁸ Lovén, ‘Erikskulten i Uppsala’, p. 32.

¹⁴⁹ Some depictions including only one or two pictures are also known from churches outside Uppsala.

'St Erik's tapestry', which was installed in the cathedral of Uppsala on solemn occasions such as coronations, and which was approximately 13.5 metres long and 1.5 metres high.¹⁵⁰ The third depiction of the legend known to have existed was the altarpiece of St Erik (*St Eriks tavla*), which has been described above. Finally, a number of scenes from the legend were represented in the choir of the cathedral, which is nowadays named after the De Geer family (Fig. 7). During the Middle Ages, this choir was named 'St Olaf's and St Erik's choir'. The paintings, which had probably been covered by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, were rediscovered and restored in 1891. However, the restoration was executed in such a way that for the present-day viewer, it is impossible to distinguish the original medieval paintings from the additions of the late nineteenth century, making it difficult to use these as source material for medieval representations of St Erik. It is even probable that not all of the episodes depicted belonged originally to the legend of St Erik but that six of these were mistakenly ascribed to St Erik and in fact showed scenes from the legends of St Olaf and St Mary.¹⁵¹ Because of these findings, the wall paintings in Uppsala Cathedral will not be considered in the present study.

Although several pilgrimage sites to St Erik were created in Uppsala during the fifteenth century, only a few signs of personal veneration by clerics of the cathedral church can be found. After the royal saint had been reintroduced into the seal of the archbishops by Archbishop Birger Gregersson in 1366, he remained there until 1515. The only exceptions were those made by Archbishop Arendt Klemmensson, as discussed above, who had been appointed by King Erik of Pomerania against the will of the cathedral chapter, and *Electus* Tord Pedersson (Bonde), who only held the office for a short period in 1468–70, without gaining papal confirmation. According to Bengt Thordeman, Erik Andersson, dean of Uppsala in 1468, also had St Erik in his seal.¹⁵² Another seal that is included in Thordeman's list of seals depicting St Erik is that of Erik Pedersson, canon and custodian of the cathedral chapter in Uppsala, who attached his seal to a charter from 1444.¹⁵³ The attribution to St Erik is, however, questionable since the king on the seal is depicted sitting in a ship, a combination of motifs that does not appear on any other known depiction of

¹⁵⁰ Bengtsson, 'Kalkmålningar', p. 331.

¹⁵¹ Bengtsson, 'Kalkmålningar', pp. 334–35, 342–44.

¹⁵² Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltida bildkonst', p. 218. The respective charter is not included in SDHK.

¹⁵³ SDHK, 24,561.

St Erik but that is common in representations of the Danish royal saint, Erik Plovpenning.¹⁵⁴ The difficulty of firmly identifying the person represented in the seal as Erik Plovpenning, however, is that there was no perceptible cult surrounding him in the fifteenth century, in either Denmark or in Sweden. The question of which royal saint is depicted on the seal of Erik Pedersson must therefore remain unresolved.

There are only a few known donations by Uppsala clerics to altars or prebends of St Erik. In 1478, Udd Birgersson, parish priest in Åker (Uppland), donated his part of a stone house and of three wooden houses in Stockholm to the altar of St Erik.¹⁵⁵ In 1482 the canon Johannes Holmberni bestowed the income from a farm in Uppsala to the cathedral church, with the revenue used to buy wine for the chapel of St Erik.¹⁵⁶ There were remarkably few donations by clerics compared to the fourteenth century, when clerical donations formed the bulk of endowments towards cult sites of St Erik.

While we only know of pilgrimages to St Erik's relics in Uppsala in earlier periods thanks to references in the miracle collection, the ascribing of Uppsala as a destination for pilgrims of the fifteenth century derives from diplomatic or legal sources. The first charter in which a pilgrimage to Uppsala is mentioned was issued in 1402. This charter records the punishment awarded to Lars Jönsson for killing Peter Kylvé. According to the text, the murderer had to give a farm to the relatives of the deceased and had to make pilgrimages to Rome, Aachen, Wilsnack, Niðarós, Uppsala, and (on four separate occasions) Vadstena.¹⁵⁷ However, if Lars (or any other person sentenced to go on pilgrimage) had sufficient money, he was not required to undertake all of these pilgrimages in person. A wealthy person could pay someone else to go on pilgrimage on his or her behalf, as it was the person who paid for the journey, and not the one who travelled, who would reduce their time in purgatory. As a result, being a pilgrim could be a profession in the Late Middle Ages.¹⁵⁸ The highest number of employed pilgrims used this way that are referred to within the Scandinavian material appears in the will of Queen Margareta from the year 1411. Some 130 pilgrims made journeys on behalf of the Queen, of whom one went to Uppsala.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ Lidén, *Olav den helige i medeltida bildkonst*, p. 295.

¹⁵⁵ SDHK, 30,427.

¹⁵⁶ SDHK, 31,078.

¹⁵⁷ SDHK, 15,882.

¹⁵⁸ Krötzel, *Pilger, Mirakel und Alltag*, pp. 147–51.

¹⁵⁹ Etting, *Queen Margrete I (1353–1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union*, pp. 120–22.

A letter for Holmborg Svensdotter and Sigrid Bengtsdotter was issued by Ericus Johannis, confessor-general of the Vadstena monastery in 1422. The confessor-general wrote that the two women were on pilgrimage to *Sancte Eriks i Wpsalom* and that they were decent and right-minded women. Therefore, their errand should be supported by everyone.¹⁶⁰ This letter of identification and recommendation was issued as a letter for a consignment of sorts, so that everyone who felt an obligation to St Birgitta or her order would further the pilgrimage of the two women. However, it should also be seen in the context of the advantages that pilgrims had over ordinary travellers (such as free accommodation in monasteries), which made it useful to have a paper verifying one's status as a pilgrim.¹⁶¹

Indulgences were very common for pilgrimages to Uppsala on the feast day of St Erik. The first charter that grants such an indulgence was issued by all the Swedish bishops in 1271. The examples of such letters of indulgence are numerous throughout the Middle Ages. With regard to such letters, and to the diplomatic material in general, however, it is important to keep in mind that those charters do not usually provide evidence for completed pilgrimages. Rather, they only announce an indulgence for those who have decided to make a pilgrimage, or else they contain a note of an intended pilgrimage. The only two exceptions in which completed pilgrimages to Uppsala are documented are two charters from 1421 and 1506. In the first one, Pål Måg states that he had made the pilgrimages that had been imposed on him to numerous places in Europe, including Uppsala.¹⁶² The second charter is a report from Olof Jonsson to Svante Nilsson, in which Olof mentions that Sten Turesson (Bielke) was on a pilgrimage to Uppsala and Vadstena.¹⁶³ All the other charters only inform of the intention to undertake a pilgrimage, and whether such intentions were ever carried out is unknown. The evidence of indulgences is still weaker. Although it must be assumed that someone probably made use of them, the extent to which people took advantage of the offer of an indulgence remains entirely unknown. The evidence of the charters certainly shows that there was pilgrimage activity in Uppsala, and the existence of an elaborate cultic landscape in and around the city implies a considerable number of pilgrims. However the lack of other sources, particularly the fact that there are no extant pilgrim's badges from

¹⁶⁰ SDHK, 41,012; printed in *Scriptores rerum Suecicarum medii aevi*, ed. by Fant, II, 330.

¹⁶¹ On the advantages of pilgrims see Ohler, *Pilgerstab und Jakobsmuschel*, pp. 144–46.

¹⁶² SDHK, 19,602.

¹⁶³ SDHK, 35,600; printed in *Arvid Siggeßons brevväxling*, ed. by Sjödin, p. 239.

Uppsala, suggests that the pilgrims were not nearly as numerous as in Niðarós (St Olaf) or Vadstena (St Birgitta).¹⁶⁴

The churches that were consecrated to St Erik during the Middle Ages were very few. The first and most prominent example is, of course, the cathedral of Uppsala, where St Erik was established as co-patron in 1273. A fragment that probably dates from 1321 informs us that Israel Erlandsson, in his office as bishop of Västerås consecrated the main altar of the church of Lima (Dalarna) in the honour of St Michael, St Lars, St Erik, and St Scholastica.¹⁶⁵ It is remarkable that, although the fame of St Erik increased considerably during the fifteenth century, only two further instances of his role as church patron are known: in 1418, he was named as one of the patrons of the cathedral of Åbo and later on, of the Finnish parish church of Virmo.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, in 1435 a charter was issued by Archbishop Olof of Uppsala in which the consecration of the church of Ärentuna, some twelve kilometres north of Uppsala, was announced. Even though the church was consecrated to St Mary and St Leonard, relics of St Erik and of the 10,000 virgins were deposited in its main altar.¹⁶⁷ It thus seems that, even the archbishop who anticipated the *riksklämman* by having St Erik as the sole saint on his archiepiscopal seal, did not consecrate a parish church to St Erik, instead simply depositing two relics that were available to him in the altar of the church while consecrating it to two other saints. It is also known that a relic of St Erik was kept in the church of Hjälmteryd. The church, however, did not have St Erik as its patron saint (see Chapter 4 above). Therefore, the question must be raised, as to why — although there was no shortage of relics of St Erik, and his *fama sanctitatis* was widespread throughout Sweden in the fifteenth century — hardly any churches were consecrated in his honour.

Of course, it is not possible to answer this question conclusively. There is no explicit evidence that St Erik was considered unable to protect an ordinary parish church or that he should generally be avoided as a patron saint.

¹⁶⁴ There is one relief on a church bell that has been interpreted as a pilgrim's badge by Källström, Thordeman, and Rydbeck, *Reliker och relikvarier från svenska kyrkor*, p. 40. Andersson, *Pilgrimsmärken och vallfart*, p. 39 states, however, that 'reliefens identifiering som pilgrimsmärken, liksom attribueringen till Uppsala, är mycket osäkert'. (The identification of the relief as a pilgrim's badge, as well as its attribution to Uppsala, are very uncertain).

¹⁶⁵ SDHK, 3064.

¹⁶⁶ FMU, 1517: 'ecclesia Aboensis, que in honorem beate Marie et sanctorum Henrici et Eriici martirum dudum extitit fabricate [...] Item cum parrochiali[s] ecclesia sanctorum Laurentij et Eriici in Virmo diocesis Aboensis'.

¹⁶⁷ SDHK, 22,327.

However, one possible answer might be found in his qualities, as discussed in this study. In the fifteenth century, St Erik represented two communities: the church of Uppsala and the kingdom of Sweden. Thus, he was the patron saint of the cathedral of Uppsala. A 'church of the kingdom' did not exist. If it had existed, one might suspect that he would have been among the patrons of that church, as well. The social scope of the venerators of St Erik widened during the time of the Kalmar Union (see below), but that did not necessarily mean that his intercession was appreciated in the day-to-day life of the common people. When he was venerated by people from the lower social strata, his veneration was still connected to the welfare of the church of Uppsala or the kingdom of Sweden. What had changed was the fact that circles other than the high aristocracy and clergy began to take part in politics at a national level. The veneration of St Erik therefore became socially more widespread, but the matters on which he was invoked remained the same and continued to stay on that rather abstract level. The miracles that associated him with miraculous healings could obviously not counterbalance the exclusive connection between St Erik and the two communities. The reason why St Erik was not chosen as the patron saint of parish churches, monasteries, and convents could therefore have been that those saints who were chosen as such were considered to show greater interest in the wellbeing of common people. The attention of St Erik, however, seemed to be focused on institutions or communities set apart from everyday life.

Contemporary with the attempts of Sten Sture the Elder to utilize the prestige of St Erik for his populist politics through the *Sturekrönika* and the establishment of two altarpieces in Uppsala Cathedral and Stockholm's *Storkyrka*, was the production of another chronicle, the *Chronica regni Gothorum*. This was written by Ericus Olai, dean of the Uppsala Cathedral chapter and, from 1477 onwards, teacher of theology at the newly founded university of Uppsala.¹⁶⁸ The biases of the chronicle have been assessed by Ernst Nygren in 1953 as xenophobic (particularly anti-Danish), anti-union, and pro-clerical, and recent research has not challenged this evaluation.¹⁶⁹ What has been challenged is Nygren's opinion that the work was commissioned by Karl Knutsson (Bonde). It has instead been pointed out that the chronicle should be seen in the context of the early regime of Sten Sture the Elder in the 1470s and that it represented the view of the clerics of the cathedral chapter of

¹⁶⁸ Edition: Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heuman and Öberg. On the chronicle, see Tjällén, *Church and Nation*; Lönnroth, 'Ericus Olai som politiker'; Nygren, 'Ericus Olai'.

¹⁶⁹ Nygren, 'Ericus Olai' pp. 232–34; Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, p. 20.

Uppsala.¹⁷⁰ In contrast to both the *Karlskrönika* and the *Sturekrönika*, the *Chronica regni Gothorum* was not intended as a political pamphlet with a broad public appeal but as an ‘historical work intended to instruct and entertain its audience’.¹⁷¹ According to Björn Tjällén, it was mostly intended for education within the church of Uppsala. This might be the reason why the chronicle is not written in vernacular verse, in contrast to the other two Swedish chronicles of the fifteenth century, but in Latin prose. The political view expressed in the *Chronica regni Gothorum* is therefore likely to represent the opinion within the cathedral chapter that would be communicated to the following generations of canons.

For the purpose of showing how an ideal king and an ideal bishop should rule together (in contrast to some of those who held these positions in the fifteenth century), the examples of St Erik and St Henrik are juxtaposed in the chronicle with the examples of King Karl Knutsson and Archbishop Jöns Bengtsson (r. 1448–67). Ericus Olai seems thus to affirm the dualist way of ruling described by Herman Schück, in which the *riksföreståndare* and the archbishop of Uppsala — as leader of the *riksråd* — developed a system to rule the kingdom together after 1471.¹⁷² Quoting from the legend of St Henrik, Ericus described the two saints as ‘two great lights by which the people of that land were more and more enlightened, directed, and taught the knowledge of the true God, the devotion towards him, and his cult’.¹⁷³ St Erik, according to the *Chronica*, was also the forefather of all Swedish kings. It is remarkable in this respect that Ericus considered Magnus Eriksson to be the last king of Sweden, with all rulers since Albrekt of Mecklenburg perceived as tyrants instead of kings.¹⁷⁴ These ideas about King Albrekt and the union kings are surely an expression of Ericus’s xenophobia and show that his political background was similar to that of the authors of the *Karlskrönika* and the *Sturekrönika*. In the *Chronica*, he writes that the politics of Erik of Pomerania deliberately led to the impoverishment of the Swedish people because ‘he laboured to throw the

¹⁷⁰ Ferm, ‘När och för vem skrev Ericus Olai sin Chronica regni Gothorum?’.

¹⁷¹ Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, p. 21.

¹⁷² Schück, ‘Sweden as an Aristocratic Republic’.

¹⁷³ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg, 15: ‘duobus luminaribus magnis, populus terre illius [...] ad veri dei noticiam, deuocionem et cultum illustraretur, dirigeretur, doceretur’.

¹⁷⁴ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg, 45.

Swedish realm into everlasting thralldom under Denmark'.¹⁷⁵ The same had happened to Judea, he suggests, when it was conquered by the Romans. Ericus adds a number of biblical examples in which the wronged party was always paralleled with Sweden while the evil-doers were represented by the union kings.¹⁷⁶ Accordingly, he approved of Engelbrekt's rebellion and depicted Engelbrekt as *liberator patriae*.¹⁷⁷

On one occasion in the text, St Erik is not only described as the ideal king of past times: he is also described as patron saint of Uppsala Cathedral, in which capacity he acts proactively, in much the same way as in the account of his intercession in the controversy about the archbishop's seat between Arendt Klemmensson and Olaf Larsson in 1332–34, as recorded in the *Karlskrönika* (see above). According to this account, shortly after the death of Arendt Klemmensson, a certain Thorlaf — who was a follower of Erik of Pomerania and had sensed that the situation in Sweden was going to become dangerous for him — wanted to leave the country and head to Bergen (in Norway). He stole the thumb of St Erik, probably with the intention of selling it, but when he tried to set out for Norway, he was delayed by a storm that abated only after he had brought back the relic to its rightful place. Thorlaf received his punishment shortly afterwards when he was killed by merchants in Bergen.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg, 41.22: 'Demum non contenta de seruitute Sueorum, subieccione et talliacione, quibus in vita sua et sub eius principatu regnum Sueorum Danis et exteris ipsius operante versucia iugo grauissimo subiacebat, cogitabat, qua arte posset hec seruitus perpetuari et continuari futurisque temporibus reseruari.'

¹⁷⁶ Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, pp. 103–06.

¹⁷⁷ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg, 43–48; Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, pp. 104–06.

¹⁷⁸ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, ed. by Heumann and Öberg, 51.19–20: (19) 'Et hoc intruso miserabiliter defuncto et diuinam vlcionem patenter experto non destitit rex a tyrannide et persecucione iniusta. Adiecit enim et alium quendam Torlacum intrudere, qui aliquanto tempore regis exequens tyrannice voluntatem, cognita dissensione in regno, fugam parauit. (20) Furtiue autem ablato pollice sancte Erici tempestate seuissima diutissime arestatus, reatum recognoscens sacras remisit cum honore reliquias et mox, quo voluit, permissus est nauigare. Et hic quidem Bergis a mercatoribus est occisus'. (And although this miserable intruder [Arendt Klemmensson] had died and had experienced the obvious divine revenge, the tyrant of a king [Erik of Pomerania] did not stop the unjust persecution. In addition, another intruder, a certain Thorlaf, who for a long time served the tyrannic king, had heard of the quarrels inside the kingdom and prepared his flight. (20) In secret he had carried away the thumb of St Erik but a severe storm delayed him for a long time. When the accused was recognized, the holy relics were brought back and soon, as he had intended, the sea journey was permitted. And this man was surely killed in Bergen by merchants').

The Three Royal Saints, 'Birgittine Culture', and the Kalmar Union

It has been pointed out by Tore Nyberg that the 'Birgittine culture' was one of the ties that bound the three kingdoms of the Kalmar Union together.¹⁷⁹ The monastery of Vadstena, dedicated to St Birgitta, played an important role in the politics of the Union. It was planned and built in line with the 1346 testament of King Magnus Eriksson and his Queen Blanka, and it was finally consecrated in 1384.¹⁸⁰ The other two union-kingdoms got their own Birgittine monasteries during the rule of Erik of Pomerania. The monastery of Maribo was consecrated in 1416 on the Danish island of Lolland, and in the 1420s, the Benedictine monastery of Munkeliv in Bergen was converted into a Birgittine monastery. Although Queen Margareta and King Erik of Pomerania favoured the Birgittine Order (actually *Ordo sanctissimi Salvatoris*), they never managed to establish a particularly warm attitude towards it because of their political aim of reclaiming the property of the throne according to the *Nyköping recess*.¹⁸¹ Whereas those two monasteries were founded through royal initiative, the monasteries of Nådendal (Naantali) in Finland and Mariager on the Danish mainland (Jutland) were built through aristocratic or episcopal initiatives during the second quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁸²

The relationship between the sisters and brothers of Vadstena and the union kings was unstable and seldom completely positive.¹⁸³ As a result, the Birgittine community was not suitable to serve as a symbol of the unity of the three kingdoms represented by the monarchs. But it was not only the central power that had an interest in the continuation of the Kalmar Union: as discussed above, a number of aristocratic families had gained property in more than one of the kingdoms and therefore also preferred the union to the re-establishment of independent kingdoms, which would have prevented free access to all their property. Probably because of its union with Sweden between 1332 and 1360, the intertwining of the Danish county of Skåne with Sweden was particularly close and a number of aristocratic families maintained good relations with the monastery of Vadstena.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Nyberg, 'Birgittinerkulturen och unionen'.

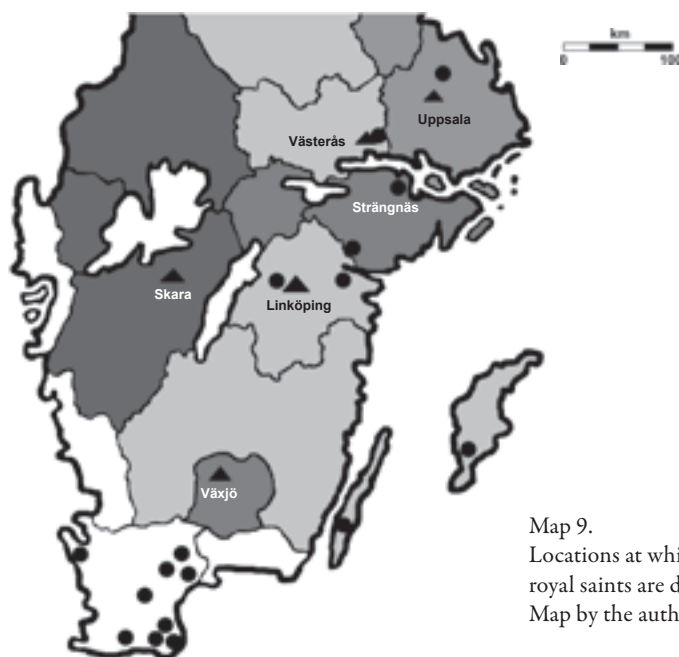
¹⁸⁰ On this period when the community was starting to be built up and its associated problems, see Gejrot, 'Att sätta ljus i ljusstaken', pp. 91–93.

¹⁸¹ Olsesen, 'Kongemagt, Birgittinere og Kalmarunion', pp. 172–74; Gejrot, 'Kloster och kungar', p. 528. On the *Nyköping recess*, see the section 'Historical Background' above.

¹⁸² Nyberg, 'Birgittinerkulturen och unionen', p. 367.

¹⁸³ Gejrot, 'Kloster och kungar', p. 534.

¹⁸⁴ Nyberg, 'Birgittinerkulturen och unionen', p. 366; Wallin, 'Kalkmålningssviterna



Map 9.
Locations at which all three Scandinavian
royal saints are depicted together.
Map by the author.

In the eastern part of the county, depictions of the three royal saints of Scandinavia, St Olaf, St Erik, and St Knut, can be found in a number of churches. In each of the kingdoms of the Kalmar Union, the respective royal saint represented and symbolized the kingdom. Therefore the depiction of all three of them can be seen as supporting the idea of a union of those kingdoms. It has previously been noted that ‘one probably has to assume an inspiration from the Birgittine culture lying behind’ those depictions.¹⁸⁵ In the churches of Brunnby, Gualöv, Linderöd, Norra Strö, Oppmanna, Skivarp, Vallby, Östra Herrestad, and Östra Vemmerlöv, all three royal saints are depicted, while the illustrations in St Olof and Torekov only include St Erik and St Olaf, and those in Fastorp and Skive show St Knut and St Olaf.¹⁸⁶ A closer analysis of the aris-

med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 1: Unionspolitiska, personhistoriska och birgittinska aspekter’; Wallin, ‘Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 2: Släktrelationer mellan skånska och svenska frälset under unionstiden’; Wallin, ‘Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 3: Helgonkungabilderna som propagandamedel i unionens tjänst’.

¹⁸⁵ Nyberg, ‘Birgittinerkulturen och unionen’, p. 368.

¹⁸⁶ This information has been taken from the iconographical catalogue at the Riksantikvarieämbetets och Vitterhetsakademiens bibliotek; Thordeman, ‘Erik den helige i medeltida



Figure 30. Wall-hanging from Fögdö (late fifteenth century) showing all three Scandinavian royal saints, Stockholm, Statens historiska museum. Reproduced with permission.

tocratic families who owned property in the parishes of the named churches has been carried out by Curt Wallin.¹⁸⁷ The families associated with those who commissioned these wall paintings were certainly numerous; however, only the names of Brahe and Krognos appear in more than one church with certainty. That means that there was no predominant family who supported the Kalmar Union, but rather that the majority of aristocrats in that part of Skåne considered the union as the preferable political structure (Map 9).

Although the largest number of depictions featuring all three royal saints occur in eastern Skåne, similar wall paintings, embroideries, and altarpieces can be found throughout other parts of Sweden. Wall paintings featuring all three royal saints have been included in the decoration of church walls in Tortuna (Västmanland), Mogata (Östergötland), and Vendel (Uppland), while altarpieces, in which wooden sculptures of the three kings are included, can be found in Torpa (Södermanland), Vårdsberg (Östergötland), Linde (Gotland), and Algutsrum (Öland). The famous embroidered wall-hanging showing the three royal saints from the church of Fogdö in Södermanland must also be included on the list (Fig. 30). On this wall-hanging, two coats of arms can be seen: those of Ture Turesson (Bielke) and of his wife, the Danish aristocrat Ingegärd Kyrning, daughter of Peder Kyrning of Färlöv (Skåne).¹⁸⁸ Also, Ture's father, Ture Stensson (Bielke) had himself been married to two Danish noblewomen (see the genealogical table 'The families Bielke and Trolle and the three Nordic royal saints' in Appendix 6).¹⁸⁹

The daughter of Ture Turesson and Lady Ingegärd, Brita, married the Swedish *riksråd* Arvid Birgersson (Trolle) in his second marriage in 1488. Previously, Arvid was married to Beata Ivarsdotter (Tott). The family of Tott was originally of Danish origin but had married into several Swedish aristocratic families during the fifteenth century.¹⁹⁰ Beata and Arvid together had a son named Erik, and Erik Arvidsson (Trolle) in turn married twice. His first

bildkonst', pp. 220–24; Nyberg, 'Birgittinerkulturen och unionen', pp. 370–71; Wallin, 'Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 3: Helgonkungabilderna som propagandamedel i unionens tjänst'; Kofod-Hansen, 'Knud den Hellige i middelalderlige malerier og træskærerarbejder'.

¹⁸⁷ Wallin, 'Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 3: Helgonkungabilderna som propagandamedel i unionens tjänst'.

¹⁸⁸ Thordeman, *Nordens helgonkonungar*, p. 10.

¹⁸⁹ See also Wallin, 'Kalkmålningssviterna med de tre nordiska helgonkungarna i skånska kyrkor, 2: Släktrationer mellan skånska och svenska frälset under unionstiden'.

¹⁹⁰ Gillingstam and Lundholm, 'Tott'.



Figure 31.
St Knut, St Olaf, and St Erik
on the silver goblet of Erik
Trolle and Karin Eriksson
(Gyllenstierna). Photos by
Nils Lagergren, courtesy
of Riksanantikvarieembete,
Stockholm.

wife was Ingeborg Philipsdotter (Tott) who died around 1502 and his second wife was Karin Eriksdotter (Gyllenstierna). The coats of arms of Erik and his second wife can be found on a silver goblet that also features the three Scandinavian royal saints (Fig. 31).¹⁹¹ As has been discussed above, Erik Trolle — who was for a few days *riksföreståndare* in 1512 — and his son, Archbishop Gustav Trolle, were the main antagonists of Sten Sture the Younger, and they both worked for the return of the union King Kristian II to Sweden. As shown in the genealogical table ‘The Bielke and Trolle families and the three Nordic royal saints’ presented in Appendix 6, some intermarried Swedish and Danish aristocratic families (most prominently the families of Bielke, Tott, and Trolle on the Swedish side) appear to belong to a section of the Scandinavian aristocracy that supported the Kalmar Union rather than separate and distinct Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian kingdoms. It is remarkable that both the wall-hanging and the silver goblet were obviously commissioned by Swedish aristocrats who had close marriage connections with Danish noble houses. The evidence of the wall-hanging and the goblet can, therefore, be considered as figural representations of this aristocratic support of the union. This support was (among other things) obviously displayed by commissioning artworks on which the royal saints of all three kingdoms were depicted together.

Moreover, there are examples of artwork that suggest it was not only the aristocracy who made use of the royal saints of Scandinavia in order to show their support of the Kalmar Union. The union kings also made similar efforts. As has been discussed in connection with Magnus Eriksson and his two sons, the names given to the children of a king could have a programmatic meaning. A clear example of this among the union kings is how Kristian I named his sons; his first two sons were named after two of the three royal saints. However, neither Olof (1450–51) nor Knut (1451–55), lived into adulthood. His third son did not bear the name of a royal saint, being named ‘Hans’. He, however, survived and succeeded his father as king of the Kalmar Union. Two further incidents also appear to have had symbolic value: firstly, when Erik of Pomerania visited the monastery of Vadstena for the first time after the death of Queen Margareta and at the beginning of his independent reign in 1413, he chose 18 May, the feast day of St Erik, for his arrival. It is likely that he did this in order to show his esteem for his saintly namesake and for the kingdom of which that saint was the patron. Secondly, and more than a century later,

¹⁹¹ Thordeman, ‘Erik den helige i medeltida bildkonst’, pp. 177, 223; Thordeman, *Nordens helgonkonungar*, pp. 14–15.

another union monarch, Kristian II, chose the same day in 1518 for his coronation as king of Sweden.¹⁹² Shortly beforehand, the *riksråd* had made an attempt to declare Sweden a hereditary kingdom and Kristian II as its true king because he had ‘St Erik’s blood’.¹⁹³ However, no genealogical construction was included to prove this claim, as was done in the case of Karl Knutsson (Bonde) and the new introduction to the *Erikskrönika*. Kristian II himself included St Erik in his *intitulatio* in some of his letters. He named himself: ‘We, Kristian, by the grace of God, etc., salute [...] with God and St Erik the king’.¹⁹⁴ Finally, the oath that knights had to swear at their accolade should be mentioned. This oath, which they had to swear to St Mary, St Knut and St Erik, will be discussed in greater detail below.

The Birgittine Order was able to spread the fame of St Erik in two different ways. Firstly, since the Swedish royal saint’s day was included in the Birgittine calendar, it was spread each time the order founded a new monastery. It is for this reason that in many regions of Europe, these entries in the order’s calendars are the only places where mention of St Erik is made.¹⁹⁵ Secondly, in order to evaluate the attitude of the politically influential monastery of Vadstena towards St Erik, we can examine the sermons archived in the monastery that were originally delivered on St Erik’s day. Sermons that took place in the monastery were regulated by the *regula* of the Birgittine Order and were annotated in chapter 23 of Birgitta’s *Revelationes extravagantes* (as discussed in Chapter 2 above). A further regulation was made in the *Liber Vsuum*, the book containing the rules of the Vadstena-monks. There the feast days on which sermons should

¹⁹² BSH, v, no. 506. The *Eriksmäs*sa on 18 May was, however, also used as a political forum by Sten Sture the Elder when he announced his preliminary accession to power in 1470 until the *riksråd* would have been assembled. See Schück, ‘Riksdagens framväxt’, p. 193.

¹⁹³ *Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*, III: 1409–1520, ed. by Rydberg, no. 594: ‘besynnnerligen med anseendes ath hans naade aaff sancte Ericx, wor helige patrones, reetta blod sanneligen er kommen’ (particularly in respect to [the fact] that his grace [=Kristian II] really originates from the true blod of St Erik, our holy patron).

¹⁹⁴ *Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*, III: 1409–1520, ed. by Rydberg, no. 587b: ‘Wii Cristiern, met Gudz nade, etc., helse [...] met Gud oc sancte Erick konyngh’.

¹⁹⁵ During the Late Middle Ages nine monasteries of the Birgittine Order were found in Scandinavia, Prussia und Poland, two in Italy, one in England, and fifteen in other Central and Western European Countries. See Sanders-Olsen, Nyberg, and Carlsen, *Saint Birgitta’s Monasteries*.

be delivered are named. Among them is the day of St Erik.¹⁹⁶ 'During the first half of the fifteenth century, the preaching of the Vadstena-monks on Sundays developed from an exegesis of Bible texts intended for the Vadstena-nuns to a public sermon for laymen.'¹⁹⁷ Thus, as well as the sermons on Sundays, which were devoted to the explanation of the Gospel, there were also public sermons delivered on saint's feast days. In this way, it was possible to transmit thoughts about a saint and his exemplary life to a wide audience.¹⁹⁸

There are twenty-three sermons in the Vadstena material preserved in the C-collection of the Uppsala University Library that have St Erik as their main subject. From those sermons, eleven — which range in date from late fourteenth to late fifteenth century — have been selected here for closer analysis.¹⁹⁹ Given the nature of those documented sermons as models for preaching, it is not surprising that they do not include statements on contemporary politics or state leaders. However, such statements may have been added to sermons as they took place as contemporary examples of the main topics addressed in the sermon. St Erik is used as the general model for a good king and as the embodiment of Christian virtues. A few examples may suffice to illustrate the ways St Erik was represented in the Vadstena sermon material.

The sermon *de sancto Erico*, by an anonymous author from around 1400, centres on the seven virtues of the royal saint that are recommended by the author for imitation.²⁰⁰ These are humility, poverty, chastisement of the flesh, endurance of hardships, patience, adherence to virtue and love, and the ability to persevere. The connection to St Erik as he is depicted in his legend is, however, rather vague. Only at the beginning of the sermon are deeds of St Erik mentioned: 'For he won the victory against pride when he wept for the death of his enemies, he revolted against avarice by offering money, he abstained from

¹⁹⁶ Andersson, *Postillor och predikan*, pp. 199–202.

¹⁹⁷ Andersson, *Postillor och predikan*, p. 205.

¹⁹⁸ The monks of Vadstena were already famous for their preaching in the early fifteenth century. This is evidenced by a letter from Archbishop Eskil of Nidaros to Vadstena from 1416, in which he asks how they prepared their sermons (SDHK, 18,701).

¹⁹⁹ Those are the sermons: C 85, fols 49^v–51^r; C 302, fols 354^r–365^v; C 308, fols 243^r–246^v; C 317, fols 239^r–243^v; C 331, fols 88^r–94^r; C 335, fols 319^r–322^r; C 344, fols 272^v–277^r; C 349, fols 166^r–169^v; C 349, fol. 169^r–^v; C 362, fols 230^r–238^r; C 395, fols 176^v–178^r. Transcriptions of those sermons have kindly been provided by Maria Berggren.

²⁰⁰ C 85, fols 49^v–51^r; On the dating, see *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala. Katalog über die C-Sammlung*, II: *Handschriften C 51–200*, ed. by Andersson-Schmidt and Hedlund (1989), p. 105.

luxury and from the dance of the queen [i.e. he avoided the queen's seductions] and he bathed in painfully cold water'.²⁰¹ During the rest of the sermon, these Christian virtues are upheld as those that everybody should strive for and they are based on, and exemplified through, quotes from the Bible and from ecclesiastical authorities. No further explicit mention is made of St Erik.

Nils Ragvaldsson, a monk in Vadstena from 1476 and confessor-general of the monastery between 1501–06 and 1511–12, used a line from the Gospel of Luke as his *thema* in one of his sermons on St Erik: 'My children are with me in my chamber'.²⁰² With this as a starting point, he preached on how the children of the Holy Spirit can sleep peacefully in the chamber, because they are guarded, as is said in the Song of Songs: 'See, it is the bed of Solomon; sixty men of war are about it, of the army of Israel. All of them armed with swords, trained in war'.²⁰³ In the metaphor of the sermon, the conscience of holy people is their chamber and the virtues are the guardians under the protection of whom the soul can rest peacefully. In this respect — and during the course of the sermon in several other respects — St Erik is paralleled with King Solomon, one of the model kings of the Old Testament. Three of the virtues of St Erik are particularly stressed and clarified over several pages: his knightly justice, his abundant giving to charity, and his true friendship.²⁰⁴ In contrast to the anonymous sermon mentioned above from around 1400, Nils Ragvaldsson included some criticism of the contemporary condition of society which, in his eyes, was not in accordance with the saintly example. In connection with the crusade to Finland and the preaching of the Gospel there, he states: 'But alas, today there are many who would rather announce their own glory than that of God'.²⁰⁵ Furthermore,

²⁰¹ C 85, fol. 49^v: 'Nam contra superbiam obtenta victoria fleuit strages hostium, contra auariciam recusauit oblatam pecuniam, contra luxuriam abstinuit a choro regine balneans in doleis aque frigide'.

²⁰² C 302, fols 354^r–365^v; 'Pueri mei mecum sunt in cubili' (Luke 11. 7). On Nicolaus Ragvaldi, see Silverstolpe, *Klosterfolket i Vadstena. Personhistoriska anteckningar*, pp. 94–95, on the dating, see *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala*, IV: *Handschriften C 301–400*, ed. by Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg, and Hedlund, p. 9.

²⁰³ Song of Songs 3. 7–8: 'en lectulum Salomonis sexaginta fortes ambiunt ex fortissimis Israel omnes tenentes gladios et ad bella doctissimi'. The biblical texts quoted in the sermons differ from the modern standard bible: C 302, fol. 354^r: 'lectum Solomonis ambiri a lxx ex fortissimis Israel tenentibus gladium et ad bellum doctissimis'.

²⁰⁴ C 302, fols 357^v–361^v. The third virtue is changed into 'obedience towards God' later in the text.

²⁰⁵ C 302, fol. 362^v: 'Sed heu multi sunt hodie, qui potius annunciant gloriam suam quam gloriam Dei'.

he declares it sinful when secular courts dare to judge clerics or when secular rulers attempt to direct the church.

After a lengthy quotation from the legend of St Erik, Nils Ragvaldsson juxtaposes the present situation to that of the time of the saint:

So it is said in the legend. From this it becomes clear that at this time, fear and love of God ruled in the kingdom, which led to the estimation of just people and to [the fact] that those were elected the leaders. But alas, soon the love of God as well as that of fellow men cooled down among the unimportant and among the mighty, and everybody cared rather for himself than for Jesus Christ [...] But today three main evils destroy this kingdom, if not the whole church: those are the malice of the clerics, [...] the greed of the kings and lords, [...] and the greed of women.²⁰⁶

Nils's contemporary, Clemens Petersson, a monk in Vadstena between 1462 and 1500 and the confessor-general from 1488 to 1499, used the example of St Erik to describe the characteristics of a good ruler and the proper ways in which one should gain office and subsequently rule.²⁰⁷ The *thema* of the sermon is 'You, Lord, have chosen me to be the king of your people'.²⁰⁸ Thus, Clemens begins by pointing out that to be legitimately elected — and not to be appointed by a tyrant — was one of three characteristics that constituted an excellent king, with the other two being that he should honour the laws and customs, and that he should care for the welfare of his people. Legitimate election was in itself considered to have three characteristics: divine providence, dynastic succession, and unanimous election; an appropriate candidate needs to derive his authority from God, to be endowed with virtues and to be humble. The number three also enumerates a king's desirable characteristics: a good king should possess wisdom, clemency, and perseverance. All those qualities of a king and of his election can, according to Clemens Petersson, be seen in St Erik and his accession to power, particularly the three characteristics of wisdom, clemency, and

²⁰⁶ C 302, fol. 363^r–363^v: 'Hec in legenda. Ex quibus patet, quod illo tempore in hoc regno erat timor et amor Dei, ex quo iusti homines diligebantur et in prepositos constituiebantur. Sed heu, iam refriguit caritas tam Dei quam hominum a parvis et magnis, et vnusquisque querit que sua sunt, potius quam Iesu Christi. [...] Hodie autem hoc regnum, ne dicam etiam totam ecclesiam, tria maxime destruunt, scilicet clericorum malicia [...] Secundo regum et principum auaricia [...] Tercio mulierum auaricia'.

²⁰⁷ C 308, fols 243^r–246^v. On Clemens Petersson, see Silverstolpe, *Klosterfolket i Vadstena. Personhistoriska anteckningar*, pp. 91–92; on the dating of the sermon, see *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala. Katalog über die C- Sammlung*, IV: *Handschriften C 301–400*, ed. by Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg, and Hedlund, p. 52.

²⁰⁸ C 308, fol. 243^r: 'Tu, Domine, elegisti me regem populo tuo'. (Wisdom, 9.7).

perseverance. That St Erik possessed them all is proven by Clemens Petersson through lengthy quotes from his legend.²⁰⁹ Finally, the difference between a king and a tyrant is defined: while a tyrant works only for his own interests, striving only for amusing things and for profit, the king works for the wellbeing of all, striving to do honourable deeds and to bring the society of his kingdom into accordance with God's law.²¹⁰

The last sermon that will be discussed here in detail is another anonymously written text dated to the fifteenth century.²¹¹ In this sermon a comparison is made between society and the human body and the focus is placed on the head of the body, i.e. the king. 'Our glorious patron St Erik, in his time head and lord of the realm, had the optimal disposition through his saintly life and was fitted [for being an apt ruler].'²¹² But the principle also worked in reverse: 'When the lords are bad, the people are ruined.'²¹³ In the sermon an interesting etymological excursus on the name 'Erik' follows, during which the name of 'Herigarius', the *praefectus* of Birka at the time of Ansgar, is said to be an old form of the name 'Ericus'.²¹⁴ The rest of the sermon is devoted to the explanation of the six most important virtues of a ruler — alertness, justness, thoughtfulness, perseverance against evil, humility, and readiness to go on a pilgrimage — and the demonstration that all of those virtues were united in the person of St Erik. In one instance, the anonymous author criticizes the conditions of the church of his days:

Four particular evils have predominated the Church of the Son for a long time, those are pride, carnal pleasures, superfluosity of things above the necessary, and simony, and the four virtues of humility, abstinence, satisfaction, and charity have been oppressed.²¹⁵

²⁰⁹ C 308, fols 243^r–244^v.

²¹⁰ C 308, fols 244^v–245^r.

²¹¹ C 317, fols 239^r–243^v; on the dating, see *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala. Katalog über die C-Sammlung*, IV: *Handschriften C 301–400*, ed. by Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg, and Hedlund, p. 127. The sermon has been dated by Berglund, *Guds stat och maktens villkor*, p. 150 to before 1430. Her claim that the sermon collection C 317 was contemporary with C 389 (for which Borgehammar, 'Preaching to pilgrims' has assumed a time of composition before 1430) is not substantiated with any arguments.

²¹² C 317, fol. 239^r: 'gloriosus patronus noster sanctus Ericus suo in tempore capud et princeps regni optime dispositus per vite sanctitatem et ordinatus fuit.'

²¹³ C 317 'Econuerso autem mali principes ruina sunt populi'.

²¹⁴ C 317, fol. 239^v. On Herigarius, the *praefectus* of Birka, see Rimbert, *Vita Anskarii*, ed. by Waitz, 11 and 19.

²¹⁵ C 317, fol. 242^v: 'Preualuerant enim iam in ecclesia satis diu quatuor specialia vicia, videlicet

Those four exemplary sermons may suffice to show the underlying pattern of the sermons held on the feast day of St Erik. Although used in different variations and as part of different subjects of the sermons, St Erik is always held up as an example of the virtues of an excellent ruler or a good Christian in general. In most cases the sermon centres around the right order of a kingdom as derived from the examples of the kings of the Old Testament, particularly King Solomon and King David. But other structures were also possible. For example, a sermon by Acho Johannsson, monk in Vadstena between 1416 and 1462 and thereafter bishop of Västerås, explains the virtues of St Erik by employing the three criteria of Augustine against which a ruler should be judged.²¹⁶ A sermon by Michael Sunesson, however, centres on the election of kings.²¹⁷ He strongly criticizes the way in which such elections took place in his time.

No-one is chosen anymore on account of his particular qualities, such as a better life, brighter wisdom, or more celebrated reputation, but on account of his earthly property, or on account of curial interpretations or intrusions. [...] Those are not chosen by the Holy Spirit but by their own spirit.²¹⁸

Nevertheless, according to Sunesson, the rule of tyrants is also considered part of divine providence and therefore they should be obeyed with due respect.²¹⁹

The general attitude in the sermons thus seems to have been that St Erik was considered an exemplary king, comparable to the model kings of the Old Testament. He possessed all the virtues that were desirable in a king and therefore the Swedish people lived a happy and holy life during his reign, in 'the good old days'. This attitude is evident throughout the sermons discussed here. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that this view of St Erik was that expressed by the Birgittine Order in general. It is also congruent with the viewpoint of Ericus Olai put forward in his *Chronica regni Gothorum*, in which the views of the cathedral chapter of Uppsala were voiced as discussed above. It might even

superbia, voluptas carnis, superfluitas super omnem necessitatem et symonia, et opprimunt alias quatuor virtutes, scilicet humilitatem, abstinenciam, contentacionem et caritatem'.

²¹⁶ C 335, fols 319^r–322^r; Silverstolpe, *Klosterfolket i Vadstena*, pp. 125–27; Berglund, *Guds stat och maktens villkor*, pp. 121–23.

²¹⁷ C 349, fols 166^r–169^v; Silverstolpe, *Klosterfolket i Vadstena*, p. 89; Berglund, *Guds stat och maktens villkor*, pp. 156–57, 160–64.

²¹⁸ C 349, fol. 166^r: 'nonnulli eliguntur propter parciales affectiones; quidam propter mundiales possessiones, et quidam propter curiales interpretaciones seu intrusiones. [...] Isti non eliguntur per Spiritum sanctum sed per spiritum suum'.

²¹⁹ C 349, fol. 166^v.

be possible to widen the circle of those who viewed St Erik in this way, and to suggest that such a view was held by most of the regular and secular clergy of Sweden during the latter half of the fifteenth century.

Further Aspects of St Erik's Cult during the Time of the Kalmar Union

The donations towards foundations made in honour of St Erik became more numerous in the fifteenth century, both inside and outside the diocese of Uppsala, than they had been in the previous century. While very few of these donations were made by clerics, the urban element increased. But it was still largely the aristocracy who donated property to the altars and prebends of St Erik. In 1396 and 1397 two new prebends were founded inside the cathedral of Uppsala, both of which were co-consecrated to St Erik. The founder of the prebend in honour of God, the Virgin Mary, St Lars, and St Erik was Helga Anundsdotter (Rörik Birgerssons ätt).²²⁰ There was a long-established tradition of veneration towards St Erik within her family (see the genealogical table on the aristocratic families of Uppand in Appendix 6): according to miracle 19 (17) of the miracle collection, the life of her mother, Birgitta, was saved at birth by St Erik and her grandmother, who was also named Helga Anundsdotter, was the object of miracle 29 (27). The founder of the second prebend, Karl Ulfsson (Sparre av Tofta) was also a member of one of the old Upplandian aristocratic families. The family of Sparre av Tofta, however, had not previously stood out as particular venerators of St Erik.

In 1452 the widow of Bengt Jönsson (Oxenstierna), Märta Lydekadotter, who was by this time the wife of Cristiern Nilsson (Vasa), founded a prebend *Gudh til loff [...] oc ära, Jomfru marie gudz modhr sancto laurencio sancte Eriks konungr oc sancto Erasmo* (to the glory and honour of God, the Virgin Mary, God's mother, St Lars, St Erik the king and St Erasmus).²²¹ Considering the facts that Bengt Jönsson was *riksföreståndare* for a short time and that both of Lady Märta's husbands were members of the very powerful aristocratic circle of the families Oxenstierna and Vasa — among whom were the most important antagonists of King Karl Knutsson (Bonde) — it appears reasonable to consider this foundation more as an act of 'national' politics than of individual

²²⁰ SDHK, 14,546, 14,547; a summary of the charter is printed in *Svenska riks-archivets pergamentsbreff*, ed. by Riksarkivet, nos 2795, 2796.

²²¹ SDHK, 26,121 (or. perg. RA 0101); on Märta Lydekadotter, see Gillingstam, *Ätterna Oxenstierna och Vasa under medeltiden*, pp. 319–23.

vation. The same is true for the foundation of the shrine of St Erik in 1472, although the name of the donor is not recorded by Peringskiöld.²²² If one considers the further history of this altar, which was later to bear *S:t Eriks tavla*, it is plausible to assume that either Sten Sture the Elder or Archbishop Jakob Ulvsson (or both) were responsible for the donation of the altar shortly after the Battle of Brunkebeg. In any case, it was Sten Sture who donated a large number of goods to the altar five years later.²²³

In 1482, an otherwise unknown squire, Erik Gregersson i Grenhammar, donated property to the cathedral of Uppsala in return for a number of weekly masses, among them one to St Erik.²²⁴ Knut Posse was one of the two commanders at the side of Sten Sture the Elder at the Battle of Brunkeberg, and remained one of the closest trustees of the *riksföreståndare* until his death. He confirmed a donation to the altar of St Erik in Uppsala in the will of his sister-in-law, Elin Gustavsdotter, in 1496.²²⁵ Elin was the daughter of Gustav Algotsson (Sture) and Elin Arvidsdotter (Oxenstierna), and was married to the knight and Upplandian lawspeaker Knut Stensson (Bielke). After his death, she married Erik Axelsson (Tott), one of the notorious *Axelsönerna*, after whose death in 1481 she appears to have remained a widow.²²⁶ She thus moved in the absolute top circles of Swedish society and it seems likely that her donation — like that of Märta Lydekadotter — should be considered as a ‘national’ political act.

A number of inhabitants of the cities of Uppsala and Stockholm also donated goods to sites where St Erik was venerated. As mentioned above, the daughter of the mayor of Uppsala, Elisabeth Kristoffersdotter, donated a basement to the newly founded altar of St Erik in front of his shrine.²²⁷ One member of the city council of Stockholm who was particularly active in terms of giving donations was Peter Ålänning. In 1386 he founded an altar for St Erik, including a prebend in the cathedral church of Åbo/Turku, and the year after, in 1387, he donated the property for the foundation of one of the two prebends of St Henrik in the cathedral church of Uppsala.²²⁸ In 1400 he and his

²²² Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*, pp. 25–27.

²²³ SDHK, 30,315.

²²⁴ SDHK, 31,105 (or. perg. RA 0101).

²²⁵ SDHK, 33,386.

²²⁶ Lundholm, ‘Sture, sjöbladsätten’, p. 204. On the *Axelsönerna* see Wallace Nilsson, *Axelsönerna (Tott)*.

²²⁷ SDHK, 29,496.

²²⁸ SDHK, 13,175, Dahlbäck, *Uppsala domkyrkas godsinnahav med särskild hänsyn*, pp. 128, 144.

wife, Kristina Petersdotter, donated property to the altar of St Henrik and St Erik in the cathedral church of Åbo and Peter ordered that all those who owed him money in Finland and on the islands of Åland should instead give that money to *sancti Henrikx domkirkio ii Abo, sancti hær Ericx tiill loff ok æro, for myna ok mina foreldra siela ganghn.* (St Henrik's cathedral church in Åbo, to the praise and honour of St Erik, [and] for the benefit of the souls of me and my parents).²²⁹ In the context of this urban veneration of St Erik, it should also be mentioned that a guild in honour of St Erik and St Peter was formed in Stockholm, probably in the 1430s.²³⁰

In regions of Sweden other than Uppland, altars of St Erik start to appear in the sources during the fifteenth century. In addition to the foundations of altars dedicated to St Erik in the cathedrals of Åbo/Turku and Linköping, which had already been initiated during the rules of Magnus Eriksson and Albrekt of Mecklenburg, and the foundation of an altar for the saint in the monastery church of Vadstena by Magnus Eriksson and his wife Blanka,²³¹ further sites for the veneration of St Erik were founded in the later fifteenth century in several regions of Sweden. In 1487, Bishop Kort Rogge of Strängnäs founded a prebend of St Erik in his cathedral to which Magnus Germundi, parish priest in Kumla (Närke), donated a farm in 1488.²³² In the same year, a prebend of St Olaf and St Erik is mentioned for the cathedral of Västerås.²³³

The question of a possible rivalry between the cults of St Erik and St Olaf has already been discussed above (Chapter 5), and the assumption that St Olaf failed to become the third patron saint of the cathedral of Uppsala has also been used to suggest a competition between the two royal saints. However, as discussed above, no evidence of this could be traced in the sources. In my opinion, the main reason why the two cults did not interfere with each other was the strong tendency of the cult of St Erik to remain associated with the leading stratum of society. It first appears as such at the end of the thirteenth century, when the cult was promoted by the kings of the Bjälbo dynasty, the archbishops of Uppsala, and some members of their cathedral chapter, as well as by a con-

²²⁹ SDHK, 15,464; printed in *Registrum ecclesiae Aboensis eller Åbo Domkyrkas Svartbok*, ed. by Pispala, no. 290.

²³⁰ Ahnlund, *Stockholms historia före Gustav Vasa*, p. 268.

²³¹ This altar was further equipped by Esbjörn Blåpanna and his wife Katarina Nilsdotter in 1428 (SDHK, 20,987).

²³² SDHK, 31,971, 32,078.

²³³ SDHK, 32,033.

siderable number of Upplandian nobles. The collection of his miracles provides evidence for the strong aristocratic and ecclesiastic element in his veneration (see Chapter 5 above). This tendency remained visible throughout the fifteenth century when St Erik became established as the saint who symbolized both the Swedish kingdom and the church of Uppsala. The appeal of St Erik broadened and he also became established as the saint of knights during this time. As a result, his veneration extended to the lower gentry of the kingdom.

The first piece of evidence for St Erik as being the saint of knights appears in the *Revelationes factae cuidam post mortem regis Christofori*, a source which has been handed down within the monastery of Vadstena in two manuscripts.²³⁴ It includes eleven revelations, all received by one (unidentified) person some time after the death of King Kristofer of Bavaria in 1448. In the sixth of those visions, the tortured Christ appears and announces that ‘those who scourge me are those who oppress the poor and the innocent, and who do wrong by the violence of injustice’.²³⁵ Then, one after another, seven saints appear in order to speak for those who are close to them. St Francis speaks for the Franciscans, St Anthony for ‘those who observe poverty’, St Louis for ‘those who love chastity and obedience’, St Birgitta for the widows and the members of her order, St Eskil for the clergy, and St Barbara for ‘those in her service’. The saint who speaks for ‘the knights and noblemen of the kingdom of Sweden’ is St Erik:

After this Saint Eric approached, adorned with precious clothes and girded with a sword. He stood upright before the Lord without showing humility, as if to complain of the knights and soldiers [*sic*] of the kingdom of Sweden, and he said: ‘Master, have mercy upon them. Look with what pride and irreverence the knights usually attend divine services. Therefore, by justice they do not deserve to be heard’.²³⁶

²³⁴ *Revelationes factae cuidam post mortem regis Christofori*, ed. by Stenborg.

²³⁵ *Revelationes factae cuidam post mortem regis Christofori*, ed. by Stenborg, pp. 40–42: ‘Et qui me flagellant sunt illi, qui pauperes et innocentes opprimunt et iniuriant per iniusticie violenciam.’ [trans. by G. Stenborg].

²³⁶ *Revelationes factae cuidam post mortem regis Christofori*, ed. by Stenborg, p. 44: ‘Postea processit sanctus Ericus veste preciosa decoratus gladio accinctus stans coram Domino erectus humilitatem non ostendens, quasi conquerendo super milites et militares regni Suecie, dicens: “Magister, miserere eis. Ecce cum tali superbia et indeuocione solent milites diuinis interesse. Propterea non merentur de iusticia exaudiri”’. [trans. by G. Stenborg]. The translation of *militares* as ‘soldiers’ is questionable. It should rather be translated as (not knighted) ‘noblemen’. I thank Claes Gejrot for this information.

Although St Erik's statement in favour of the *milites et militares regni Suecie* is rather contradictory (he commends them to Christ's mercy but states that 'by justice they do not deserve to be heard'), it is remarkable that it is the Swedish royal martyr who speaks for the knights of the kingdom and not St George, who was widely venerated in Sweden as the saint of knights. It is clear that the person who received the revelations shortly after the death of King Kristofer was faced with the conclusion that St Erik was best suited to represent the knights and noblemen of the kingdom and to act as their advocate and protector.

The second source that connects St Erik to the knights of the kingdom is the knight's oath, the usage of which is first confirmed for the year 1441 when seventy-six noblemen of the three Nordic kingdoms were knighted at the coronation ceremony of Kristofer of Bavaria.²³⁷ Each knight had to swear by 'the mercy of God, the Virgin Mary, St Erik, and St Knut' that he was going to protect 'the holy Christian faith' and its servants as well as orphans, maidens, and widows, and that he was going to be faithful towards his king and his kingdom. Although it seems obvious that St Erik and St Knut were invoked as saints representing the Kalmar Union, it is still noticeable that it was they who were asked to give their mercy to the knight and that they were also responsible for punishing a knight who broke his oath.

From the time of the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson onwards, a veneration of St Erik on the part of the farmers and miners can also be observed. The veneration of the royal martyr in those circles is hard to grasp since the overwhelming majority of extant sources from the Middle Ages concerns the kings

²³⁷ On this oath, see Gejrot, 'En svensk riddared dokumenteras'. His edition of the oath — which he has kindly provided me with before publication — is now replacing that of FMU, 4893: 'Jach bidher mik swa Gud hullan jomfrv Mariæ, sancte Erich oc sancte Knwt at jac wil epter min yterste machth medh liiff och godz beskerma the helga cristna tro oc ewangelium oc halla oc wæria kirkiona oc henna tiænara wid sina friheet och frælse, standa moth oræth och storkia fridh oc ræth oc beskerma | fadherløos och modherløos barn, joncfrwr, ænkior och armt folk och wara trygger och tro minom konungh oc mino rike oc rætfærdeligha halla oc owa mith riddarscap Gudi til heders epter mine bæzste formaagho, swa hielpp mik Gudh'. (I promise by God, the Virgin Mary, St Erik, [and] St Knut, that I will, with my uttermost power, with my life and my property, protect the holy Christian faith and the Gospel and hold and protect the Church and her servants in their independence and freedom, stand against injustice and strengthen peace and justice, and defend the fatherless and motherless children, maidens and widows, and poor people, and I will be true and faithful to my king and my kingdom and rightfully hold and exercise my knighthood; to the glory of God to my best ability. So help me God.)



Map 10.
The distribution of charters
dated by St Erik's feast day,
1397–1433.

and the leading aristocrats and clerics.²³⁸ However, some indirect hints are given by sources from the time of Sten Sture the Elder. As has been discussed above, this *riksföreståndare* used St Erik and St George for his

political purposes in a way that was a novelty in Swedish history. The accounts given of the saints in the *Sturekrönika*, combined with the figural impression of the two altars of the saints in Uppsala and Stockholm, were a most effective

²³⁸ Some examples of the invocation of St Erik by people of lower social strata are given in the fifteenth-century additions to the miracle collection. Another example can be found in a letter of the inhabitants of Luleå who promise to 'gudi oc sancto Erico' an offering of money every year in order to be spared from the plague. After that, no further person died of the plague because of 'sancti Eriki böön' (St Erik's prayers) (SDHK, 24,762 (or. perg. RA 0101).



Map 11.
The distribution of charters
dated by St Erik's feast day,
1434–66.

medial presentation of Sten Sture the Elder. He was depicted as a knight who fought for the wellbeing of the Swedish people against the Danish invaders and who was supported in this fight by St Erik and St George. This medial strat-

egy had its origin in the circle of high nobles around the *riksföreståndare* and in Sten Sture himself, but it would have been entirely pointless if there had not been a strong veneration of the two saints among those whom they wished to impress: namely the 'common men'. Alongside his personal property and his supporters within the upper nobility, the main basis of the regent's power was his ability to raise quickly an army of several thousand miners and farmers. In order to keep them on his side, however, it was necessary for Sten Sture to keep them convinced that he was the right man to represent them on the political stage. And in order to achieve this aim, the *riksföreståndare* fuelled the anti-



Danish feelings of the populace via the means discussed above in a way that has to be described as populist.

During the second half of the fourteenth century, the custom of dating charters by the feast

day of St Erik had spread to most of regions in middle and southern Sweden (except for Västergötland) and it had also started to become common in those regions of Norway and Denmark that bordered Sweden. This situation did not change during the time of the Kalmar Union. Although the distribution of the charters differed across the fifteenth century, no general increase or decrease of the custom of using St Erik's feast day for the dating of charters can be observed (Maps 10–13). However, although there are some letters that use St Erik's day as a dating mechanism from Västergötland, there are still comparatively few such charters to be found in that region. In other words, the veneration of the



Map 13.
The distribution of charters
dated by St Erik's feast day,
1501–18.

saint, as indicated by the charters, had reached most of the regions of the kingdom of Sweden by the late fourteenth century but it was only during the fifteenth century that Västergötland and regions in northern Sweden (particularly

Jämtland and Medelpad) began to issue some charters dated by St Erik's day.

The distribution of depictions of St Erik in ecclesiastic art follows a similar pattern to that of charter formulae, albeit with some delay. While charters that mentioned St Erik's day in their dating formulae had already appeared across mid and southern Sweden during the fourteenth century, the depictions of St Erik were largely centred on Uppland until the mid-fifteenth century. Only at the end of that century did an increasing number of depictions begin to appear elsewhere (Maps 14–17). Compared to the evidence of the charters, however, depictions of St Erik are more evenly distributed across the country.



Map 14.
The distribution of depictions of
St Erik during the early fifteenth
century.

This difference probably relates to the nature of the sources. While charters were mainly issued in centres of power, parish churches (in which most of the depictions can be found) were located across all parts of a kingdom. A remarkable difference in distribution, however, is the fact, that both along the northern Swedish coast and in Västergötland, quite a number of depictions of St Erik can be found but only very few dated charters.

This chronological discrepancy may reflect different intensities of the veneration of St Erik. His introduction into the rather large canon of saints whose feast days were recorded on the liturgical calendar did not necessarily require an intense level of veneration. To be among the much smaller group of saints whose images could be depicted inside a church, however, might be taken as a sign that those saints were of particular importance to the people who visited this church. The analysis given here of charter-dating formulae that used



Map 15.
The distribution of depictions of
St Erik during the mid-fifteenth
century.

St Erik's feast day and of the location of depictions of the saint broadly supports the conclusions drawn from the earlier examined sources. The peak of the veneration of St Erik was reached between 1450 and the early 1520s during the rule of the three *riksföreståndare*, Sten

Sture the Elder, Svante Nilsson, and Sten Sture the Younger.

As noted above in Chapter 5, St Erik was already remembered as the first person to give laws to the people of Uppland in the *Upplandslag* of 1296.²³⁹ Furthermore, King Birger Magnusson informed the reader in his introduction to *Upplandslag* that St Erik was one of his forefathers. This association of St Erik with the law is seen in some depictions showing him holding a (law) book. The

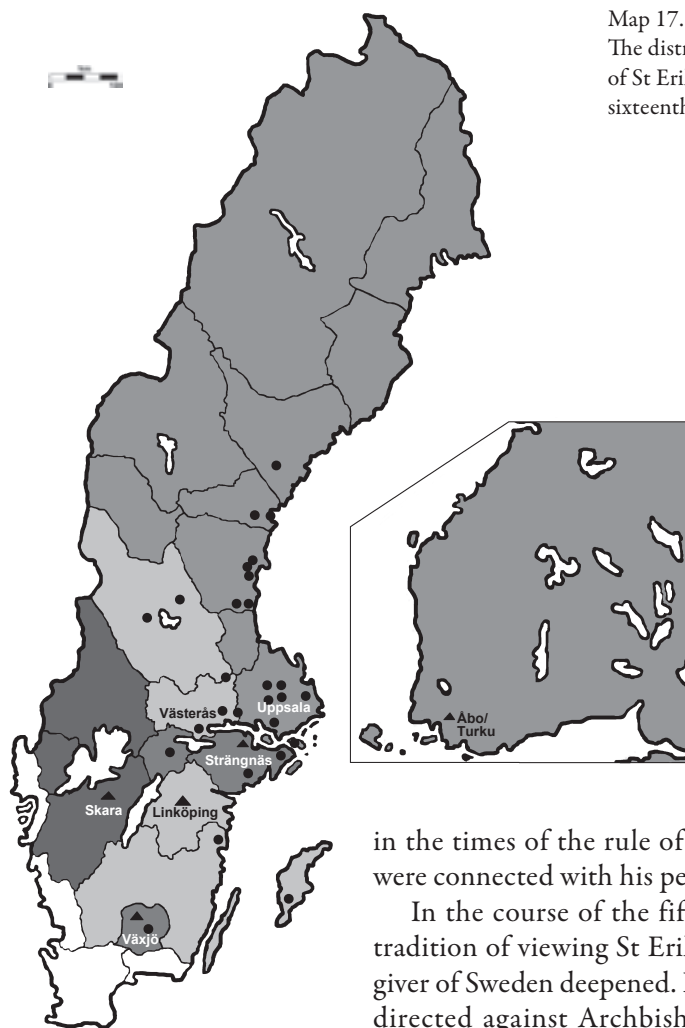
²³⁹ *Upplands-lagen*, ed. by Collin and Schlyter, pp. 7, 107.



Map 16.
The distribution of depictions
of St Erik during the late
fifteenth century.

notion of St Erik as an ancient law-giver was, however, not acknowledged in Magnus Eriksson's *landslog*, which was issued in the middle of the fourteenth century. Within this lawcode, St Erik is only mentioned in connection with his relics, on which the oaths of the king and his subjects had to be sworn (see Chapter 6 above). Yet, the tradition of St Erik's law must have survived the rules of Magnus Eriksson and Albrekt of Mecklenburg, since there is a record of a land exchange conducted 'after the law of King St Erik' in a charter from 1398,²⁴⁰ and in 1403 Queen Margareta decreed that a tax, known as the *fem-tonmarkshjälp*, should be paid 'as was done in the days of King St Erik', here referring not to an exact law but to the old legal customs that had their origin

²⁴⁰ SDHK, 14,973 (or. perg. RA 0101): 'aphthir sancta erics konugs lagom'.



Map 17.
The distribution of depictions
of St Erik during the early
sixteenth century.

in the times of the rule of the royal saint and were connected with his person.²⁴¹

In the course of the fifteenth century, the tradition of viewing St Erik as an ancient law-giver of Sweden deepened. In a polemical paper directed against Archbishop Jöns Bengtsson and King Kristian I from 1466, Karl Knutsson (Bonde) was said to be in the tradition of St Erik as someone who follows the right laws.²⁴² However, it was the reign of Sten Sture the Elder that has been of the greatest significance in this respect. In the contract of Kungssätra from April 1471, that was drawn up between the representatives of King Kristian I on one side and Sten Sture the Elder, Nils Sture, and other Swedish aristocrats

²⁴¹ SDHK, 16,083: 'som the giorthæ i sancti Eriks konungx daghæ'.

²⁴² SDHK, 42,593; printed in BSH, III, no. 82.

on the other side, the document stated that the king was supposed to ‘treat all those who live in Sweden according to the written law, rights, privileges, freedoms, and good old customs of God, St Erik, and Sweden.’²⁴³

In images from the second half of the fifteenth century, St Erik is again depicted holding a book. For example, on the altarpiece of the church of Tumbo in Södermanland, St Olaf and St Erik are both depicted presenting a book to the viewer. The inscriptions in those books — *Härligheternas herre är korsfäst* (The Lord of glory is crucified) and *Lifsens förste är dräpen* (The Lord of life is killed) — are later additions that date from 1526 at the earliest, when the *Umlaute* ‘ä’ and ‘ö’ were first introduced to Sweden with the publication of the New Testament in Swedish.²⁴⁴ Before those inscriptions were added, the leaves of the books were either empty or else carried another inscription, which was erased to make room for the now extant text. Within the picture a staff can still be seen in the right hand of St Olaf that must originally have been the shaft of his axe.

The references to St Erik’s law reached a climax in the early sixteenth century. In 1507, the people from Kalmar, Aspeland, Handbörd, and Möre made a declaration that they would stand at the side of Svante Nilsson, because he adhered to the law of St Erik.²⁴⁵ Svante, in his turn, promised to keep the law of St Erik.²⁴⁶ In a letter from 4 April 1512, the inhabitants of Gästrikland acknowledged the succession of Sten Sture the Younger as *riksföreståndare* and gave voice to their hope that he would ‘treat them all, the rich and the poor, according to St Erik the king’s law and the good old customs.’²⁴⁷

The union King Kristian II also referred to the law of St Erik in 1518, as did the *riksråd* in 1520, and the inhabitants of Dalarna in 1525.²⁴⁸ Gustav Vasa

²⁴³ SDHK, 29,243, printed in BSH, IV, no. 2: ‘halle alle Sweriges inbyggare wiid Gudz, sancte Erick oc Swerigis bescripne lag, rāth, privilegier, friheter oc goda gambla sidwānia.’

²⁴⁴ For this information and the dating, I thank Ingela Hedström-Bolton.

²⁴⁵ SDHK, 35,797, printed in BSH, v, no. 131: ‘thy han halder oss wid Sancte Erick konwgs lag och gambla goda sedwānior.’

²⁴⁶ SDHK, 36,161; printed in: BSH, v, no. 203: ‘Jach vil gerna halle eder alle, riche och fatigue, vnge och gamble, vid Sancte Erick konungs lag och gode gamble sidwenier, som fader och foreldre for mik giort haffue.’

²⁴⁷ SDHK, 37,188, printed in: BSH, v, no. 396: ‘ath edert herrdōme wele halle os alle ryke ok fatigue, weth Sancte Erics konungs lag ok gode gamble sedwengia.’

²⁴⁸ **King Kristian II:** *Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar*, ed. by Rydberg, III: 1409–1520 no. 587b: ‘sancta Erick konges oc Sueriges lag oc reth’ (the law and rights of the King St Erik and Sweden); *riksråd*: SDHK, 38,413; printed in

referred to it in 1523 and 1525 but also — and strikingly, after the Reformation — in 1528.²⁴⁹ The same is true for the Catholic refugee archbishop of Uppsala, Gustav Trolle, and Bishop Magnus of Strängnäs in 1531.²⁵⁰ The list could be extended and it also shows that — together with the other tales associated with the saint — Erik's reputation as the mythical founder of Swedish law reached the climax of its popularity in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. From the beginning of the sixteenth century, another image showing St Erik with a book is preserved. It is embroidered on a *corporale* from the church of Hög (Hälsingland) and shows the royal saint wearing armour and leaning with his right hand on his sword while he holds a book in his left hand. The same church was in the possession of a (now-lost) altarpiece on which the Virgin Mary was flanked by St Henrik and St Erik.²⁵¹

Summary

It is hardly a coincidence that at the very beginning of the Kalmar Union, the veneration of St Erik is again prominent in the sources. After the cult of the royal Swedish saint had been neglected during the reign of Albrekt of Mecklenburg, the new monarch, Margareta, employed a different way of ruling. She renamed her grand-nephew Bogislav, after the Swedish patron saint, in order to stress his genealogical continuity with the dynasty of Bjälbo and also tried in other ways (for example, by supporting the monastery of Vadstena) to

Sverges traktater med främmande magter jemte andra dit hörande handlingar, ed. by Rydberg, III: 1409–1520, no. 594: 'sancta Erich konungs screffwen lag' (the written law of King St Erik). In the same charter, King Kristian II is said to be of the 'true blood' of St Erik: 'besynnerligen med anseendes ath hans naade aaff sancte Ericx, wor helige patrones, reetta blod sanneligen er kommen' (particularly with respect to [the fact] that his grace [=Kristian II] really originates from the true blood of St Erik, our holy patron); **Inhabitants of Dalarna**: Liedgren, 'Erik konungs lag', col. 22.

²⁴⁹ *Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur*, ed. by Almquist, I, (1521–24) p. 50: 'Sancte Ere kungx lagh ok ræth priuilegier' (King St Erik's law and good privileges); *Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur*, ed. by Almquist, II, 1525, p. 36: 'wiidt sancte Eriich konungx lagh och goda gambla sidwennior' (with King St Erik's law and the good old customs); *Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur*, ed. by Almquist, V (1528), p. 175: 'och seye at than skal Jntheit hielpa oss emot S: Erics Lagh, som wij tilforenne hade szworit på' (and see that he should not help us against St Erik's law on which we had sworn before).

²⁵⁰ *Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur*, ed. by Almquist, VII (1530–31), pp. 542, 564.

²⁵¹ It is preserved via a sketch from 1763 in a manuscript in the Kungliga Biblioteket (MS KB F.m. 18): Nescher, *Samling af Ritningar*, no. 79.

create a sense of unity among her subjects across the three kingdoms without suppressing their feelings for their individual nations. The event that led to the promotion of St Erik as the *rex perpetuus* of the kingdom of Sweden was, however, of an entirely different character: This was the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson against the union king, Erik of Pomerania, during the years 1434 to 1436. Whereas King Karl Knutsson (Bonde) referred only briefly to St Erik — in many ways comparable to King Magnus Eriksson in the fourteenth century — the real breakthrough, when St Erik became recognized as the most important saint for the Swedish ruler, took place during the early years of the rule of Sten Sture the Elder.

In the years after the Battle of Brunkeberg in 1471, Sten Sture and Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson cooperated in promoting the saint who represented their two institutions, respectively the kingdom of Sweden and the church of Uppsala. This promotion of St Erik found its expression in the episode recounted in the *Sturekrönika*, in which his sword was said to appear in the sky after the Battle of Brunkeberg, as well as in the coinage of Sten Sture. He and the archbishop cooperated in founding an altar for St Erik in the early 1470s and furnishing it with an altarpiece on which depictions of St Erik's last battle against the Dane Magnus Henriksson drew deliberate parallels with the Battle of Brunkeberg and with the antagonism between the 'Swede' Sten Sture and the 'Danish' union kings in general. Another sign of cooperation between the two leading dignitaries of the kingdom are the statutes after the Synod of Arbøge of 1474 in which the feast of the patron saints of the kingdom was officially proclaimed and the feast day of St Erik was given the status of *totum duplex* in all dioceses of the church province of Uppsala. The *Chronica regni Gothorum* of Ericus Olai can also be seen in this context, since in this text Ericus depicted the cooperation between ruler and archbishop as the ideal form of administering a kingdom and illustrated this with reference to the close collaboration between St Erik and St Henrik. In light of such source materials, the rule of Sten Sture the Elder in general, and the 1470s in particular, must be considered as the time of the most intensive promotion of St Erik's cult in the whole of the Middle Ages.

The intensity of cult performance seems to have stagnated at a high level or might even have decreased during the reigns of Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger. Nonetheless, the close connection between the ruler and the royal saint was sustained. This is revealed by the coinage of the two *riksföreståndare* and the appearance of St Erik in the *apprecatio* of many letters directed to the two *riksföreståndare*. However, no works of art or literature are known from this time that promoted the patronship of St Erik, in contrast to the reign of Sten Sture the Elder. Moreover, the replacement of St Erik's name on some

coins of Sten Sture the Younger could be interpreted as a sign of his own efforts to claim the royal title. If an actual king had returned to the Swedish throne, the importance of the *rex perpetuus* would automatically have been diminished. It is therefore interesting that the union King Kristian II, when he tried to conquer Sweden, also tried to make use of the legitimizing potential of the Swedish royal saint by including him in his *intitulatio* and by claiming a genealogical connection to him.

The cult of St Erik in general developed a number of interesting facets during the fifteenth century. During its first period of prosperity in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, it was the church of Uppsala, the royal dynasty of Bjälbo, and a number of aristocratic families who furthered the cult. The rest of the fourteenth century was characterized by a low level of support for the cult of St Erik, even from the Swedish King Albrekt of Mecklenburg and from a number of archbishops of Uppsala, who stopped depicting the saint on their seals for for a number of decades in the middle of the century. However, the lower social strata discovered the political value of the cult during the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson (1434–36), and from that time on St Erik began to represent the kingdom of Sweden on the seal of the realm (*riksklämman*). In the eyes of the farmers and miners who followed Engelbrekt, Erik became a symbol of a just Swedish king who fought against Danish claims to his throne and who did not charge his subjects more taxes than was his due. These three points characterize some key aspects of the political agenda of this group and explain why St Erik remained very popular among the ‘common folk’ of Sweden throughout the century.

While donations towards veneration sites of St Erik made by clerics were comparatively numerous during the fourteenth century, during the fifteenth century it was mainly the leading aristocrats (including the *riksföreståndare*) and — as a new element — a number of burghers who engaged in furthering the saint’s cult sites. Nevertheless, the veneration of St Erik spread from the clerics of the Uppsala bishopric to the whole kingdom. Most prominent in the sources are the members of the Order of St Birgitta, but this may be due to the fact that more sources have been preserved from the monastery of Vadstena alone than from all other ecclesiastical institutions in the Swedish kingdom combined. In addition to the social groups already discussed here, the role of St Erik as a patron saint of knights became popular among the lower nobility. It can thus be stated that — in contrast to the preceding centuries — the cult of St Erik became widely known and practised among all layers of Swedish society during the period of the Kalmar Union.

ST ERIK AMONG THE CANON OF SAINTS

The overall importance of any particular saint can only be evaluated properly by comparing him or her to the broader canon of saints. With few exceptions, the influence of the cult of St Erik has remained confined to the kingdom of Sweden. Early exceptions are the prescribed celebration of his feast day at the royal chapel in Oslo since 1342 and the foundation of an altar for St Olaf and St Erik in the Christchurch of Niðarós in the Norwegian testament of King Magnus Eriksson and Queen Blanka in 1347.¹ These two measures have been considered in the present study to be an attempt to connect the two kingdoms of this Swedish and Norwegian king through the mutual representation of their respective royal saints. No further spread of the cult of St Erik beyond the boundaries of the kingdom of Sweden can be observed before the fifteenth century.

The best documented example from the fifteenth century is certainly the foundation of St Erik's altar in the church of the Carmelite monastery of Gdansk on his feast day in 1438.² In connection with this foundation, we also learn that a guild named after St Erik existed in Gdansk, a town which was situated in the territory of the Teutonic Order and was a member of the Hanseatic League. The importance of the cult of St Erik on the southern shore of the Baltic, however, was most probably very limited. Since a Swedish priest was employed to take care of the altar, it would be plausible to assume that the

¹ SDHK, 4755, 5459.

² SDHK, 22,977, 22,981, 23,261. On the foundation, see Gassowska, 'Der Kult des heiligen Erich im Gdansk des 15. Jahrhunderts'; which outdates Donner, 'St. Erich in Danzig'.

main objects of his pastoral care were Swedish tradesmen coming to Gdansk. The third — and last — altar outside Sweden for which evidence is still extant was founded in the Danish town of Halmstad in Skåne before 1481.³ Skåne had been in union with the kingdom of Sweden between 1332 and 1360 and later, as part of Denmark, was part of the Kalmar Union. Veneration of St Erik in these parts is therefore not particularly surprising.⁴ Some further scraps of information suggest that the cult of St Erik had started to reach the northern regions of the continent at some time in the fifteenth century. In 1492, Erik, together with St Olaf, was depicted in a legend collection printed in Lübeck.⁵

A formerly unknown mention of St Erik in a fifteenth-century *liber legendarum sanctorum* has recently been discovered by Jonathan Grove.⁶ The legends of St Knut Konung, St Knut Lavard, and St Erik were included in this codex, which was written on paper at Elnon, the Benedictine abbey of Saint Amand (Flanders). According to Grove, all three texts arrived in Flanders, probably via the archbishopric of Lund, at some time in the mid-fourteenth century and were copied in the early fifteenth century. In this context it is interesting to note that from 1497, a rarely noted letter from the dean and chapter of the church of St Mary in Antwerp is extant in which they thank Archbishop Jakob Ulfsson of Uppsala for the consignment of a relic of St Erik.⁷ It thus seems that the cult of St Erik was becoming known in those parts in the late fourteenth and -fifteenth centuries and that it became sufficiently popular that relics of the saint were desired and imported from Uppsala.

Compared to other Scandinavian saints, with the notable exception of St Olaf and St Birgitta, the area in which St Erik was venerated towards the end of the Middle Ages was comparatively large and included all the ecclesiastical

³ SDHK, 30,926, 31,575, 34,978.

⁴ On Skåne and St Erik, see the discussion of the church paintings in that region in chap. 7 above. The dating according to the feast day of St Erik was introduced in the Norwegian region of Bohuslän as early as 1405 (SDHK, 16,494) and he appears together with St Olaf on the seal of the Benedictine monastery of Bergen from 1424. The first dating for Skåne appears in a charter issued in Kalmar in 1426 (SDHK, 20,618). For a thorough investigation, however, the charter material of the Danish and Norwegian editions would have to be carefully scrutinized.

⁵ Thordeman, 'Erik den helige i medeltidens bildkonst', p. 178.

⁶ Valenciennes, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 519, fols 114^v–118^r. Jonathan Grove will publish an edition and commentaries on the legends of St Knut konung, St Kut Lavard and St Erik contained therein in the near future. I thank him warmly for having already shared the texts and his research on them with me.

⁷ Peringskiöld, *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*, p. 53.

provinces of the North. The veneration of St Olaf had already spread across the whole North during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as discussed above in Chapter 3. The Birgittine Order founded monasteries not only in the kingdoms of the Kalmar Union but in many European countries. In around 1500, twenty-seven Birgittine monasteries existed in Denmark, Norway, Finland, England, Estonia, and Germany, to name only the earliest foundations.⁸ The difference in the numbers of charters mentioning pilgrimages to Niðarós or Vadstena compared to Uppsala is also remarkable, as is the difference in the numbers of pilgrim's badges.⁹ While these two saints thus enjoyed more intensive veneration than St Erik, it remains the case that all other native saints, even if they were venerated across the borders of their respective bishoprics, were venerated on a much smaller scale than was the Swedish royal saint.¹⁰

Compared to of the cults of other European royal saints, that of St Erik confirms the general trend described by André Vauchez, that in the 'non-mediterranean West' the cults of new saints were mainly established by clerics, monks, and mendicants, while in Southern Europe lay people played a more important role in the propagation of some cults. St Erik, as a 'suffering leader', was representative of a widely venerated type of saint.¹¹ This type of saint was particularly widespread in the northern and eastern peripheries of medieval Christianity, with the saints of the Arpadian dynasty being the most numerous from the late eleventh century onwards, five of them being canonized in 1083 alone.¹² The establishment of indigenous saints usually occurred during the first phases of Christianization and the veneration of royal saints went hand-in-hand with the development of the Christian kingdoms. Examples that fit this pattern are Bohemia and St Wenceslas,¹³ Kiev and the saintly princes, Boris

⁸ Nyberg, 'Birgitten'.

⁹ There are thirteen references in the Swedish material to pilgrims heading to Niðarós, in contrast to just three mentions of people heading to Uppsala. Moreover, while there are no pilgrim badges that can be assigned to Uppsala, we have seven such badges from Niðarós and thirty-one from Vadstena. This material has been analysed by Andersson, *Pilgrimsmärken och vallfart*, pp. 223–28. Those numbers are, of course, not precise estimates of the differing importance of the cults, but they can provide a first impression.

¹⁰ On all Danish and Swedish saints' cults up to the middle of the thirteenth century, see Ellis Nilsson, *Creating Holy People and Places on the Periphery*.

¹¹ Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 128–36, 158–67.

¹² Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, pp. 123–34.

¹³ Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit*, pp. 159–61; Bláhová, 'The Function of the Saints in Early Bohemian Historical Writing'.

and Gleb,¹⁴ and Hungary and the three saintly kings, St Stephen, St Emeric, and St Ladislav.¹⁵

The dimension of a cult is hard to compare at the European level, since population densities varied across the continent. A purely Scandinavian cult like that of St Erik, could never hope to attract as many followers as the cult of St Louis, for example, largely due to the low density of settlement in Scandinavia. Seen in this light, the numbers of pilgrims visiting a site, based on the evidences of charters and pilgrims' badges, are not particularly helpful as a tool of comparison. Another way of estimating the dimension of a cult might be to question to what extent the legend of the particular saint has been re-worked, or how many competing legends existed. The more the material has been re-worked, the more lively the cult can be assumed to have been. In this respect, the legend of St Erik is remarkable. Although the original Latin version of 1344 was translated into Old Swedish and Middle Low German, no changes were made to the content. Moreover, quotations from the legend that appear in the fifteenth-century Birgittine sermons (discussed above in Chapter 7) strictly correspond to the text from 1344.¹⁶ In contrast to this, St Olaf's legend and miracles developed over a period of more than a century before a first version was written down under the supervision of Archbishop Eystein of Niðarós in the second half of the twelfth century. At least two more lives of St Olaf were produced, in addition to the Old Norse sagas (see Chapter 3 above).

The situation for many of the royal saints of central Europe is even more complex. For St Wenceslas, Duke of Bohemia, who was killed in 929 or 935 by his brother Boleslav I, a large number of legends are extant, some in Old Slavonic and some in Latin.¹⁷ His cult spread quickly to the adjacent regions of Saxony and Bavaria, which were ecclesiastically closely connected to Bohemia in the

¹⁴ Poppe, 'Politik und Heiligenverehrung in der Kiewer Rus'; Lenhoff, *The Martyred Princes Boris and Gleb*.

¹⁵ Klaniczay, 'Königliche dynastische Heiligkeit in Ungarn'; Klaniczay, 'From Sacral Kingship to Self-Representation'. For a more recent, but less well-founded argument, see Magyar, *Hungarian Royal Saints*. I have expressed my criticism of Magyar's book in Oertel, 'Review of Magyar, *Hungarian Royal Saints: The Saints of the Arpadian Dynasty*'.

¹⁶ See the sermons on St Erik in the Vadstena manuscripts: UUB, C 302, fols 354^r–365^v, UUB, C 308, fols 243^r–246^v, UUB, C 317, fols 239^r–243^v, UUB, C 331, fols 88^r–94^r, UUB, C 335, fols 319^r–322^r, UUB, C 344, fols 272^v–277^r, UUB, C 349, fols 166^r–169^v, UUB, C 362, fols 230^r–238^r which have, among others, been analysed for the present study.

¹⁷ *Bibliotheca hagiographica Latina antiquae et mediae aetatis*, ed. by Société des Bollandistes, III (1911), *Supplementi*, nos 8821–8844.

tenth century.¹⁸ Like that of St Erik in the fifteenth century, his image appears on the coins of many Bohemian rulers from the early eleventh century up to the thirteenth century, and he is also depicted on their seals from the middle of the twelfth century.¹⁹ St Wenceslas was thus represented as the eternal ruler of the kingdom, while the actual ruler was only the temporary head of the realm.

In similar fashion, three legends were composed about the Hungarian ruler St Stephen, with the *legenda maior* and the *legenda minor* being blended and revised by Bishop Hartvik of Győr into a third legend in the early twelfth century.²⁰ The legend of St Ladislav, meanwhile, was handed down in five versions.²¹ Generally, the *réécriture* of hagiographical writings was common in the Middle Ages, allowing the virtues described in the *vitae* and miracle collections to be adapted to the contemporary ideals of the ecclesiastic authorities.²²

Given these examples, it is remarkable that a similar rewriting and adaptation was never performed on the legend of St Erik. A possible explanation for this could be that those who wanted to refer to St Erik in the later Middle Ages found that there was already a sufficient number of episodes and virtues in the legend that they could exploit for their purposes. The miners of Dalarna, who were the main supporters of the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, joined in the protests because they were affected by the high taxes levied by King Erik of Pomerania. An example of royal modesty which could be used by the protesters against Erik of Pomerania's taxation policy already existed in the legend of St Erik, in the episode in which the holy king refused to accept the money offered to him by his subjects. Similarly, King Karl Knutsson (Bonde) and the *riksföreståndare* of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, who needed the support of the public in their continuous conflict with the Danish union kings, could (and did) refer to the episode of the last battle of St Erik against the Dane, Magnus Henriksson. Finally, when Sten Sture the Elder went to fight the Russian 'infidels' in Finland, he could follow the saintly example of St Erik

¹⁸ Graus, 'Böhmen zwischen Bayern und Sachsen', pp. 21–23.

¹⁹ Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit*, pp. 165–73.

²⁰ Klaniczay, 'Königliche dynastische Heiligkeit in Ungarn', pp. 354–55; Silagi and von Bogay, 'Die Stephanslegenden', p. 26; Madas, 'Die heiligen ungarischen Könige in zisterziensischen Legendarien', pp. 220–22.

²¹ Bak, 'Ladislavuslegende', p. 154.

²² Nuß, *Die hagiographischen Werke Hildeberts von Lavardin, Baudris von Bourgueil und Marbods von Rennes*; Goulet, *Écriture et réécriture hagiographiques*; Goulet and Heinzlmann, *Miracles, vies et réécritures dans l'Occident médiéval*.

and St Henrik, whose legends recounted that they had gone on a similar venture more than 300 years previously.

Thus, the fact that the legend of St Erik has not been altered and that no competing legends were ever produced does not necessarily imply that his cult was less intensely practised than those of other European saints. However, when we consider the liturgical situation, it also becomes clear that St Erik was not one of the most intensely venerated saints, either in Sweden or among his fellow royal saints. Up to the fifteenth century, his only feast day was 18 May, and this was complemented, around 1400, by the day of his *translatio* on 24 January. The celebration of this second feast day, however, was confined to the bishopric of Uppsala.

The only example of a Swedish native saint who had more feast days than St Erik is St Birgitta. In the printed calendar of the diocese of Linköping, three feast days dedicated to her are mentioned: the *translatio Birgitte* on 28 May, the day of her death on 23 July, and the day of her canonization on 8 October. Her *canonisatio* feast was also celebrated with an *octave*.²³ Another European royal saint, St Wenceslas of Bohemia, was also venerated in the Swedish diocese. His main feast day was 28 September, the day on which he was martyred in either 929 or 935. This illustrates the very widespread veneration that a royal saint could experience and it is another piece of evidence that shows the comparatively minor role played by St Erik among the broader canon of saints. In Wenceslas's homeland, Bohemia, the saintly duke's body was moved to the castle of Prague three years after his death on 4 March and on this day his *translatio* was celebrated. Only in the last years of the tenth century is there evidence for an actual celebration of the feast of St Wenceslas in the *Vita Adalberti* by Brun of Querfurt.²⁴ At the same time, his feast was already appearing in calendars outside of Bohemia.²⁵ Later, the *Octava s. Wenceslai* was also celebrated, and in the fourteenth century, the *Recoleccio ossium* was added one day before the feast day of St Wenceslas.²⁶ These two examples of saints who were more widely venerated than St Erik on both a geographical and a social scale may suffice, and there is no doubt that they could be complemented by other saints.

Among the two types of medieval royal saints — the chaste prince and the knightly king — St Erik has to be counted among the latter, although his leg-

²³ Grotefend, *Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, II (1898), pp. 223–25.

²⁴ Brun of Querfurt, *Vita Adalberti altera*, ed. by Karwasiańska, 21.

²⁵ Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit*, p. 164. On St Wenceslas, see further Graus, 'Der Heilige als Schlachtenhelfer'.

²⁶ Graus, 'St. Adalbert und St. Wenzel', p. 218.

end includes the statement that he bathed in painfully cold water in order to counteract his desire for carnal pleasure.²⁷ Other representatives of this sub-type were, for example, Charlemagne, who was canonized in 1165, and most of the early medieval Anglo-Saxon royal saints.²⁸ In particular, many parallels can be found between St Erik and the Hungarian royal saint Ladislas. The legends of both saints were only composed about a hundred years after their deaths; both were said to have initiated a crusade and to have been elected unanimously by all inhabitants of their kingdoms. Very similar qualities were also ascribed to them (humility, truthfulness, a fear of God, largesse towards their subjects, and so on). Their cults also developed along similar lines: both were venerated as *athletae patriae* because they had fought heathen neighbours; both cults were furthered by their royal successors, and both saints advanced to the position of the foremost patron saint of their respective kingdoms in the later Middle Ages.²⁹ Even the motives of the later kings in furthering their cults were similar. According to Gábor Klaniczay, the reason why St Ladislas was depicted as a crusading saint was that Béla III wanted to go on crusade himself:³⁰

Béla III's story reads so much like that of the legendary Ladislas that we find ourselves faced with a dilemma: are we to think of the legend of Ladislas as an omen, and believe that what the legend-writer invented in connection with St Ladislas came fatally true for Béla?³¹

The same thought came to my mind when writing about the composition of the legends of St Erik and St Henrik and the crusade ambitions of the first kings of the Bjälbo dynasty (see Chapter 5 above). St Erik's position relative to the entire canon of European saints cannot be analysed conclusively in the present study: only a few glimpses can be presented. A further exploration of the relations between the various European royal saints and of possible influences between the various cults they inspired must be the object of a later study.

²⁷ 'ipse vt in se incontinentia carnis pullulancia reprimeret frequenter ac eciam hyemali tempore in doleo aque frigid clam balneans frigidis curans animalis eius motus ipse animo forcior reprimebat'. On the two sub-types of royal saints, see Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, pp. 154–94.

²⁸ On the canonization of Charlemagne, see Görich, 'Karl der Große'.

²⁹ Bak, 'Ladislauslegende', pp. 152–53.

³⁰ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, pp. 182–84.

³¹ Klaniczay, *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses*, p. 187.

CONCLUSION

The veneration of royal saints was brought to Scandinavia by Anglo-Saxon missionaries who came in the entourage of Danish and Norwegian kings. The first Scandinavian king to be venerated as a saint was King Olaf Haraldsson of Norway, who was killed at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1031 and whose veneration spread rapidly over the whole North. In Denmark, King Knut IV was canonized in 1101 and was venerated as St Knut Konung. Two more royal saints were also venerated in this kingdom, St Knut Lavard (St Knut Hertig) and St Erik Plovpenning. The Christian missionaries in Sweden achieved their aim of creating ecclesiastical structures somewhat later than in the two other Scandinavian kingdoms. Therefore, the veneration of the Swedish royal saint, St Erik, did not start before the second half of the twelfth century at about the time when the bishopric of Uppsala was elevated to an archbishop's seat. During his lifetime, he was known as Erik Jedvardsson, but very few details about his life and achievements are known. Details about his early veneration are similarly scarce. Because of the very low literacy rates at the time of Erik's martyrdom, the first textual source to give evidence of his cult was written in 1198 — about forty years after his death. In contrast to the conclusions of earlier research, it is my opinion that there is no reliable evidence that the kings of the royal house founded by St Erik ever engaged in the promotion of his cult, nor are there extant sources that would suggest that he was venerated outside the diocese of Uppsala in the early years of his cult, during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

The cathedral of (Gamla) Uppsala, where the relics of St Erik were kept, burned down at some point in the first half of the thirteenth century, and it was decided that the new cathedral should be erected in the nearby town of Östra Aros, where St Erik's legend records that he was killed. Östra Aros was renamed 'Uppsala', the new cathedral adopted St Erik as its co-patron, and his relics were moved there in 1273. In connection with his new function as patron

of Uppsala Cathedral, the necessary liturgical texts (legend, miracle collection, and office) were produced. Among the promoters of the cult were not only the clergy of the cathedral, but also during this period, the new royal dynasty of Bjälbo, as well as a large proportion of the Upplandian aristocracy who engaged in the veneration of the royal saint. In other words, the cult of St Erik became fashionable in the region of Uppland in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

The Dominican Order had founded convents in Sigtuna (Uppland) in 1237 and in Åbo (Turku, modern Finland) in 1249. A strong Dominican influence on the legends of St Erik and St Henrik has already been emphasized by earlier research. In the present study, the attempt is made to view the legends of St Erik and St Henrik together. In addition to their common historical background, they are linked by an episode about a crusade to Finland that the two protagonists are said to have undertaken together. It has recently been shown that both legends are so similar that they even have identical wording in some places. As an explanation for these remarkable similarities, I suggest that they were both composed at Dominican convents, with St Erik's legend recorded at the convent of Sigtuna and St Henrik's legend written down at the convent of Åbo/Turku. It is known that a certain Brother Johan was the prior of the convent of Sigtuna before 1286 and that thereafter he was bishop of Åbo/Turku. I therefore assume that he would have been the 'project leader' in the composition of both saints' legends. During this first phase of cult-intensification, the veneration of St Erik moved beyond Uppland for the first time. Indeed, some pieces of evidence suggest that by the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century he had started to be known and venerated in almost all the dioceses of medieval Sweden, albeit at a low level.

The aristocratic veneration of St Erik declined considerably during the reigns of Magnus Eriksson and Albrekt of Mecklenburg, and even the archbishops of Uppsala stopped sporting St Erik on their seals for more than thirty years. King Magnus Eriksson, however, appears to have esteemed the Swedish royal saint very highly. As Magnus was also the king of Norway, he attempted to make St Erik the patron saint of Sweden just as St Olaf was the patron saint of Norway. To achieve this, he introduced an oath, sworn on the relics of St Erik, which had to be made by any newly elected Swedish king. In addition he founded altars for the two royal saints in Sweden and in Norway, and he probably attempted an *imitatio Erici* in his crusade to Russia in the years 1348 to 1351. However, during the disturbances and power shifts that occurred in the later years of his reign, and during the rule of Albrekt of Mecklenburg, royal efforts to promote the cult of St Erik were no longer pursued.

Only when the centre of power moved — albeit briefly — back to a strong kingship after the foundation of the Kalmar Union in 1397 do pieces of evidence concerning St Erik's veneration again appear. Most significant in this context is the introduction of a new feast day, the *translatio sancti Erixi*, in the diocese of Uppsala around 1400. This situation did not last long, however, and from the middle of the first decade of the fifteenth century up to the middle of the third decade, there are only a few extant pieces of evidence pointing to the continued veneration of St Erik. However, after the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, the Swedish royal saint almost overnight gained the status of *rex perpetuus* of the kingdom of Sweden. Following the resignation of Erik of Pomerania and in the absence of an actual king, he filled the place of the monarch while the kingdom was being led by the *riksföreståndare* and the *riksråd*. Consequently, it was St Erik who was depicted on the seal of the Swedish realm, the *riksklämman*. Although St Erik did not lose his standing as *rex perpetuus* during the rule of Kristofer of Bavaria, he certainly became less politically important during the reign of this king. Nevertheless, Erik's status as the patron of the realm must have consolidated during this period, and his general popularity seems to have remained high since a large number of depictions of St Erik are preserved from this time. Many of these images show St Erik in armour, thereby emphasizing his position as a (knightly) patron of the realm.

When Karl Knutsson (Bonde) came to power in 1449, he had only a weak hereditary claim to the throne since he was not of royal stock. He tried to counterbalance this by attempting to connect himself genealogically to St Erik through a false genealogy, which was included in the new introduction to the *Erikskrönika*. In addition, in the chronicle that Karl Knutsson commissioned as a record of his reign, St Erik is mentioned in several places as the protector of the church of Uppsala as well as an object of devotion for Karl Knutsson and his warriors.

The climax of St Erik's importance in Swedish politics was reached during the rules of the *riksföreståndare* Sten Sture the Elder, Svante Nilsson, and Sten Sture the Younger. Starting with the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, the 'common man' became a powerful factor in Swedish politics. As a rule, they supported whichever political party supported the idea of a Swedish government independent from the union kings. Although the composition of this 'independence party' was not stable, it was obviously always the *riksföreståndare* who had the strongest interest in upholding the independent status of Sweden. Therefore, the 'common men' and the *riksföreståndare* together formed a natural alliance and it was one of the most important pillars of power for the latter that he could mobilize an army of several thousand miners and farmers at short

notice. To keep the sympathies of these people on his side, Sten Sture the Elder started a multimedia campaign in the early 1470s, in which St Erik was presented as the symbol of the 'Swedish' fight against the 'Danes'.

On the coins of these three *riksföreståndare*, St Erik, in his role as *rex perpetuus*, took the place of the actual king, as he had done on the *riksklämman*. Furthermore, on an altarpiece standing on a shrine of St Erik in the cathedral of Uppsala, which was founded in 1472 and furnished by Sten Sture the Elder, one of the pictures shows the last battle of St Erik against Magnus Henriksson. The latter was the Danish pretender to the Swedish throne who — according to the legend — killed St Erik. Two of the knights of St Erik's retinue on that picture can be identified by their coats of arms as Sten Sture the Elder and King Karl Knusson (Bonde). Through the picture, the 'Swedish-Danish' fighting of the late fifteenth century was directly paralleled with St Erik's last battle and thus sanctioned through that saintly example. Similar allusions can be seen in a group of figures showing St George's fight against the dragon in Stockholm's *Storkyrka*. Both saints, St Erik and St George, were also used in the *Sturekrönika* to frame the account on the Battle of Brunkeberg in 1471. The 'Swedish' fighters marched on the battlefield singing the song of St George, while after the victorious battle the burning sword of St Erik appeared in the sky. The spectacular sign of the burning sword was understood to show the benevolence of the saint towards the 'Swedish' cause. Although such media campaigns are not known to have been conducted by Svante Nilsson and Sten Sture the Younger, the status of St Erik as *rex perpetuus* of Sweden remained undisputed during their rules, as evidenced by their coins and their frequent invocations of St Erik in the *apprecatio* of a high percentage of letters that were directed to the *riksföreståndare* and handed down in the *Sturearkiv*. The fact that Sten Sture the Younger had his own name on some of his coins, however, suggests that this particular *riksföreståndare* was keen to go one step further and claim the Swedish royal title for himself.

The emphasis of the present study is on how and by whom the cult of St Erik was furthered and promoted. In this respect, it is important to distinguish between the two communities that St Erik came to represent in the course of the Middle Ages: namely, the church of Uppsala and the kingdom of Sweden. The cult started off very slowly when St Erik became the saint of a bishopric, and was promoted only by the church of Uppsala. During this time, Erik's cult was just one among many similar diocesan cults in Sweden. The point at which the cult of St Erik started to become more than that was reached when Birger Jarl and his sons decided to use their cognate relationship with the dynasty of St Erik to strengthen their claim of rulership and when — at the same time —

Erik became patron saint of the cathedral of Uppsala. Following these royal and archiepiscopal examples, the aristocrats and mendicants of Uppland started to engage in the veneration of the royal saint as well. Those groups remained the principal supporters of the cult until the 1430s. By then, St Erik had become a symbol for a perceived golden age, the 'good old days' when justice ruled and no hard taxes were levied. Those 'good old times of the holy King Erik' represented the ideal condition of the kingdom in the minds of the insurgent miners and farmers who took part in the uprising of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson. Although the social scope of the supporters of St Erik's cult widened during this period, the object of the saint's patronage remained the same: the kingdom of Sweden. The difference was that, from the 1430s onwards, the 'common men' started to engage in high politics and started to support the patron saint of the realm, even though they continued to prefer invoking other saints for everyday matters. It may be for this reason that so few churches (and no monastery) were placed under the patronage of St Erik.

At the same time, the way in which St Erik was depicted also began to change. Up to the fifteenth century, church art depicting St Erik typically consisted of single pictures or statues of the saint showing him with his associated attributes. It was only after this time that a series of several pictures were produced in Uppsala depicting his legend, while at a small number of other churches, episodes from his legend were depicted in one or two pictures. In the same period, Erik was also introduced into Swedish historiography. While the *Erikskrönika* of the fourteenth century does not mention him at all, he is referred to several times in the *Karlskrönika*, which was completed in 1452. Together with St Henrik, he played a key role in Ericus Olai's *Chronica regni Gothorum*. His flaming sword, which gave his saintly approbation to the victory of Sten Sture at the Battle of Brunkeberg, in the account of the *Sturekrönika*, has already been mentioned, as was the fact that his name replaced that of the king on the coins of the *riksföreståndare* of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

One of the ideas with which I started my research project was to trace the diffusion of the cult of St Erik by connecting the charters that used his feast day in their dating formulae with their place of issue. However, once we begin to draw on the evidence of the liturgical sources, it seems clear that the introduction of such dating formulae usually coincided with the introduction of St Erik's feast day into the calendars of the various Swedish dioceses. If we compare the spread of these charters with the spread of (two- and three-dimensional) depictions of the saint, a difference can be observed. While the introduction of the use of Erik's feast day for dating purposes occurred in most Swedish dioceses

during the fourteenth century, a considerable number of depictions of St Erik only date from much later on. Moreover, such images remained confined to Uppland, the core region of his veneration, even for some decades after the turn of the century.

Such findings suggest that two different forms of veneration are connected to these two source types. The introduction of a saint's day into the calendar of a diocese was a decision made by the bishop or a synod of this diocese. It was, therefore, an action taken from 'above' and did not necessarily reflect the actual veneration of a saint. Rather, it reflected the administrative furthering of a cult. Depictions, on the other hand, were issued (and paid for) by local people for their churches. If they went to the effort of having a depiction of a saint made, it was most likely because they felt a special connection with this saint, and it is a fairly safe assumption that the creation of such depictions meant that the saint was venerated at all levels of society in the region where the particular image was commissioned. Depictions — like donations — thus appear to reflect the personal veneration of a saint. This distinction has not yet been made by hagiographical researchers but I believe it could also bear fruit in other contexts, as a way of investigating whether a cult was furthered officially or personally.

It is clear from the developments discussed above that the rise of the cult of St Erik was not a linear progression with mild fluctuations in degrees of ascent, as earlier research has indicated. Rather, it appears to have been a development that experienced stagnations and even relapses, as well as rapid increase. The rise of the regional saint of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to the role of patron of the Swedish realm was by no means predestined — much like the emergence of the Swedish kingdom. The path that led St Erik to becoming one of the most intensely venerated saints of medieval Sweden, however, was surely eased by external factors. One such factor was the tradition of many European kingdoms — whether in Scandinavia, in Central Europe, or further afield — to make their royal saints the patrons of their realms. Internal factors, such as the fact that the highest ecclesiastical and lay authorities had their centres in the core region of St Erik's veneration, along with the ongoing Dominican support of the cult, certainly also had an impact.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Verehrung heiliger Könige erreichte Skandinavien durch die Vermittlung angelsächsischer Missionare, die sich im Gefolge derjenigen dänischen und norwegischen Könige befanden, die sich anschickten, ihre Heimat zu missionieren. Der erste skandinavische König, der als Heiliger verehrt wurde, war König Olaf Haraldsson von Norwegen, der in der Schlacht von Stiklestad im Jahr 1031 getötet wurde und dessen Kult sich sehr schnell über den gesamten Norden verbreitete. In Dänemark wurde König Knut IV. im Jahr 1101 kanonisiert und fortan als St Knut konung verehrt. Eine Besonderheit Dänemarks im skandinavischen (wenn auch nicht im europäischen) Kontext ist die Tatsache, dass im Laufe des Mittelalters noch zwei weitere Herrscher als Heilige verehrt werden sollten: St Knut Lavard (St Knut hertig) und St Erik Plovpenning. Die christlichen Missionare in Schweden erreichten ihr Ziel, dem Land kirchliche Strukturen zu geben, erst einige Zeit später als jene in den beiden anderen skandinavischen Königreichen. Aus diesem Grund begann auch die Verehrung des schwedischen Königsheiligen, Eriks des Heiligen, etwas später, nämlich in der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts zu der Zeit in das Bistum von Uppsala zum Erzbistum erhoben wurde. Über Erik Jedvardssons Leben und Taten sind sehr wenige Einzelheiten bekannt und bezüglich seines frühen Kultes ist die Überlieferungssituation ähnlich lückenhaft. Die erste Quelle, die auf seine Verehrung als Heiligem hindeutet, wurde erst im Jahr 1198 verfasst, c. 40 Jahre nach seinem Tod. Im Gegensatz zu weiten Teilen der bisherigen Forschung vertrete ich die Meinung, dass die erhaltenen Quellen weder den Schluss zulassen, dass Eriks direkte Nachkommen seine Verehrung förderten, noch, dass die Quellen einen Hinweis darauf geben, dass er in dieser frühen Phase außerhalb des Bistums Uppsala verehrt wurde.

Der Dom in (Gamla) Uppsala, in dem die Reliquien des heiligen Erik aufbewahrt wurden, wurde in der ersten Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts durch Feuer zerstört. Nach einiger Überlegung wurde beschlossen, den neuen Dom nicht

an der Stelle des alten zu errichten, sondern im nahe gelegenen Ort Östra Aros. Dort wurde seiner Legende zufolge Erik der Heilige getötet. Der Ort wurde zu „Uppsala“ umbenannt, der neue Dom erhielt St Erik als einen seiner Patrone und Eriks Reliquien wurden 1273 dorthin überführt. Außerdem wurden die im Zusammenhang mit seiner neuen Funktion als Schutzheiligem des Doms notwendigen liturgischen Texte (Legende, Wundersammlung, Offizium) hergestellt. Zu den Förderern des Kultes gehörten nicht nur die Geistlichkeit der Kirche von Uppsala, sondern auch die Vertreter der neuen königlichen Dynastie — des Hauses Bjälbo — sowie große Teile des uppländischen Adels. Mit anderen Worten: Der Kult des heiligen Erik wurde zu einer Modeerscheinung im Uppland des späten 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhunderts.

Die Dominikaner hatten einen ihrer ersten schwedischen Konvente 1237 im uppländischen Sigtuna gegründet. Ihm folgten eine Reihe weiterer, u.a. 1249 in Åbo, dem heutigen Turku (Finnland). Ein starker dominikanischer Einfluss auf die Legenden der Heiligen Erik und Henrik wurde bereits von der älteren Forschung konstatiert. In der vorliegenden Arbeit wurde der Versuch unternommen, die Legenden der beiden Heiligen zusammen zu betrachten. Neben ihrem gemeinsamen historischen Hintergrund werden sie vor allem durch eine Episode über einen von den beiden Protagonisten angeblich gemeinsam durchgeführten Kreuzzug nach Finnland verbunden. Erst kürzlich wurde gezeigt, dass die Ähnlichkeit der beiden Legenden soweit geht, dass sie stellenweise wörtlich übereinstimmen. Um diese erstaunliche Ähnlichkeit zu erklären, wird in der vorliegenden Arbeit vorgeschlagen, als Entstehungsort beider Legenden einen dominikanischen Konvent anzunehmen: für die Legende des heiligen Erik den Konvent von Sigtuna und für die des heiligen Henrik den von Åbo. Es ist bekannt, dass ein gewisser Bruder Johannes vor 1286 der Prior des Konventes von Sigtuna war. Danach war er Bischof von Åbo. Ich nehme deshalb an, dass er bei der Schaffung beider Legenden der „Projektleiter“ war, der die Herstellung der Texte über die beiden Heiligen koordinierte. Während dieser ersten Phase der Intensivierung der Verehrung des heiligen Erik, überschritt der Kult erstmals die Grenzen Upplands. Für fast alle schwedischen Diözesen (außer Växjö) existieren bereits aus dieser frühen Zeit Belege dafür, dass Erik der Heilige in den jeweiligen Heiligenkalender aufgenommen, der Kult also zumindest von den geistlichen Eliten unterstützt wurde.

Der Anteil des Adels an dieser Verehrung ließ im Laufe der Regierungszeiten der Könige Magnus Eriksson und Albrecht von Mecklenburg beträchtlich nach. Selbst die Erzbischöfe von Uppsala führten den Heiligen für über 30 Jahre nicht mehr in ihren Siegeln. König Magnus Eriksson selbst scheint den heiligen Erik allerdings in hohen Ehren gehalten zu haben. Magnus war

gleichzeitig König von Norwegen, und er versuchte, den heiligen Erik als den Schutzheiligen Schwedens aufzubauen und darin ein schwedisches Äquivalent zu Olaf dem Heiligen von Norwegen zu schaffen. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, führte er einen Krönungseid auf die Reliquien Eriks ein und stiftete sowohl in Schweden als auch in Norwegen Altäre, die den beiden Königsheiligen zusammen geweiht waren. Wahrscheinlich versuchte er sogar, den heiligen Erik zu imitieren als er 1348–51 einen Kreuzzug nach Russland unternahm. Während der Unruhen und Machtverschiebung in den späten Jahren seiner Herrschaft und während der Regierung Albrechts von Mecklenburg wurden diese Versuche der Förderung des Erikskultes durch die schwedische Krone allerdings nicht erkennbar fortgeführt.

Erst als ein Großteil der Macht — für eine Weile — durch die Gründung der Kalmarer Union 1397 zu einer starken Zentralgewalt zurückkehrte, können wieder Hinweise auf eine verstärkte Verehrung Eriks des Heiligen gefunden werden. Am wichtigsten ist in diesem Zusammenhang sicherlich die Einführung eines neuen Eriksfestes, der *translatio sancti Eriki*, im Bistum Uppsala um 1400. Dieses neue Aufleben des Erikskultes war allerdings scheinbar nicht von langer Dauer, denn von der Mitte des ersten bis ins frühe dritte Jahrzehnt des 15. Jahrhunderts gibt es nur wenige Hinweise auf eine fortgesetzte Verehrung des Heiligen. Im Zusammenhang mit dem Aufruhr Engelbrekt Engelbrektssons erfuhr der schwedische Königsheilige allerdings quasi über Nacht die Aufwertung seines Status' zum *rex perpetuus* des schwedischen Königreiches. Dies wurde möglich, da er den nach der Abdankung Eriks von Pommern frei gewordenen Platz des Königs symbolisch ausfüllen musste. Als solcher wurde er auf dem neuen Siegel des Königreiches, der *riksklämman*, dargestellt. Obwohl Erik der Heilige die Stellung des *rex perpetuus* während der Regierungszeit Christophs von Bayern nicht einbüßte, war sie doch — in Anbetracht eines regierenden Königs — von weniger großer Bedeutung als in der kurzen königslosen Zeit zuvor. Seine Stellung als Schutzheiliger des Königreiches konsolidierte sich nichtsdestotrotz und seine Popularität scheint auf einem hohen Niveau verblieben zu sein. Dies lässt sich aus der hohen Anzahl von zu dieser Zeit hergestellten Abbildungen des Heiligen schließen. Viele von ihnen zeigen Erik in Rüstung und betonen damit seine Eigenschaft als (ritterlicher) Beschützer des Reiches. Als Karl Knutsson (Bonde) im Jahr 1449 den schwedischen Thron bestieg, konnte er nur einen schwachen Anspruch auf die Krone geltend machen, da er nicht von königlichem Geblüt war. Um diesen Makel auszugleichen, versucht er, sich als blutsverwandt mit Erik dem Heiligen darzustellen. Dazu ließ er eine neue Einleitung zur *Erikskrönika* schreiben, in der diese (erfundene) Verwandtschaft genealogisch heregeleitet wurde. Auch in der

Chronik, die Karl Knutsson über seine eigene Regierungszeit schreiben ließ, taucht Erik an mehreren Stellen sowohl als Beschützer der Kirche von Uppsala als auch als Gegenstand der Verehrung Karl Knutssons und seiner Krieger auf.

Der Höhepunkt der Bedeutung St Eriks in der schwedischen Politik wurde unter den Reichsverwesern (*riksföreståndare*) Sten Sture dem Älteren, Svante Nilsson und Sten Sture dem Jüngeren erreicht. Seit dem Aufstand Engelbrekt Engelbrektssons waren der gemeine Mann“ ein wichtiger Machtfaktor in der politischen Landschaft Schwedens geworden. Die Bergleute und Bauern, die diesen Aufstand zum größten Teil getragen hatten, unterstützten regelmäßig diejenige politische Fraktion, die eine von den Unionskönigen möglichst unabhängige schwedische Regierung zum Ziel hatte. Obwohl die Zusammensetzung dieser Fraktion nicht stabil war, war es naturgemäß immer der *riksföreståndare*, der das stärkste Interesse an einem unabhängigen Status Schwedens hatte. Die „gemeinen Leute“ und der jeweilige *riksföreståndare* bildeten daher eine logische Allianz und die Tatsache, dass beide zusammen in kurzer Zeit ein Heer aus mehreren tausend Bergleuten und Bauern mobilisieren konnten, war eine der wichtigsten Machtstützen der Reichsverweser. Um sich der Sympathien dieser potentiellen Kämpfer zu versichern, begann Sten Sture der Ältere in den frühen 1470ern einen Medienfeldzug, der den heiligen Erik als Symbol des „schwedischen“ Kampfes gegen die „Dänen“ inszenierte.

Auf den Münzen Sten Stures des Älteren (und der *riksföreståndare*, die ihm folgten) übernahm Erik der Heilige als *rex perpetuus* den Platz des (nicht vorhandenen) regierenden Königs wie er es bereits auf der *rikslänna* getan hatte. Außerdem enthielt der Bilderzyklus am 1472 gestifteten Eriksschrein im Dom von Uppsala ein Bild, auf dem das letzte Gefecht des Heiligen gegen Magnus Henriksson dargestellt wurde. Magnus war der dänische Thronprätendent, der, der Legende zufolge, Erik den Heiligen tötete. Zwei der Ritter des Gefolges Eriks des Heiligen auf diesem Bild können über ihre Wappen als Sten Sture der Ältere und Karl Knutsson (Bonde) identifiziert werden. Durch dieses Bild wurde der „schwedisch“-„dänische“ Kampf des späten 15. Jahrhunderts mit dem letzten Gefecht des heiligen Erik parallelisiert und damit durch das heilige Vorbild legitimiert. Mit ähnlichen Mitteln verband Sten Sture der Ältere seine Person mit der des heiligen Georg in einer Figurengruppe in der Stockholmer *Storkyrka*, die den Kampf Georgs mit dem Drachen darstellt und deren Herstellung von Sten Sture dem Älteren finanziert wurde. Die selben beiden Heiligen bilden den Rahmen der Erzählung über die Schlacht von Brunkeberg 1471 in der *Sturekrönika*. Während die „schwedischen“ Kämpfer auf dem Weg zum Schlachtfeld das Lied des heiligen Georgs singen, ist es das Schwert Eriks des Heiligen, dass ihnen nach der siegreichen Schlacht am Himmel

erscheint. Das spektakuläre Zeichen des brennenden Schwertes sollte einmal mehr das Wohlwollen, dass der Schutzheilige des Königreiches der „schwedischen Sache“ entgegenbrachte, verdeutlichen. Obwohl die Durchführung solcher Kampagnen unter den folgenden Regenten, Svante Nilsson und Sten Sture dem Jüngeren, nicht bekannt ist, blieb die Stellung Eriks des Heiligen als Schwedens *rex perpetuus* auch unter ihrer Herrschaft unangefochten. Dies wird durch ihre Münzen, die den Namen des heiligen Königs tragen, ebenso verdeutlicht wie seine häufige Anrufung in der *apprecatio* von Briefen, die an einen der Reichsverweser gerichtet waren und die im *Sturearkiv* überliefert sind. Die Tatsache, dass Sten Sture der Jüngere auf einigen seiner Münzen den Namen Eriks durch seinen eigenen ersetzte, muss wohl im Zusammenhang mit dem Streben dieses *riksföreståndare* nach der schwedischen Krone gesehen werden.

Der Schwerpunkt der vorliegenden Untersuchung liegt auf der Frage, wie und durch wen der Kult Eriks des Heiligen gefördert und verbreitet wurde. In dieser Hinsicht ist es wichtig, zwischen den beiden Institutionen zu unterscheiden, deren Repräsentant der Heilige im Laufe des Mittelalters wurde: der Kirche von Uppsala und dem schwedischen Königreich. Die frühe Entwicklung des Kultes verlief sehr langsam und der heilige Erik war der Heilige „seines“ Bistums Uppsala. Sein Kult wurde dem entsprechend ausschließlich von der Kirche dieses Bistums gefördert. In dieser Phase war er einer der zahlreichen Diözesanheiligen Schwedens. Der Punkt, an dem der Kult Eriks des Heiligen mehr als der eines reinen Regionalheiligen wurde, war erreicht, als Birger Jarl und seine Söhne sich entschieden, ihre kognatische Verwandtschaft mit der Dynastie des Heiligen dazu zu nutzen, ihren Anspruch auf die schwedische Krone zu stärken. Gleichzeitig wurde seine Bedeutung dadurch erhöht, dass er einer der beiden Schutzheiligen des neuen Doms von Uppsala wurde. Dem königlichen und erzbischöflichen Beispiel folgend, begannen auch die Adligen und Mendikanten Upplands den Heiligen verstärkt zu verehren. Diese Gruppen blieben, den erhaltenen Quellen zufolge, bis in die 1430er Jahre hinein die wichtigsten Träger des Erikskultes. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt hatte sich der Heilige zu einem Symbol für die guten alten Zeiten entwickelt, in denen Gerechtigkeit herrschte und keine hohen Steuern erhoben wurden. Diese „guten alten Zeiten des heiligen Königs Erik“ repräsentierten den Idealzustand des Königreiches nach Meinung der Bergleute und Bauern, die am Aufstand Engelbrekt Engelbrektssons teilnahmen. Obwohl sich die soziale Trägerschaft des Erikskultes damit erweiterte, blieb das Objekt der Patronage des Heiligen das gleiche: das Königreich Schweden. Der Unterschied war, dass seit den 1430er Jahren die „gemeinen Leute“ begannen, eine aktive Rolle in der schwedischen Politik zu spielen und deshalb einen Grund hatten, den heiligen Erik unter diesem Aspekt zu verehren.

Für ihre alltäglichen Bedürfnisse riefen sie weiterhin andere Heilige an. Dies mag der Grund dafür sein, dass so wenige schwedische Kirchen (und kein einziges Kloster) ein Erikspatrozinium erhielten.

Gleichzeitig mit der erhöhten Bedeutung Eriks des Heiligen änderte sich auch die Art und Weise seiner Darstellung. In der kirchlichen Kunst des schwedischen Mittelalters bis hinein ins 15. Jahrhundert wurde St Erik ausschließlich auf einzelnen Bildern oder durch einzelne Statuen dargestellt, die den Heiligen ohne Rüstung aber mit seinen Attributen zeigten. Erst nachdem er die Stellung des *rex perpetuus* Schwedens eingenommen hatte, wurden in Uppsala mehrere Bildzyklen hergestellt, die Episoden aus seiner Legende darstellten. Auch in einigen Kirchen außerhalb Uppsalas begegnen nun kurze Bildserien mit dem Heiligen, die einzelne der in seiner Legende überlieferten Taten beschreiben. Er wurde nun ebenfalls häufiger in der schwedischen Historiographie erwähnt. Während er in der *Erikskrönika* des 14. Jahrhunderts überhaupt nicht vorkommt, wird er mehrere Male in der *Karlskrönika* erwähnt, die 1452 fertig gestellt wurde. Die heiligen Erik und Henrik nehmen auch prominente Rollen in der in den frühen 1470er Jahren verfassten *Chronica regni Gothorum* des Ericus Olai ein. Sein flammendes Schwert, durch das dem Sieg Sten Stures in der Schlacht bei Brunkeberg durch die *Sturekrönika* St Eriks heiliger Beifall zugesichert wurde, ist bereits erwähnt worden ebenso wie die Tatsache, dass der Name des Heiligen den des Münzherren auf den Münzen der Reichsverweser des späten 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts ersetzte.

Eine der Ideen, die am Anfang meines Dissertationsprojektes standen, war es, die Ausbreitung des Erikskultes über die Benutzung seines Heiligtages zur Urkundendatierung unter Einbeziehung des Ausstellungsortes, nachzuvollziehen. Zusammen mit dem Zeugnis der frühen liturgischen Quellen kann nun festgestellt werden, dass die Einführung der Datierung nach dem Erikstag in den meisten Fällen in etwa chronologisch mit seiner Aufnahme in den Heiligenkalender eines Bistums zusammenfällt. Vergleicht man die Verbreitung der Eriks-Datierungen mit jener der Abbildungen des Heiligen, kann ein deutlicher zeitlicher Unterschied festgestellt werden. Während die Einführung Eriks als Tagesheiligem in den meisten Diözesen spätestens im Laufe des 14. Jahrhunderts durchgeführt wird, kann eine nennenswerte Anzahl von Abbildungen des Heiligen erst viel später ausgemacht werden. Diese Abbildungen sind zusätzlich sehr lange auf Uppland, der Kernregion seiner Verehrung, beschränkt.

Es scheint daher, dass sich über diese beiden Quellentypen zwei verschiedene Formen der Verehrung zeigen. Die Einführung eines Heiligtages in den Kalender einer Diözese war eine Entscheidung, die von einem Bischof

oder einer Diözesansynode getroffen wurde; sie lag also bei den geistlichen Eliten des jeweiligen Bistums und spiegelt daher nicht notwendigerweise eine Verehrung auch durch die restliche Gesellschaft wider. Vielmehr zeigt sich darin eine „administrative“ Förderung eines Kultes. Heiligenbilder, auf der anderen Seite, wurden von Ortsansässigen für ihre lokale Kirche in Auftrag gegeben. Wenn diese Menschen die Kosten der Herstellung eines Heiligenbildes auf sich nahmen, kann mit größerer Wahrscheinlichkeit davon ausgegangen werden, dass sie eine enge Verbindung zu dem entsprechenden Heiligen hatten. Die Anfertigung von Abbildungen eines Heiligen kann daher als Zeichen dafür gedeutet werden, dass die Verehrung dieses/dieser Heiligen sozusagen die „gesellschaftliche Mitte“ erreicht hatte. Heiligenbilder spiegeln daher — ebenso wie Altarstiftungen — die persönliche Ebene der Verehrung eines Heiligen wider. Dieser Unterschied ist meines Wissen in der Forschung bisher nicht gemacht worden, mir scheint jedoch, dass es auch in anderen Zusammenhängen sinnvoll sein kann, zwischen Förderung eines Kultes „von Amts wegen“ und persönlicher Verehrung zu unterscheiden.

Aus dem Gesagten ergibt sich, dass die „Laufbahn“ Eriks als Heiligem nicht als lineare Entwicklung mit unterschiedlicher Steigung dargestellt werden sollte, wie es von der älteren Forschung getan wurde. Sie erscheint vielmehr als eine Entwicklung, die sowohl Phasen der Stagnation und selbst der Rückläufigkeit als auch sehr schnelle Vergrößerungen seiner Popularität beinhaltet. Der Aufstieg des Regionalheiligen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts zum Schutzheiligen des Reiches sollte keinesfalls als vorbestimmt aufgefasst werden (das gleiche gilt für die Entstehung des schwedischen Königreiches). Der Aufstieg war steinig und — wie in den verschiedenen Kapiteln der vorliegenden Arbeit gezeigt — nicht frei von Rückschlägen. Der letztendliche Erfolg des Kultes wurde sicherlich von vielen inner- und außerschwedischen Faktoren erleichtert. Dazu dürfte die sich im Laufe des Mittelalters in vielen europäischen Königreichen herausbildende Tradition zählen, den (oder einen der) jeweiligen Königsheiligen zum Reichspatron zu machen. Innerhalb Schwedens war es sicherlich von Vorteil, dass sowohl die höchste kirchliche als auch die höchste weltliche Macht ihr geographisches Zentrum in der Kernregion der Eriksverehrung hatte und dass der Kult in der Phase seines ersten Aufschwungs im späten 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhundert auch über die Kommunikationskanäle der Bettelorden (besonders der Dominikaner) verbreitet und von ihnen gefördert wurde.

THE LEGEND OF ST ERIK

Gloriosi martiris christi ac illustrissimi condam regis sweuorum beati erici ortum vitam et felicem consumacionem presentibus succinctus sermo percurrat Extitit enim tam regali prosapia quam nobilium swecie procerum oriundus / Hic regno vacante propter innatam sibi clemenciam et vite bonitatem conspicuam dilectus a principibus terre et omni populo in regem vnanimiter eligitur ad in regni solio apud vpsaliam honorifice sublimatur In regali igitur fastigio constitutus cultor trinitatis omne tempus non tam collate potestatis quam assumpte sollicitudinis tribus distinxit ordinibus ornans et implens dies suos vsque ad consumacionem vite per illustre matirium Imitatus namque sanctorum veteris testamenti regum exempla · primo ad edificacionem ecclesiarum et divini cultus reparacionem ac ampliacionem deinde ad populi regimen et legume iusticie promulgacionem · Postremo ad hostium fidei et regni expugnacionem se totum conuertens · menum misit ad forcias Nam vpsalensem ecclesiam ab antiquis regibus suis scilicet progenitoribus fundatam et aliquantulum adificatam primo et pre ceteris aggrediens ac ministros divini cultus inibi ponens opera pregrandi · et laborioso sollicite studuit consummare deinde regnum suum circuiens ad populum visitans vniuersum via regia incedens nec ad dexteram declinans fauore vel precio nec ad sinistram deflectens timore vel odio · tramite recto qui ducit ad patriam inflexibiliter gradiebatur Sicque pacem inter discordes faciens · oppressos a potencioribus liberans recte ambulantes in via dej dirigens · impios de terra exterminans · equa lance in libra iusticie vnicuique ius suum distribuit ad diuisit cum vero ab omni populo suo propter hec et hiis similia graciosus haberetur · Ac vnanimiter vniuersi terciam satisfactionis delinquencium que iuxta morem terre ad fiscum rei publice legaliter pertineret eidem vellent tribuere · tale offerentibus fertur dedisse

responsum michi mea sufficiant vobis vestra sint salua · quia forsitan hiis posteris vestris futuris temporibus indigebunt O principem iustum et in sublimitate raro inuentum · qui propriis contentus inferiorum facultates cupide non ambiuit

Verum quia iustum est ut qui alios ex officio regit et iudicat · seipsum prius diiudicet carnem spiritui subiciendo ac spiritum ad dominum dirigendo · iuxta illud · castigo corpus meum et in seruitutem redigo · Ideo sanctus rex noster assiduus in oracionibus · creber in vigiliis · frequens in ieiuniis · in afflictorum calamitate compaciens in elemosinis pauperum largus · carnem suam iugi attriuit cilicio quo etiam tamquam lorica iusticie tempore passionis sue indutus erat / quod et vsque hodie precioso eius intinctum sanguine in vpsalensi reseruatur ecclesia · Qualiter vero ad familiarem hostem ad eam que dormit in sinu hominis se gesserit ex eo liquido patet · quod cum propter ieiuniorum et alia sacra tempora a thoro regine sepius abstinuisset · ipse vt in se incentiua carnis pullulancia reprimeret frequenter ac etiam hyemali tempore in doleo aque frigid clam balneans frigidis curans animalis eius motus ipse animo fortior reprimebat Postremo vero vt supra diximerimus edificata ecclesia ordinato regno ad inimicos fidei et hostes populi sui conuertens coadunato exercitu et assumpto secum ex ecclesia vpsalensi beato henrico episcopo versus finnonnes expeditionem dirigit · ipsosque fide Christi prius oblate ac pace exhibita renitentes et rebelles in vlcionem sanuini christiani manu vlida aggreditur ac bello deuictos victor prostrauit Cumque tanta potitus Victoria in oracionem se prostrasset atque cum lacrimis vt semper piissimi cordis erat oraret ad dominum · interrogates a quodam suorum familiarium cur fleret cum de Victoria hostium Christi potius esset gaudendum sic dicitur respondisse Gaudeo quidem et dominum glorifico pro data nobis Victoria sed vehementer doleo quod tot eorum anime hodie perierunt / qui si sacramenta fidei recipissent ad salute fuissent perpetuam reservati Imitatus in hoc amicum illum dei et virorum mansuetissimum qui zelo accensus prostrates ydolatri domini vindicauit iniurias · et compassione affectus pro peccato eiusdem populi dominum deprecabatur Conuocato igitur qui remansit populo terre pace data predicate Christi fide baptizatis plurimis fundatis ecclesiis positoque ibidem quem supradiximus beato henrico episcopo qui postmodum illic martirio coronatus est · institutis que ibi sacerdotibus ac ceteris que ad religionem christiani cultus pertinent · ordinatis ad swecian cum gloriosa Victoria remeauit.

Currente igitur anno decimo regni illustris regni nostril vt virum iustum probaret tribulacio et granum oppressum fructificaret vberius · antiquis hostis quendam magnum nomine danorum regis filium eiusdem aduersarium suscitauit · qui rex hereditate materna ius regnandi contra consuetudinem terre que alienigenas regnare prohibet sibi perperam vendicabat · vnde et quendam princ-

ipem regni aliosque iniquitatis satellites sibi associans qui muneribus corrupti et promissionibus illecti · in necem regis illustrissimi vnanimiter conspirarunt · ac coadunato clam exercitu ipsum regem ignorantem et nichil aduersi suspicantem apud orientalem arosiam manu valida aggrediuntur Instabat die illo festum ascensionis dominice in quo idem post dominum per palmam martirii erat feliciter ascensurus Cumque illa die in ecclesia sancte trinitatis in monte qui dicitur domini vbi nunc metropolitan fundata est ecclesia missarum sollempniis interesset a quodam suorum sibi nunciatur hostes prope ciuitatem adesse et consultum fore eisdem armata manu protinus occurrere fertur taliter respondisse Sinite me inquit in pace ad perfectum tante sollempnitatis audire misteria Spero enim in domino quod hoc quod de seruicio suo restat alibi sollempniter audiemus et hiis dictis deo se commendans et inpresso sibi prius signo crucis ab ecclesia exiens armavit se et suos · cum eisdem licet paucis viriliter obuians inimicis Quos illi bello excipiunt et contra regem ipsum pre ceteris aciem dirigentes christo domini solotenus prostrate vlnera vlneribus ingeminant Ac in ipsum iam seminecem amplius seuientes et ludibria exercentes · reuerendum caput eius irreuerenter absciderunt Sic que ille de bello ad pacem victor transiens · regnum terrenum in celeste feliciter commutauit · hoc autem ibidem initium signorum factum est quod in loco vbi sanguis eius primum effusus est · fons scaturiens erupit qui vsque hodie in testimonium martirii eius manet recedentibus igitur hostibus et sancto corpora in loco interfec-tionis derelicti pauci de regalibus ministries qui remanserant ipsum in domum quondam proximam paupercule vidue deportauerunt Erat ibidem habitans mulier paupercula ceca de multo tempore · que cum corpus martiris tetigisset et digitos sancto intinctos sanguine ad oculos reduxisset · statim deteresa caligine pristinum lumen recepit · laudans deum in sanco suo · Reliqua vite eius et translatio sancti corporis ac miracula que dominus operatus est per sanctum suum et vsque in presens non definit misericorditer operari · que hic omissa sunt breuitatis causa alibi scripta sunt Passus est autem beatus Ericus anno incarnationis M.c.lx.xv. kalendas Junii Alexandro papa tercio romane ecclesie president Regnante domino nostro ihesu christo cui est omnis honor et Gloria in secula seculorum AMEN

Appendix 2

THE MIRACLES OF
ST ERIK AND ST OLAF

The Miracles of St Erik

The numbers in brackets are those used in the 1828 edition of the miracle collection. Since miracles were also recorded in the legend of St Erik and during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, an alternative enumeration, starting with the miracles of the legend, has also been applied.

No.	Person	Social Background	Place	Miracle
1	–	–	Uppsala	Manifestation of a well
2	Woman	Poor Widow	Uppsala	Healed from blindness
3 (1)	Man	Farmer	Måby, Uppland	Healed from madness
4 (2)	Brother Rodger	Friar OFM	Uppsala	Healed from lameness
5 (3)	Ingemund	Priest of Sir Ragvast	Närtna, Uppland	Healed from muteness after prayers made on recommendation of Sir Ragvast
6 (4)	Anders	Farmer	Årsta, Uppland	Healed from madness
7 (5)	Anders	Servant Boy of Sir Ingevald of Sollentuna	Sollentuna, Uppland	Returned from the dead after vow of Sir Ingevald
8 (6)	Boy	–	Lövö, Uppland	Returned from the dead
9 (7)	Girl	–	Hälsingland	Healed from lameness
10 (8)	Baby girl	–	Uppland	Born dead but miraculously reanimated
11 (9)	Man	Friar OFM	–	Healed from severe pains
12 (10)	Girl	–	–	Returned from the dead
13 (11)	Woman	–	–	Returned from the dead
14 (12)	Dothir	Wife of Frodger	Håningby, Uppland	Healed from pain in her legs
15 (13)	Man	–	–	Evil spirits driven out
16 (14)	Man	–	Ekeby, Uppland	Returned from the dead
–	–	Village	Ekeby, Uppland	Saved from fire
17 (15)	Peter	Friar OP, prior of province Dacia	Alvastra, Östergötland	Lake Vättern calmed

18 (16)	Ulfhild	Daughter of Ingevald	Stabby, Uppland	Returned from the dead
19 (17)	Ragnborg	Wife of Sir Folke of Fänö	Fänö, Uppland	Mother and child saved from death at childbirth
20 (18)	Woman	–	Uppsala	Mother and child saved from death at childbirth
21 (19)	Woman	–	Helgesta, Uppland	Healed from madness and muteness
22 (20)	Magnus	Son of Sir Johan Ängel	Näs, Uppland	Healed from severe sickness
23 (21)	Olaf	Parishoner (probably farmer)	Lövsta, Uppland	Healed from headache after vow recommended by parish priest Sir Martin
24 (22)	Martin	Parish priest	Lövsta, Uppland	His ox healed
25 (23)	Man	–	Våla parish, Västmanland	Healed from madness and saved from death through vow of Archbishop Folke Johansson (Ängel)
26 (24)	Boy	–	Jämtland	Leg healed
	Man	–	–	Swollen foot healed
27 (25)	Israel Erlandsson	Boy, son of Erland Israelsson (Finsta)	Uppsala	Healed from quartan fever after prayers recommended by Archdeacon Folke Johansson (Ängel)
28 (26)	Birger Magnusson	King	Uppland	Healed from sickness after vow of Sir Karl Tyske
	Karl Tyske	Educator of King Birger	Uppland	Healed from eye-sickness
29 (27)	Helga	Wife of Sir Rörik Birgersson	Uppland ¹	Childbirth made possible
30 (28)	Nicolas	Parish priest	Gottfröta, Uppland	Saved house from fire
	Margareta	Wife of Sir Lidhinward	Norby, Uppland	Saved house from fire
31 (29)	Sigvast	Boy	Grillby, Uppland	Healed from severe sickness
32 (30)	Man	Houshold of Sir Vidikin the merchant	Uppsala	Returned from the dead
33 (31)	Man	–	Vaksala parish, Uppland	Healed from madness
34 (32)	Lina	–	Dalarna	Healed from blindness
35 (33)	Man	Deacon	Hälsingland	Healed from sickness
36 (34)	Woman	–	Giresta, Uppland	Healed from muteness

¹ Rörik Birgersson and his wife, Lady Helga, lived in Uppland, see SDHK 1471.

No.	Person	Social Background	Place	Miracle
37 (35)	[Miracle of St Lars]	–	–	–
38 (36)	[Miracle of St Lars]	–	–	–
39 (37)	Andreas from Solna	–	Solna, Uppland	Healed from sickness
40 (38)	Saxe	Bailiff of Stockholm Castle	Stockholm, Uppland	Healed from sickness
41 (39)	Siderius	–	Vaksala parish, Uppland	Healed from eye disease
42 (40)	Olaf from Huddinge	–	Huddinge, Uppland	Healed from madness
43 (41)	Men	Farmers	Bälinge, Pickaby, Aketby; Uppland	Good weather and harvest
44 (42)	Katarina	Wife of Sir Ragvald Puke	Uppland	Healed from sickness
45 (43)	Martin	Parish priest	Edebo, Uppland	Healed from sickness
46 (44)	–	–	–	Summary of miracles remembered by Archbishop Folke Johansson (Ångel)
	Lars	Priest	Dalby, Uppland	–
	Woman	–	Rasbo, Uppland	–
	Hyggjulf	Priest	–	–
	Leonard ²	Priest	–	Fire
	–	–	–	Eye disease
	Woman	–	Hälsingland	Madness
	Juliana	–	–	–
	Sigrd	Lady	–	Eyesight miracle
	–	–	Uppsala	Light miracle at the <i>translatio</i> of St Erik's relics
	Little girl	Daughter of Johannes	–	Healed from eye disease
	Man	Merchant	–	–
47 (45)	Bengt	Boy, Son of Olaf the Dane and Ingegärd	Ekeby, Uppland	Healed from stomach sickness

48 (46)	Woman	Sister of Sir Johannes, priest in Gamla Uppsala	Gamla Uppsala, Uppland	Healed from sickness
49 (47)	Boy	Son of Thorsten the Smith	Färingsö, Uppland	Returned from the dead
50 (48)	Nils Kerttilsson	Archbishop of Uppsala	Uppsala	Healed from sickness
51 (49)	Man	–	Fullerö, Uppland	Healed from sickness
52 (50)	Margareta	Lady	Viksta parish, Uppland	Property saved from fire
53 (51)	Ödger	–	Knivsta parish, Uppland	Property saved from fire
54 (52)	Christina	Noble maiden, daughter of Sir Harald Älg	Hallkved, Uppland	Healed from severe sickness and quartan fever
55 (53)	Pilte	Son of Johann Andersson	Barksätter, Södermanland	Healed from muteness (1403)
56 (54)	Hans Wälarsson	–	Fasterna, Uppland	Healed from Deafness (1411)
57	Arendt Klemmenson	Archbishop elect of Uppsala	Uppsala	Struck with deadly disease (1432) ³
58	Thorlaf	–	Uppsala	Departure of ship delayed by storm (1434/35) ⁴
59	Inhabitants of Luleå	–	Luleå	No further plague victims (1445) ⁵
60	–	–	Stockholm	Burning sword appeared in the sky after Battle of Brunkeberg (1471) ⁶
61	Man	Danish soldier (Officer)	Uppsala	Killed miraculously after having attacked the arms reliquary of St Erik (1518) ⁷

² The priest Leonhard in ‘Vita et miracula S. Eriici Regis et Martyris’, p. 306, fn. *k* has been identified as the same person as Sir Lidinward, the subject of miracle 30 (28), on the grounds that in cod. C 15 the latter is called Leonardus (SRS II, 298, fn. *q*). Myrdal and Bäärnhielm, *Kvinnor, barn & fester i medeltida mirakelberättelser*, pp. 134–35 follow this identification. Lidinward is however labelled ‘Dominus’ and is said to have had a wife, Margareta. It is, therefore, doubtful that he is the same person as the priest Leonhard. In addition, the forms ‘Lidinward’ and ‘Leonhard’ were not necessarily variants of the same name.

³ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, II, 20–21.

⁴ Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*, chap. 51, 19–20.

⁵ SDHK, 24,762.

⁶ *Svenska Medeltidens Rimkrönikor*, ed. by Klemming, III, 82.

⁷ N.N., ‘Expediit Danica adversus Holmiam anno 1518’, p. 31: ‘dar was 1 kapteyn wollde Sante Ericus arm an gripen und bleff tor stunt doeth, miraculum’ (‘There was a captain who wanted to grip St Erik’s arm and he died immediately, miracle’).

The Miracles of St Olaf

English translations of the poems *Glelognskviða* and *Erfidrapa* can be found in Lindow, 'St Olaf and the Skalds';¹ the poem *Geisli* has recently been edited and translated by Martin Chase.² The miracles in *Geisli* have been listed by Anne Holtsmark.³ The *Passio Olafi*, including the miracles, has been translated by Carl Phelpstead.⁴

No.	Person	Social Background	Place	Miracle
<i>Miracle from the poem Glelognskviða</i>				
1			Trondheim	Body uncorrupted, nails and hair continue to grow
2			Trondheim	Church bells ring of their own accord at the shrine of St Olaf
3			Trondheim	'Blind men seek the counsel of the king and leave healthy'
<i>Miracles from the poem Erfidrapa (in addition to those from Glelognskviða)</i>				
4			Stiklestad	Eclipse of the sun at St Olaf's death (?)
<i>Miracles from the poem Geisli</i>				
5	St Olaf	King	Stiklestad	Dreams about a ladder to heaven
6	-	-	Stiklestad	Eclipse of the sun at St Olaf's death
7	St Olaf	King	Stiklestad	A burning light over his dead body
8	Man	Poor	Stiklestad	Healed from blindness by the blood washed away from St Olaf's wounds
9	-	-	Stiklestad	St Olaf's coffin comes up from earth
10	Man	-	-	St Olaf restores his ripped out tongue
11	Magnus	King, son of St Olaf	Denmark	Dream about the battle at Lyrskov Hede
12	Gurthorm	Duke	Angelsøysund	Gives him victory in battle
13	Woman	Norwegian serving maid	Denmark	Punished her master, who ordered her to work on his holyday
14	Man	-	Trondheim	Restores his tongue ripped out by a noble lady

15	Man	-	Slavonic areas	Saved from captivity and healed from treatment there
16	-	-	-	Rediscovery of St Olaf's sword 'Hneitir'
17	-	-	-	About the battle at Pezinavollene
18	Richard	English monk	Trondheim	Healed from maltreatment
<i>Miracles from the miracle collection of the Passio Olavi</i>				
like no. 9	Man	Poor, old	Striklestad	Healed from blindness
like no. 12	Guthorm	Chieftain, nephew of St Olaf	Ireland	Help in battle
19	-	Byzantine emperor	Byzantium	Help in battle
like no. 13	Woman	Norwegian serving maid	Denmark	Punished her master, who ordered her to work on his holy day
20	Boy	-	Trondheim	Restored his tongue, cut out by a judge
21	Man	-	Trondheim	Restored his tongue, cut out by Slavs
22	Woman	-	Trondheim	Healed from deformed legs
23	Man	Priest	-	Injuries (eyes, tongue and broken legs) healed which had been affected by two nobles
24	St Olaf	King	Norway	His hands resisted fire
25	Man	Peasant	-	Falsely doomed by 'certain powerful men' but rescued from hanging
26	Man	Cleric	Trondheim	Punished for audacity before St Olaf
27	-	-	Trondheim	Cathedral saved from fire
like no. 15	Boy	Danish	Slavonic areas	Rescued from captivity and healed from treatment there

¹ Lindow, 'St Olaf and the Skalds', pp. 122-27
² *Einarr Skúlason's Geisli*, ed. by Chase.
³ Holtsmark, 'Sankt Olafs liv og mirakler'.
⁴ Phelpstead, *A History of Norway*, pp. 32-74.

No.	Person	Social Background	Place	Miracle
28	Woman		Trondheim	Healed from epilepsy
29	-	-	Novgorod	Fire extinguished
30	-	-	Novgorod	Stones provided for the building of Olaf's church
31	Boy	-	Novgorod	Miraculously replaced at his house
32	Boy	-	Ytterøya (island in Trondheimsfjord)	Redirected an apostate
33	Man	-	Trondheim	Healed from blindness
34	Man	-	Trondheim	Healed from muteness
35	Woman	from distant parts of Sweden	Trondheim	Healed from blindness
36	Man	Varangian slave boy	Novgorod	Healed from muteness
37	Man	King	Trondheim	Healed swollen knee
38	Girl	-	Trondheim	Healed from being crippled
39	Girl	-	Trondheim	Healed from being crippled
40	Woman	-	Stiklestad	Healed from blindness
41	Man	Merchant	Iceland	Healed from broken leg
42	Two brothers	One cleric, one layman from Chartres, France	Trondheim	Absolution from triple murder shown by breaking of iron bonds
43	Man	Peasant	Møer, Trøndelag	Barn full of harvest saved from fire
44	Group	of sailors	Norwegian coast	Saved from shipwreck
45	Boy	Son of a rich man	Angrar/Norway and pagan lands	Rescued from captivity
46	Two boys	-	Beyond the southern mountains (Alps?)	Saved from a waterfall
47	Man	Danish deacon	Trondheim	Healed from a venereal disease and lust

48	Two brothers	from Galicia	Trondheim	Absolution from multiple murder shown by breaking of iron bonds
49	Youth	–	–	Healed from muteness
50	Boy	Son of Þórðr, Peasant	Trondheim	Healed from crippled legs
51	Man	Peasant	Sogne–district, Norway	Property saved from fire
52	–	Queen	Norway	Absolved from charge of having removed the body of St Olaf by his remains having a sweet fragrance
53	Man	–	Trondheim	Healed from muteness
<i>Additions by Archbishop Eyestein (r. 1161–1188)</i>				
54	Eyestein	Archbishop of Trondheim	Trondheim	Broken ribs healed
55	Þórir	Farmer from Randal, Norway	Trondheim	Healed from madness, muteness, and deafness
56	Youth	Worker at the farm Uttorgar, Norway	Farm Uttorgar, Norway	Healed from hallucination
57	Woman	–	–	Healed from blindness
58	Man	–	St Olaf’s church in Ringsaker, Norway	Healed from blindness
59	Man	–	Estonia	Healed from diseases and thereby led to Christianity
60	Man	Son of a higher clergy of Trondheim	Trondheim	Healed from leprosy
61	Group	of Fishermen	Shore of the pagan lands	Granting of good fish catch
62	Man	Farmer	Ljoxa, Norway	Granting of animal fertility
63	Woman	–	Trondheim	Healed from crippled legs
64	Man	Servant at Cistercian monastery	Stiklestad	Healed from deafness and muteness
65	Small boy	–	Trondheim	Healed from muteness
66	Karl, boy	–	Trondheim	Healed from crippled legs

Appendix 3

CHARTERS USING ST ERIK'S
FEAST DAY FOR DATING

Date	Place	Issuer	SDHK	Dating
19/5/1291	Sigtuna	Electus Magnus Johansson of Uppsala	1522	'in crastino beati Erici regis et martyris'
17/5/1292	Uppsala	Archdean & chapter of Uppsala	1562	'in vigilia Beati Erici'
18/5/1294	Uppsala	Dean & chapter of Uppsala	1621	'In festo beati Erici Regis et Martiris'
18/5/1303	—	Thorkel Knutson	2023	'In die beati Erici Regis et martiris'
17/5/1310	Uppsala	Upplands lawspeaker Birger Persson et al.	2352	'In profesto beati Erici Regis et martyris'
17/5/1310	Uppsala	Abs. Nils Kettilsson of Uppsala	2353	'in profesto beati Erici regis, et Martyris'
19/5/1310	Uppsala	Dean Andreas of Uppsala	2354	'in crastino beati Erici Regis et martiris'
18/5/1319	Linköping	Christina	2925	'In die beati erici martiris'
19/5/1323	—	Bengt Bosson	3216	'in crastino beati Erici Regis et martiris'
19/5/1324	Uppsala	Drotset Knut Jonsson	3280	'in crastino Beati Erici Regis et martiris'
19/5/1325	—	Anund Röriksson	3337	'In crastino beati Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1331	—	Kyrkoherde Eskil i Hartula	3799	'in die beati henrici [<i>sic</i>] regis et martiris'
14/5/1332	—	Johan Ingemarsson	3884	'quinta feria proxima ante festum beati erici'
17/5/1332	Strängnäs	Sigge Johansson	3885	'in profesto beati Erici'
19/5/1332	—	Dean Björn of Uppsala	3886	'in crastino beati erici'
18/5/1334	Biögsåker	Gösta Magnusson	4057	'in die Erici Regis et martiris'
18/5/1334	—	Ingevald Frostenson	4056	'in festo beati erici regis et martiris'
16/5/1335	Stockholm	Knight Ulf Abjörnsson	4153	'feria tertia proxima ante festum beati erici regis et martyris'
17/5/1335	Stockholm	Knut Jonsson, lagman in Östergötland	4154	'in profesto sancti erici'
18/5/1335	Stockholm	K. Magnus Eriksson	4156	'die beati erici regis et martyris'
18/5/1335	—	Knight Ulf Abjörnsson	4155	'die beati erici regis et martiris'
20/5/1335	Uppsala	Canon Nils i Västerås	4159	'sabbato post erici regis et martiris'
20/5/1335	Aranäs	Birgitta	4158	'sabbato proximo post diem beati erici regis et martiris'

21/7/1339	Sigruna	Abs. Peter of Uppsala	4517	'die beati Eriki regis et martyris patroni nostre ecclesie vpsalensis'
17/5/1346	Töresund	Finvid Lafrensson	5314	'in profesto beati Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1346	—	Magnus Mathiasson Griis	5316	'In festo sancti Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1346	—	Magnus Mathiasson Griis	5315	'die beati Eriki'
16/5/1348	Stockholm	Knight Karl Näskonungsson et al.	5611	'sexta feria proxima ante Eriki regis et martyris'
17/5/1348	Stockholm	K. Magnus Eriksson	5612	'in profesto beati Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1349	Askeby monastery	abess of Askey monastery	5760	'die beati Eriki regis et martyris'
13/5/1351	Åbo domkyrka	K. Magnus Eriksson	6173	'die Veneris ante festum beati Eriki regis et martyris'
13/5/1351	Åbo domkyrka	K. Magnus Eriksson	6174	'die Veneris ante festum beati Eriki'
15/5/1351	Åbo Schloss	K. Magnus Eriksson	6177	'dominica ante festum beati Eriki regis et martyris'
15/5/1351	Åbo Schloss	K. Magnus Eriksson	6176	'dominica ante festum beati Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1352	—	Olof Joarsson	6378	'die beati Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1355	—	Herman of Bogsta	6859	'die sancti Eriki regis et martyris'
12/5/1356	Gällsta, Ekerö sn	Peter Karlsson	7011	'feria quinta proxima · ante festum beati Eriki regis et martyris'
16/5/1356	Stockholm	K. Magnus Eriksson	7012	'pa thet Siette mandaghen nest ffore Sancte erik konungx dagh'
18/5/1356	Länna kyrka	Andreas & Olof of Järsta	7013	'die beati erici regis et martyris'
19/5/1357	Torshälla	Ulf Petersson	7183	'feria sexta proxima · post festum Eriki Regis et martyris'
19/5/1358	—	Nils Abjörnsson & Lars Nilsson	7356	'in crastino beati Eriki regis et martyris'
17/5/1359	Skänninge	Holmger Thorkelsson	7556	'in profesto sancti Eriki regis et martyris'
18/5/1359	—	Ramfrid Bengtsdotter	7557	'die beati Eriki regis et martyris'
17/5/1362	'Suthertorp'	K. Håkan Magnusson	8124	'foeria [<i>sic</i>] tertia proxima ante Eriki'
after 18/5/1362	Oppunda thing	Dean Nils	8125	'nesta thingxdaghen aptir sancta erikx dagh'
18/5/1364	Västerås	Lars Lydersson	8514	'die beati regis Eriki et martijris'

Date	Place	Issuer	SDHK	Dating
4/2/1366	Uppsala	Johan Hemmingsson i Sandvik	8830	uses 'jn festo beati · erici · proximo · futuro' as payday
19/5/1366	Linköping	Cecilia Petersdotter	8869	'in crastino beati erici regis et martiris'
20/5/1366	Linköping	Heneka Sandersmåg	8871	'fferia quarta proxima post festum sancti erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1367	—	Magnus Nilsson	9075	'die sancti erici regis et martyris gloriosi'
18/5/1368	Uppsala	Jon Petersson	9260	'Die beati Erii Regis et martyris'
19/5/1368	—	Benedicta Magnusdotter	9261	'In crastino beati erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1370	Uppsala	Erik of Binklinge & his wife Margareta	9695	'jn die sancti Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1370	Rörvik, Jönköpings län	Johan Tyrgilsson	9696	'die beati Erii martiris et regis'
24/5/1375	Stockholm	K. Albrekt & his father Duke Albrekt	10685	'feria quinta proxima post diem sancti Erii regis'
19/5/1376	Uppsala	Lydeke Stralendorp	10818	'in crastino beati Erii regis et martiris'
18/5/1377	Kristdala	Henrik Svinakula	11024	'sub die beati Erii regis et martiris'
17/5/1378	Norrälje	Ulf Nilsson	11224	'in profesto S. Erii'
18/5/1378	—	'Tune' Håkansson	11225	'Die beati Erii regis et martyris'
18/5/1378	Nyköping	Peter Skytte	11226	'Die beati Erii regis et martyris'
22/5/1378	Runso, Överselö sn	Ingeborg Ulfsdotter	11228	'Sabbato proximo post [festum] beati Erii regis et martyris'
25/5/1378	Oppunda häradsting	Nils Djäken, häradshövding	11227	'Nästa tingsdagen eger sancti Eriks dag'
15/8/1379	—	Mats Gustavsson	11466	'die beati erici regis et martyris'
22/5/1379	—	Bo Jonsson	11469	'xi i post festum beati erici regis'
18/5/1384	Uppsala	Magnus Tyrgilsson, canon in Uppsala	12651	'die beati erici regis et martyris'
18/5/1384	Uppsala	Karl Magnusson	12652	'die beati erici regis et martyris gloriosi'

14/5/1386	Kuddby kyrka	'Magnus i Thastadha'	13096	'feria proxima quarta ante festum sancti erici regis'
18/5/1386	Skänninge	Ramborg Eriksdotter	13097	'circa festum beati erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
19/5/1386	Uppsala	Karl Ulfsson, lagman i Uppland	13099	'in crastino beati erici regis et martiris'
19/5/1386	Uppsala	Sylwaster, canon	13101	'in crastino sancti erici regis et martiris'
21/5/1386	Strängnäs	Henrik Koc et al.	13103	'nästa manadaghin äftir sancti eriks dagh'
18/5/1387	Jäders kyrka	Sven 'Homstensson'	13292	'MCCCLXXXVII ... (lakun) Erii Regis et Martyris'
19/5/1387	Uppsala	Nils Bengtsson	13293	'In crastino sancti erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
19/5/1387	Uppsala	Abs. Henrik & chapter of Uppsala	13294	'In crastino beati erici regis et martyris'
19/5/1390	Uppsala	Mikael of 'Baellista'	13717	'Crastino beati Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
17/5/1391	—	St Martin's monastery (Skänninge)	13891	'In profesto beati Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1392	Uppsala	Lars from 'Kylinge' & his wife 'Aelina'	14057	'die beati erici regis et martyris gloriosi'
23/5/1392	Åkers skeppslag	Erik from 'Lydhby'	14059	'Torsdaghin aefte sancte Erikkx dagh'
23/5/1392	Åkers skeppslag	Nils from Träsättra & his son Lars	14060	'Torsdaghen aefte sancte Erikkx dagh'
18/5/1393	Kalmar	Vikke van Vitzen	14177	'die beati Erii Regis & Martyris gloriosi'
15/5/1394	—	Sten Bosson	14280	'Feria sexta ante festum beati Erii regis'
21/5/1394	Åkers skeppslag	Erik from Lundby	14283	'Torsdaghen aepther sancte Erikkx dagh'
13/5/1395	Sigtuna	Johannes, priest in Sigtuna	14416	'Feria quinta proxima ante festum beati Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
20/5/1395	Åkers skeppslag	Jöns, kyrkoherde i Österåker	14421	'Torsdaghen ephther sancte Erikkx dagh'
20/5/1395	Åkers skeppslag	Nichlis Alason & his son Peter	14422	'Torsdaghen ephther sancte Erikkx dagh'
20/5/1395	Åkers skeppslag	Ingevald from 'Rödhesten'	14420	'Torsdaghen ephther sancte Erikkx dagh'
13/5/1396	Vallentuna härads ting	Påvel from 'Rifsta', underhärads hövding	14588	'Lögerdaghen nest fore sancta Erikkx kwnunx dagh'
22/5/1398	Uppsala	Isak Isaksson & his wife Margareta	14952	'Feria quarta proxima post Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
12/5/1400	'Kaelstööt'	Olof from 'Akra'	15405	'feria quarta proxima ante festum sancti Erii regis et martiris'

Date	Place	Issuer	SDHK	Dating
13/5/1400	Fagrahed, Kjula sn	Kettil Nilsson from Bråhövde	15406	'naeste thorsdaghin for sancte Erikx dagh'
19/5/1400	Uppsala	Kertilbjörn Ingvarsson	15410	'in crastino beati erici regis et martyris gloriosi'
21/5/1400	—	Tuve Galen	15412	'feria 6 post diem Erici'
19/5/1402	Uppsala	Birgita Magnusdotter	15849	'in crastino sancti Erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1405	—	Nils Kirth of Rasbo	16493	'die sancti Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1405	Herrestad	Olaf Halvardsson	16494	'sancte Eriks dag'
12/5/1406	Marieborg (Eskilstuna)	Knight Sten Benktsson	16700	'feria quarta ante festum Erici regis et martiris'
17/5/1408	Valkebo häradsathing	Magnus Jönsson	17052	'feria quinta ante festum Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1408	Flätteryd (Svanaholm)	Gunnar Johansdotter	17053	'in die sancti Erici regis et martyris gloriosi'
12/5/1410	—	Peter Nilsson	17485	'feria secunda proxima ante festum Erici regis et martiris'
15/5/1410	Kjulaås	Gudmund Johansson	17486	'neste thorsdaghen fore sancte Erixx dagh'
19/5/1410	—	Olof of Ennesta	17488	'nasta tingdaghen epter sancti Eriex dagh'
21/5/1410	Uppsala	Ragna of Viggeby	17490	'odhensdaghin nast epter sancti Erixx dagh'
18/5/1411	(Stora) Sundby	Knight Lars Ulfsson	17642	'oppa sancta Erixx dagh'
18/5/1411	Uppsala	Abs. Jöns of Uppsala	17643	'die sancti Erici regis et martiris'
15/5/1412	Sauvo (Finland)	Henrik Jönsson	41568	'dominica proxima ante festum beati Erici regis et martiris'
13/5/1413	—	Björn Andersson	18006	'Sancte Eriks afton'
17/5/1413	Vadstena	K. Erik of Pomerania	18008	'in profesto beati Erici regis et martyris'
20/5/1413	Uppsala	Johan Henonis	18009	'sabbato proximo post Erici Regis et martyris gloriosi'
18/5/1414	Tuna	Anders of Sunnansjö	18333	'ipso die beati Erici regis et martiris'
21/5/1414	Uppsala	Abs. Jöns of Uppsala	18335	'manedaghin nest epter sancti Erixx dagh'

24/5/1414	Uppsala	Abs. Jöns of Uppsala	18338	'torsdaghin æpther sancti Eriks dagh'
3/7/1414	Skara	K. Erik of Pomerania	18378	event dated 'innan sancti Eriks dagh'
17/5/1415	Uppsala	Priest Kettlibjörn Kettlibjörnsson	18541	'yppa sancte Erix apton'
21/5/1415	Väla	Nils of Brunvalla	18542	'feria iij post Erixi regis et martiris'
13/5/1416	Stockholm	Kristofer & Peter Kruse	18738	'feria quarta ante festum sancti Erixi regis et martiris'
22/5/1416	Kalmar	Ture Stensson	18741	'feria sexta proxima post festum Erixi regis et martiris [sic]'
18/5/1417	Misterhult	Nils Djäken	18922	'in die Erixi regis et martiris'
18/5/1417	Uppsala	Olof of Torstuna	18923	'die beati Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1417	Uppsala	Katarina Johansdotter	18924	'oppa sancti Erikk konnungx dagh'
18/5/1417	Floby kyrka	Jon Larsson of Floby	18925	'in die sancti Erixi regis et martiris'
18/5/1417	Halmstad	Tord Jonsson	18926	'die sancti Erixi regis et martyris'
20/5/1418	Thun	Knight Jöns Magnusson	19092	'feria sexta post festum Erixi regis et martiris'
17/5/1419	Strängnäs	Hakon Star	19279	'in profesto sancti Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1419	Uppsala	Birgitta Magnusdotter	19280	'aa sancte Erix dagh, som wm somaren kombyr'
18/5/1419	Vadstena	Bengta Bosdotter	19281	'die beati Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1419	—	Abs. Jöns of Uppsala	19282	'yppa sancti Eriks dagh, konunger i Swerike'
22/1/1420	'Hof' (Uppland)	Lars Petersson	19427	'yppa sancti Eriks afton, som wm wintrin kombir'
18/5/1420	Skara	Sigvid Ingemarsson	19482	'ipso die beati Erixi regis et martiris'
18/5/1420	(Åbo)	Major & council of Åbo	19483	'ipso die beati Erixi regis et martiris'
12/5/1422	Flensburg	Pawol Falakasson	19857	'feria tertia ante festum Erixi'
18/5/1422	Västervik	Ulf Lämme	19859	'ipso die beati Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
15/8/1424	Vadstena	Kristin Bengtsdotter	20277	'die beati regis erici martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1426	Kalmar	Johannes van der Borg	20618	'die Erixi Regis & Martyris'
17/5/1426	Västerås	Lars Petersson	20680	'in profesto beati erici regis et martiris gloriosi'

Date	Place	Issuer	SDHK	Dating
17/5/1427	Kalmar	Peter Karlsson	20856	'in profesto beati erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1427	Stegesholm	Mikael Magnusson	20857	'in festo Eriki regis et martiris'
18/5/1428	Uppsala	Cecilia Filipdotter	21002	'die beati erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1429	Uppsala	Margareta Larsdotter	21162	'um sancti erikx dagh'
17/5/1430	Stockholm	Krister Nilsson	21376	'in profesto sancti erici'
18/5/1430	Stockholm	Katarina Mattsdotter	21377	'die beati erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1430	Linköping	Håkan Larsson, byfogde i Linköping	21378	'sancti Eriks dagh'
22/5/1430	Uppsala	Birgitta Magnusdotter	21381	'manedaghe i gangdaghe me (?) nest aeptr sancti Eriks dagh'
17/5/1431	Stockholm	Bs. Knut of Linköping	21588	'in profesto sancti erici'
22/5/1431	Tingvalla	Bs. Sigge of Skara	21590	'Tiisdaghen naest efftir Sancti Erikx konungx dagh'
13/5/1432	Jönäkers ting	Ragvald Jonson i Valunge	21780	'in feria sexta proximo ante festum beati Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
14/5/1432	Sunds kyrka	Björn from Töftö (i Vårdö)	21781	'feria quarta ante festum Eriki regis et martiris'
17/5/1432	—	Nils Gagne from 'Wintrie'	21783	'profesto sancti Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
21/5/1432	Sörby	Karl Petersson (Puke)	21785	'feria tertia post festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
19/5/1433	Åbo	Olof Magnusson, priest in Kyrklätt	21947	'in crastino b:ti Eriki regis et martiris'
20/5/1434	Åbo	Local law court of Åbo	22156	'torsdagen näst efter Sancti Eriks dag'
19/5/1435	Uppsala	Lars, kyrkoherde i Tuna & canon in Uppsala	22367	'in crastino sancti Eriki martiris'
24/5/1436	Uppsala	Bengt Karlsson et al.	22756	'feria sexta proxima post festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
11/5/1438	Stockholm	Erik Jönsson from Hallkväd	22974	'dominica proxima ante festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
12/5/1438	Stockholm	Ingevald Östensson i Borresta & Ragnar from Näs	22975	'feria secunda proxima ante festum beati erici regis et martiris'
17/5/1438	Linköping	Lars Erlandsson & Nils Brask	22980	'in profesto sancti Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'

18/5/1438	Vingåker	Olof Andersson et al.	22982	'die beati Eriki regis et martiris'
18/5/1439	Skänninge	Gudsärk, kyrkherde i Skänninge	23201	'ipso die Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1439	Vingåker	Olof Andersson	23202	'die Eriki beati regis et martiris'
19/5/1439	—	Bengt Lydikesson	23203	'dagen näst efter S:t Eriks dag'
18/5/1440	Vadstena	Johan Gädde	23524	'die sancti Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
19/5/1440	Vadstena	Johan Gädde	23525	'crastino beati Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
19/5/1440	Vadstena	Johan Gädde	23526	'crastino beati Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
23/1/1441	Uppsala	Lars skräddare & his wife Margareta	23730	'in profesto translationis sancti Eriki regis nostri gloriosi'
11/5/1441	Stockholm	Peter Duva	23805	'torsdagen næst före sancta Erix konungx dagh'
12/5/1441	Stockholm	Karl Knutsson, <i>riksföreståndare</i> of Sweden	23806	'feria sexta proxima ante festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
13/5/1441	Stockholm	Nils Tidekesson	23808	'sabbato ante Eriki'
14/5/1441	Vadstena	Håkan Larsson	23809	'dominica proxima ante festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
15/5/1441	Köping	Sten Petersson, lagman	23811	'manedaghin næst for sancta Erik dagh'
17/5/1441	Åbo	Ingrid, Johan Karlssons wife	23813	'[in] sunte Erekes awent'
18/5/1441	Uppsala	Henning Foss	23814	'die beati Eriki regis et martiris'
19/5/1441	Svartsjö	Karl Knutsson, <i>riksföreståndare</i> of Sweden	23816	'in crastino beati Eriki regis et martiris'
21/5/1441	Jönköping	Abraham Skinnare & Nils Håkansson	23820	'dominica proxima post festum Eriki regis et martiris'
17/5/1442	Eskilstuna	Gertrud Rembalsdotter	24134	'in profesto sancti Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1443	Lund	Arvid Andersson	24315	'ypa sancti Eriess dagh, som koning oc martyer'
18/5/1443	Vä (near Reftele)	Abjörn Thordson	24317	'ipso die beati Eriki regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1443	Eskilstuna	Andreas, dean of Eskilstuna et al.	24316	'die beati Eriki regis et martiris'
19/5/1443	Lockne	Johan & Thorer sons of Olof	24318	'uppa sunnadaghen næst aepter sancti Eriks dagh'
20/5/1443	Narvetomta (?)	Germund Brynolfsson & Gudmund Sonasson	24319	'feria secunda proxima post erici regis et martyris'

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21/5/1443	Stockholm	Erik Nilsson from Vang	24320	'feria tertia proxima post festum sancti Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
23/5/1443	Vadsrena	Magnus Jönsson & his wife Maeritta	24322	'feria quinta proxima post Erii regis et martiris'
15/5/1445	Öknebo häradssting	Matts Körning, häradshövding	24742	'logordagen näst fore sancti Erii dagh'
18/5/1445	Kalmar	Hans Bertelsson, priest in Kalmar	24745	'a sancti Erii dagh'
18/5/1446	Uppsala	Abs. Nils of Uppsala	24947	'die beati erici regis et martyris'
20/5/1446	Uppsala	Margit Pettersdotter	24949	'ffredaghin nest efter sancti Erii dagh'
20/5/1446	Strängnäs	Lars Karlsson & his wife Elin	24950	'feria sexta proxima post erici regis et martiris'
21/5/1447	—	Lasse Jönsson from Rörby on Lovö	25138	'[...]? Daghe nest eptr sancta (!) ericx dagh'
17/5/1448	Askeby kloster	Lars Mattson	25336	'in profesto sancti Erii regis et martiris gloriosi'
15/5/1449	Klägerup (Skåne)	Per 'Kaerksson'	25516	'thorsdaghen nest fore sancta Eriks dagh saw koning hvar'
18/5/1449	—	Ingevald from Valby	25517	'ipso die beati erici regis et martyris'
17/5/1451	Gåshög, Västbo hd	Abjörn Gissesson, häradshövding	25893	'sancte konungx erikx affton'
17/5/1451	Gåshög, Västbo hd	Abjörn Gissesson, häradshövding	25892	'sancte konungx erikx affton'
18/5/1451	Kalmar	Bs. Nils of Linköping	25894	'die sancti erici regis et martiris'
11/5/1452	Stockholm	Nils Berg	26112	'nesta thorsdaghin for sancti ericx dag'
18/5/1452	Stockholm	Gustav Karlsson	26115	'In festo sancti erici regis et martiris'
19/5/1452	Vadsrena	Abbess Ingeborg Gertsddotter et al.	26116	'crastino sancti erici regis et martiris'
17/5/1453	Stockholm	Elin Karlsdotter, Mats Håkansson's wife	26253	'nesta thorsdaghin for sancti ericx dag'
18/5/1453	Stockholm	Boetti Stenonis (natt och dag)	26255	'oppa Sancti Erii dagh'
19/5/1453	Uppsala	Katrin Gunnarsdotter	26258	'Daghin naesth effthir sancte Erii dagh'
15/5/1454	Ringsted, Denmark	K. Kristian	26512	'feria quarta proxima ante festum beati Erii Regis et martiris'
13/5/1456	Ulleråkers tingplats	Peter Karlsson from Brunna, häradshövding	26842	'torsdaghen nest fore sancti eriks dagh'

15/5/1457	—	Olof Eriksson	26989	'sundaghin ffore sancte erikx dagh'
18/5/1457	Vadstena	Brothers Magnus und Håkan Holt	26990	'die sancti Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
18/5/1457	Vadstena	Magnus Holt	26991	'die sancti Erixi regis et martiris'
24/5/1458	Norrbo härad	Olof from 'mungha', häradshövding	27220	'naesta odenzdaghe aepter sancti eriks dag'
17/5/1459	Uppsala	Dean Birger & his mother Margit	27409	'In profesto sancti Erixi Regis et martiris'
18/5/1459	Halmstad	K. Kristian	27410	'die beati Erixi regis et martiris'
18/5/1460	—	Olof Johansson, balliff in Medelpad	27597	'die sancte erice'
18/5/1461	Kalmar	Birger Trolle	27779	'die sancti Erixi regis et martiris gloriosi'
19/5/1461	Uppsala	Lucia Jönsdotter	27781	'nest eptur sancti Eriks dagh'
14/5/1462	Vadstena	Gjord Larsson	27960	'uppa fredaghen naest fore sancti Erikx dagh'
20/5/1463	Stockholm	Bs. Kertil of Linköping et al.	28126	'fredaghin nest epther sancte erikxdagh'
11/5/1465	Oppunda härad	Matts Kagge, häradshövding in Oppunda hd	28421	'lögfordghin nästh for sancte eriks dagh'
18/5/1466	Torps skeppslag	Peter Gyntsson	28581	'die sancte erici'
13/5/1468	Stockholm	K. Karl Knutsson	28830	'fredagen före Sancti Eriks dag'
15/5/1468	Kumla kyrka	Jöns Magnusson i Randista	28831	'dominica proxima ante Erixi regis et martiris'
18/5/1468	Svinshulans tingställe	Nills, kyrkoherde of Askeryd	28832	'Vppa sancti erikx dagh'
13/5/1469	[Vemmenhög's hd]	Kristina, widow of Jep Henriksen from Torup	41252	'sabbato proximo ante festum beati Erixi regis et martiris'
16/5/1469	Dingtuna kyrka	Johan Birgersson, häradshfd. of Tuhundra hd	28952	'tisadghen naesth fore sancti erikx dagh'
14/5/1470	Hängsdal	Peter Nilsson, häradshövding of Vartofta hd	29108	'mandhagin naesta ffor sancte erics daagh'
15/5/1470	[Vartofta hd]	Peter Nilsson, häradshövding of Vartofta hd	29109	'naesta tiisdaghin ffor sancti erics daagh'

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16/5/1470	Stockholm	Sten Sture the Elder, <i>riksförståndare</i>	29111	'feria quarta ante Eri''
18/5/1470	Söderköping	Olaf Spjut	29114	'die sancti erici regis et martiris'
25/5/1472	Arboga	major and council of Arboga	29422	'nest manadagen aepthr sancte erikx dagh'
16/5/1473	Torshälla	Johan Gervinsson	29590	'sondaghin naest for sancti Ericx dagh'
18/5/1473	Alsen	Sigurd Sigurdsson & his sister Ingegerd	29591	'uppa sancte Eriks erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1473	Lund	Hans Kristiernson	29594	'in die sancti Eriki regis et martiris'
18/5/1473	Händelö, Kvillinge sn	Erland Petersson & Joachim Björnsson	29592	'In festo sancti erici regis et martiris'
21/5/1473	Uppsala	Abs. Jakob of Uppsala et al.	29595	'fredagen naest aeptr sancte Ericx dagh'
22/5/1473	[Tillberga sn]	Olof Ingason	29597	'sabato proximo post festum erici regis et martiris'
after 18/5/1474	Uppsala	Major and council of Uppsala	29757	'neste radhsreugo [?] efter sancte Ericx dagh'
17/5/1474	Jäleby [Skärkind]	Kristin Petersdotter	29766	'uppa sancte Eriks affne'
17/5/1474	[Kopparberg]	'Rauast Arnason' på Kopparberg	29767	'in profesto erici martiris'
18/5/1474	[Hanekinds hd]	Birger Jönsson & Bengt Haraldson from Valkebo	29768	'um sancti Ericx dag'
20/5/1474	Lund	Jens Brostrup, electus of Lund	41277	'fferia sexta proxima post festum beati Eriki regis et martiris'
17/5/1475	[Skurtunge sn]	Katrin, Jöns 'Morkx' daughter	29948	'In profesto sancti erici regis et martiris';
18/5/1475	Lund	—	41285	'die beati Eriki regis'
18/5/1475	[Artmars sn]	Johan & Magnus & Lars, sons of Nils	29950	'die sancte erice'
18/5/1475	Lund	Abs. Jens Brostrup of Lund		'die beati Eriki regis et martyris'
11/5/1476	Söderby prästgård	Sten Sture the Elder, <i>riksförståndare</i>	30071	'løgdagh nest fore erici'
17/5/1476	[Näsholm]	Ingel Jönsson	30073	'sancti erikx aphon'
17/5/1476	Åbo	Council of Åbo	30074	'vp den frydach vor sunthe Erikes dage'

17/5/1477	Vadstena	'Lydhka' Henningsson'	30257	'in vigilia sancti Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1478	—	Påvel from 'Wenastadthe'	30405	'die sancti erici'
18/5/1479	Händelö	Erland Petersson et al.	30537	'pa Sancte Erikx dagh'
18/5/1479	[Kumla sn]	Nils Siggasson	30536	'uppa [...] ? Ericx dagh'
21/5/1479	Uppsala	Anders Olsson	30538	'fredagh nesth ephtr sancti Erici Dagh'
21/5/1479	Stockholm	Peter Månsson from 'Nypstaa'	30539	'fredage nest ephtr sancte Ericks dagh'
24/1/1480	[Frösö sn]	Peter Nilsson from 'Genuallom'	30669	'in die thtranslatione sancti erici regis et martiris'
12/5/1480	Tynnelö	Bs. Kort of Strängnäs	30724	'fredagen nesth for sancte Erikx dagh'
17/5/1480	[Säby]	Ingeborg Bengtsdotter	30725	'oppa sancti erix apton'
19/5/1480	Uppsala	Finvid Larsson	30726	'fredagh nest ephtr sancti Erici konungs dagh'
20/5/1480	Uppsala	Abs. Jakob of Uppsala et al.	30727	'løghrdag nest ephtr sancti Erici konungx dag'
16/5/1481	Uppsala	Hans Hakonsson, major of Uppsala	30916	'odensdaghin for sancte erikx dag'
18/5/1481	Uppsala	Abs. Jakob v. Uppsala	30917	'die Beati Erici Regis et martyris'
19/5/1481	Stockholm	Abs. Jakob of Uppsala	30918	'løghrdagh nest epter sancte Erickx dagh'
18/5/1482	Arboga	Jon Larsson	31097	'sancti Eriks dagh'
21/5/1482	Uppsala	Albrikt Jonsson	31099	'Dinsdaghen nest eppter Sanci Erici Dagh'
21/5/1482	Skiringe, Mellösa sn	Ulf Torstensson	31098	'[...] ? Proxima feste [nicht sichtbar] rege et martire'
14/5/1483	Stockholm	Birgitta Ragvaldsdotter	31290	'odinsdage nest fore sancti eriks dagh'
18/5/1483	Uppsala	Erik Jonsson, major of Uppsala	31295	'oppa sancti ericx dagh'
18/5/1483	Stockholm	Abs. Jakob of Uppsala et al.	31296	'ipso die [...] et martiris'
22/5/1483	Stockholm	Nils Sture from Eksjö	31300	'Torsdagen naest aepter sancte Erik Konungx dag'
17/5/1484	—	Sten Sture the Elder, <i>riksföreståndare</i>	42655	'vpp sant Ericks des heylligen konges und mertelers obent'
19/5/1484	Uppsala	Swedish riksråd	42656	'in crastino sancti Erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
23/1/1485	Nävsta	Magnus Andrisson	31554	'om sancta erikx afton aepter ivlin'

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17/5/1485	Överhogdal	Björn Sigurdsson et al.	31592	'sancte eriks afftan'
19/5/1486	[Dalarna]	Peter Jönsson Skrivare	31760	'dagn epeter sancti erik konungx dag'
19/5/1486	Strängnäs	Johan Körning	31762	'In crastino Sancti Erici Regis et martiris'
19/5/1486	Uppsala	Abs. Jakob, Sten Sture the Elder et al.	31761	'daghin nest epeter Sancti ericxs dag'
12/5/1487	Oppunda härad	Måns Domare	31906	'laegaerdaghaen fore santhae erikzs dagh'
18/5/1487	Åbo	Jöns i Ström et al.	31909	'ipso die sancti Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1487	Uppsala	Peter Jönsson, major of Uppsala	31910	'pa Sancte Erikx dagh'
18/5/1487	Uppsala	'Jarle' Petersson	31911	'oppa sancti ericx dagh'
15/5/1488	[Norrköping]		32054	'thorsdagen naest fore sancty Ericy dag'
16/5/1488	Skrömsta [?]	Kristin Torsensdotter	32055	'daghin fore sancti ericx affton'
22/5/1488	Stockholm	Katarina Ingesdotter	32059	'Thorsdagen naest effter sancte Erichs Dagh'
11/5/1489	Västerås	Bailiff, major and council of Västerås	32230	'Måndagen näst före Eriks dag'
11/5/1490	Norrköping	Agent of the church of Olaf in Norrköping	32424	'tissdagen nest for Sanci erici dagh'
21/5/1490	Hov	Olof Petersson from 'Böyeredh'	32426	'fredaghen nesth effther sancti erikx dagh'
17/5/1491	Strängnäs	Olof Petersson	32586	'paa beati Erici konungx affaton'
18/5/1491	Torsö	Ingrid Jonsdotter	32587	'die beati Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1492	Gällstad	Per Hansson	32756	'sancti erikx dagh'
18/5/1492	Kopenhagen	K. Hans		'in [...] beati Erici regis'
18/5/1492	Kopenhagen	K. Hans	41479	'ipso die beati Erici regis'
18/5/1492	[Lund]	Kiettel Anderson, canon in Lund		'die beati regis Erici et martyris'
18/5/1494	Oviken	Sigrid & Margit & Radgerd, daughter of Lars	33090	'ipso die Erici regis et martiris'
18/5/1494	Uppsala	Abs. Jakob of Uppsala	33091	'paa sancti Ericx konunghx dagh'

18/5/1494	Svenstorp	Christiancia Ipsdotter	41 505	'jpso die danceti Erici regis et martinis'
15/5/1495	Landskrona	Anders Basse, bailiff of Landskrona et al.	41 510	'then fredag nest fore sancti Erick koninges dagh'
15/5/1495	Lund	Anders Basse, bailiff of Landskrona et al.	41 510	'then fredag nest fore sancti Erick koninges dagh'
19/5/1495	Västerås	Bs. Olof of Västerås	33 230	'In crastino Sancti Erici Regis et martinis'
19/5/1495	Västerås	Bs. Olof of Västerås	33 231	'In crastino Sancti Erici Regis et martinis'
19/5/1495	Norberg	Lars from 'Haeredhe' på gamla Norberg	33 232	'tysdaghen naesth epher sancti Erici konungx daagh'
21/5/1495	[Gäsnene hd]	Jöns Knutsson from Falem & his son Erik	33 235	'torsdaghen nest effter [...] Eriks dagh'
24/5/1495	Hagnastad	Magnus Hanson, lagman in Jämtland	33 237	'ssundag nest effter sancti erikss dagh'
20/5/1496	Uppsala	Birgita Kristernsdotter (Oxenstierna)	33 376	'fredaghen nesth aepther sancti Erix dagh'
15/5/1496	[Stigromta]	Bengt from Tomta	33 374	'sonnedaghen naest for sancte ericx dagh'
17/5/1496	Stigromta	Lars Birgersson	33 375	'om sancte ericx apfthan'
17/5/1497	Nådendal	Peter & Mats, sons of Mickel of Haijais	33 495	'pa sancti Erix affton'
18/5/1497	Lund	Jens Persson	41 528	'die sancti Erici regis et martinis'
19/5/1497	Uppsala	Jöns Nilsson	33 496	'vppa nytttonde daghen i may maanadh so var daghen nest epher sanctie erikx dagh'
20/5/1498	Maribo, Denmark	Convent of Maribo	33 602	'Syndaghen Nest effter Sancti Erichs konigx dagh'
22/5/1498	Skönberga	Jöns Mutare	33 604	'tisdagin aepter sancti Erikkx dag'
23/5/1498	Närdinghundra	Henrik Balk from Näs in Oland	33 605	'onsdagen näst efter Sancti Eriks dag'
13/5/1499	Strängnäs	Anders Jönsson, councillor in Strängnäs	33 755	'pa tes cryende [?] Mondaghin naest for sancte Erics dagh'
17/5/1499	Lund	Hans Basse	41 544	'fferia sexta proxima ante festum beati Erici regis et martinis'
18/5/1499	Åbo	Sten Sture the Elder	33 758	'die beati Erici regis et martinis'
18/5/1500	unknown	Sigge Larsson på 'Aargardh'	34 203	'die erici regis'
25/5/1500	Älvkarleby	Erik Trolle	34 208	'Maandaghen nesth epher sancte eriks dagh'
18/5/1502	Kalmar	Matts Olofsson	34 539	'Sancte Eric konungs dag'

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20/5/1503	Kaukola By	Henrik Stensson	34637	'løgdaghin nest epter sancti erikx dagh'
18/5/1504	Stegeborg	Sander Arendsson	34825	'om sancti eriks dagh'
18/5/1504	Kopenhagen	Bs. Matts of Strängnäs et al.	34823	'die Erici regis et martiris'
19/5/1504	Kopenhagen	Bs. Matts of Strängnäs et al.	34827	'In crastino Erici regis et martiris'
19/5/1504	Örebro	Metta Ivarsdotter	34826	'söndagen näst efter Sancti Eriks dag'
19/5/1504	Uppsala	Knut Eskilsson, lagman i Uppland	34828	'söndagen nest efter sancti erik konungs dagh'
23/5/1504	Lagunda ting	Eriks Larsson from 'Skælby'	34833	'torsdaghen nest epther epther sancti ericx dagh'
14/5/1505	Örebro	Henning Gagge	35121	'odhinsdaghen nest ffor sancte erich kongx dagh'
16/5/1505	Stockholm	Svante Nilsson, <i>riksföreståndare</i>	35122	'fredaghen naesth fore sancte Eriks dagh'
19/5/1505	Uppsala	Anders Jönsson, councillor in Uppsala	35123	'jn crastino Erici regis et martiris gloriosi'
15/5/1506	Långhytta (Långhult)	Sten Kristiernsson	35411	'fredagen nest for Sancte Eric kwngs dagh'
17/5/1506	Todene (Tådene)	Nils Krumme	35414	'sancte eriks aaffton'
17/5/1506	Stockholm	Metta Ivarsdotter	35413	'Sonedagen nest för sancte erik dagh'
18/5/1506	Stockholm	Bengt Eriksson	35416	'die sancti Erici regis et martiris'
22/5/1506	Gille	Knut from Gille	35423	'fredagen effther Erici regis et martiris'
17/5/1507	Västerås	Metta Ivarsdotter	35813	'In profesto erici regis'
17/5/1507	Högsby	Hemming Gad	35814	'Sancte Eriks apten'
17/5/1507	Högsby	Hemming Gad	35815	'in profesto Sancti Erici'
18/5/1507	Alsta	Sven Brunsson	35816	'sancte erickss dagh'
11/5/1508	Västerås	Knut Eskilsson, lagman in Uppland et al.	36177	'torsdaghin nesth for sancti erikx dagh'
15/5/1508	Stockholm	Jon Jönsson	36180	'mandaghen för sancte Erikx dag'
18/5/1508	Söderköping	Per Vägare & Clavus Överskärare	36181	'die erici regis et martiris'

21/5/1508	[Dalsland]	The people of Dalsland	36183	‘sönedaghin nest epter Sancte Ericss dagh’
18/5/1510	Vreta Kloster	Arvid Månsson from Valby	36734	‘oppa sancti eriks dagh regis’
1/5/1511	Åbo	Arvid Kurck, <i>electus</i> of Åbo	36977	event ‘vij dahga for sanctj Ericx dagh’
18/5/1511	Händelö	Bengt Åbjörnsson	36987	‘Sancte Erichs dag’
18/5/1511	Arboga	Anders Persson	36986	‘S:t Eriks dag’
19/5/1511	Kullung	Nils Skrivare	36988	‘daghin nesth epther Sancte Ericss dagh’
21/5/1511	Borgholm	Jens Laurensen	36989	‘odensdagen nest epter Erici’
22/5/1511	Västerås	Arvid Siggesson	36990	‘feria quinta post Erici’
13/5/1512	Sjö [unknown]	Knut Eskilsson, lagman in Uppland	37204	‘torsdaghin nesth fore sancti erik konunge dag’
14/5/1512	Nyköping	Sten Kristiernsson	37205	‘6:a feria anter festum Erici’
16/5/1512	Poiko on Rimito (Piokko)	Henrik Stensson, Lagman	37207	‘synnedaghen nest fore sancte Erickx dag’
17/5/1512	Söderköpings hospital	Matts Helgesson in Stigilstorp	37208	‘pa sancti erks affhyn’
18/5/1513	Sigtuna	Bs. Matts of Strängnäs	37414	‘die beati Erici regis et martiris’
14/5/1514	Stockholm	Sten Sture the Younger, <i>riksföreståndare</i>	37578	‘dominica proxima ante festum Sancti Erici regis et martiris’
23/1/1515	Ragunda	Germund Pedersson from Håsjö	37672	‘Vespero die translationis Sancti Erici Regni Patroni’
24/1/1515	Ragunda	Germund Pedersson from Håsjö	37673	‘po die translationis sancti erici regis et martyris’
20/5/1516	[Asunda hd]	Erik Person from Lunby	37858	‘tisdag epter sancti Eriks dag’
24/5/1516	Uppsala	Diderik Westfaal	37861	‘logardaghen naesth epther Sancti Ericss dagh’
17/5/1517	Uppsala	Lasse Klockgutare	38062	‘sancte Erik konungs affhon’
19/5/1517	Uppsala	Sten Sture the Younger, <i>riksföreståndare</i>	38063	‘dagen nest epter sancti Erici dagh’
24/1/1518	[Lit sn]	Lasse & Kettil, sons of Sten	38127	‘ipso die translationis sancti erici regis et martiris’
12/5/1518	Åby	Jens Jonsson	38172	‘onsdagen nest ffor sancte eriks dag’
18/5/1518	Linköping	Lars Birgersson	38174	‘Die sancte Erici regis et martiris’

DEPICTIONS OF ST ERIK

The depictions listed on the following pages were mostly provided by the iconographic catalogue of *Riksantikvarieämbete* and *Vitterhetsakademien*. The images of St Erik from Finland were supplied by Nygren, *Helgonen i Finlands medeltidskonst*, pp. 184–88.

Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes, appearance, company
1250–1275	Uppsala Cathedral	Embroidery on maniple	None; plain clothes, beardless; St Erik and St Olaf?
1260–1280	Gamla Uppsala, Uppland	Glass painting	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded
c. 1300 or 1895 (?) ¹	Strängnäs Cathedral	Wall painting in church	None; beardless
14th c.	Sparrsätra, Uppland	Relief on <i>ciborium</i>	Sceptre, globe; plain clothes, beardless, sitting; with St Olaf
14th c.	Vendel, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sceptre; plain clothes
14th c. (head 15th c.?)	Västra Ryd, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	None; plain clothes, beardless; insecure identification
Beginning of 14th c.	Hubbo, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Butt of) Sword; plain clothes, beardless
First half of 14th c.	Vämdö, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	None; plain clothes, beardless; insecure identification
1340s	Östervala, Uppland	Relief on goblet	None; head only, beardless
c. 1350	Lofa, Småland	Engraving on goblet	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless, sitting
c. 1350	Fellingsbro, Västmanland	Engraving on goblet	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
15th c.	Vall, Gotland	Embroidery on altarcloth	Sword, globe; plain clothes; with St Olaf
15th c.	Enköping, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
Beginning of 15th c.	Roslags Bro, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	None; plain clothes, beardless, <i>underliggare</i> ; ² probably St Olaf
Beginning of 15th c.	Asker, Närke	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Beginning of 15th c.	Virmo, Finland	wooden sculpture (lost)	None; armour, bearded
First quarter of 15th c.	Valö, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded, with St Henrik
First half of 15th c.	S:t Olof, Skåne	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, leaf; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
First half of 15th c.	Danmark, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, bearded, <i>nounderliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
First half of 15th c.	Sköllerstra, Närke	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
First half of 15th c.	Knutby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
First half of 15th c.	Rö, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	Globe; plain clothes, bearded, <i>nounderliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
First half of 15th c.	Tjällmo, Östergötland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless

1415–1430	Nousis, Finland	Pictures on metal cenotaph	Sceptre, globe; plain clothes, beardless; with St Henrik
1425–1450	Ytterjärna, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1425–1450	Länna, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, bearded, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Olaf
1425–1450	Länna, Uppland	Picture on altarpiece	Two scenes from St Erik's legend (Sea journey with St Henrik, death)
1430–1450	Österunda, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Seven scenes from the life of St Henrik, three including St Erik
c. 1435	Ärentuna, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1437	Tensta, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword; plain clothes, bearded, <i>underliggare</i>
1439	Kumla, Närke	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
c. 1440	Arboga's townchurch	Wall painting in church	Sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1440s?	Vidbo, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
1440s	Färentuna, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1440s	Nagu, Finland	Glass painting	Sceptre, globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1440s	Salo, Finland	Picture on altarpiece	Sceptre, sword; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Middle of 15th c.	Hille, Gävleborgs län	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword; plain clothes; with Sts Olaf and Henrik
Middle of 15th c.	Tövsala, Finland	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes, beardless
Middle of 15th c.	Sigtuna, church of St Mary	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
Middle of 15th c.	Risinge, Östergötland	Wall painting in church	Depiction of St Erik's martyrdom (St Olaf's martyrdom depicted in the same church)
Middle of 15th c.	Medåker, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Burr of) Sword, globe; plain clothes, bearded
Middle of 15th c.	Kvillinge, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf

¹ The medieval painting was restored in 1895 and its content most probably changed during the process. On the 19th- and early 20th-century practice of restoration, see Oertel, 'St Erik and Swedish Nationalism'.

² The *underliggare* is a figure placed under the feet of the saint symbolizing the eternal triumph of the saint over those who have humiliated him/her while alive. In the North it is most frequently St Olaf who is depicted with an *underliggare*.

Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes, appearance, company
Middle of 15th c.	Markim, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
Middle of 15th c.	Överselö, Södermanl.	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with Sts Olaf and Henrik
Middle of 15th c.	Runtuna, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture	None; plain clothes, beardless, <i>undertigare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
Middle of 15th c.	Norrunda, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword; plain clothes, beardless; with St Knut
1451–1452	Vendel, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Unidentifiable; plain clothes; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Tumbo, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Book; armour, beardless; with St Olaf (also with book)
Second half of 15th c.	Uppsala Cathedral	Picture on altarpieces	Ten scenes from the life of St Erik, lost (Peringsköld, Monumenta Uplandica)
Second half of 15th c.	Segersta, Hälsingland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Vidbo, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Hammarby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Burr of) Sword, <i>åborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Rö, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Skivarp, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes but martial, bearded; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Hjorted, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Gualöv, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; unidentifiable; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Torpa, Södermanl.	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Haga, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, banner (?); armour, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Mogata, Östergötland	Wall painting in church	Sword; only as stickfigures; with Sts Olaf, Knut, and Henrik
Second half of 15th c.	Östra Herrestad, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Spear (!), lily sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Njutånger, Hälsingland	Embroidery on cope (<i>pluviale</i>)	Sceptre, globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf

Second half of 15th c.	Östra Vemmerlöv, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Parchment/paper leaf; plain clothes, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Husby-Långhundra, Uppl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
Second half of 15th c.	Kullings-Skövde, Västergödl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	unknown church, Västergödl.	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Hedesunda, Gävleborgs län	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes; with Sts Olaf and Henrik
Second half of 15th c.	Mosjö, Närke	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
Second half of 15th c.	Vällby, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Butt of) Sword, globe; plain clothes, beardless (sculpture lost)
Second half of 15th c.	Tolg, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Synnerby, Västergötland	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	unknown church, Västergödl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Rystad, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Harbo, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
Second half of 15th c.	Skellefteå, Västerbotten	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Täby, Närke	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Övertorneå, Västerbotten	Wooden sculpture	Globe; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Åkerby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	No picture
Second half of 15th c.	Hällnäs, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Täby, Uppland	Wall painting in church	<i>Ciborium</i> , sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Gårds Köpinge, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; insecure identification

Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes, appearance, company
Second half of 15th c.	Gamla Uppsala, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Knislinge, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Goblet (<i>ciborium</i> ?); plain clothes, beardless; insecure identification
Second half of 15th c.	Överselö, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Lagga, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, no <i>underliggare</i> , figure has no head; possibly St Olaf?
Second half of 15th c.	Kulla, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless; insecure identification
Second half of 15th c.	Vallby, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Globe; plain clothes, bearded but young; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Oppmanna, Skåne	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
Second half of 15th c.	Hidinge, Närke	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
Second half of 15th c.	Kårsta, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
1450–1475	Norra Strö, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Spear (?), <i>ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
1455–1469	Gamla Uppsala, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Globe; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
1460s	Gamla Uppsala, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Seven scenes from the legend
before 1462	Ockelbo, Dalarna	Lost	No picture; SDHK, 27888
not before 1462	Danmark, Uppland	Wall painting in church	No picture
1468	Stockholm	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, <i>ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1474	Åker, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless
c. 1470	Boglösa, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sceptre; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
c. 1475	Fogdö, Södermanl.	Embroidery on wall-hanging	Sword, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
c. 1475	Eskilstuna Fors Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf

c. 1475	Tillinge, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
c. 1475	Jumkil, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
c. 1475	Övergarn, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded
1470s	Sånga, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless; with St Henrik
1470s	Salem, Södermanl.	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless
1470–1480	Möja, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
1470–1480	Orkesta, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; possibly St Olaf?
1470s–1480s	Hammarby, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Spear (!); armour, beardless; rather St Knut
1470–1490	Faringe, Uppland	Wooden sculpture	<i>Ciborium</i> , (butt of) sword; armour, bearded
1471	Bälänge, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
1475	Sollenruna, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, beardless
1479	Västra Ryd, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
1475–1500	Jumkil, Uppland	Embroidery on altarcloth	Sword; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1475–1500	Skuttrunge, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
1475–1525	Virtskövle, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Spear (!), lily sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; possibly St Knut?
1476–1488	Brunnby, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword; plain clothes, bearded; with Sts Olaf, Knut, and Henrik
c. 1480	Vansö, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Butt of) sword; armour, beardless
1480s	Neder-Luleå, Västerbotten	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
1482	Kumla, Västmanland	Wall painting in church	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
1485–c. 1490	Skellefteå, Västerbotten	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded; with St Henrik
1487	Ed, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sceptre; plain clothes; with St Olaf
1488	Östra Ryd, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, beardless
c. 1490	Silvberg, Dalarna	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes, beardless

Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes, appearance, company
1490?	Älvkarleby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
1490s	Tolfta, Uppland	Wall painting in church	No picture
1490s	Odensala, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Two scenes from Erik's legend (sea journey with St Henrik, coronation)
1491	Lena, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
c. 1495	Sorunda, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
1498	Linderöd, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
End of 15th c.	Vörå, Finland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, <i>åborium</i> ; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Amsberg, Dalarna	Picture on altarpiece	Sword; armour, beardless; with St Henrik
End of 15th c.	Bollnäs, Hälsingland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword; armour; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Blidsberg, Västergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Näshult, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded
End of 15th c.	Rumskulla, Småland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Risinge, Östergötland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, bearded
End of 15th c.	Algutsrum, Öland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless; with Sts Olaf and Knut
End of 15th c.	Tensta, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Össebygarn, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Älvkarleby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
End of 15th c.	Ekebyborna, Östergötland	Wall painting in church	Sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
End of 15th c.	Slaka, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
End of 15th c.	Haraker, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Älvkarleby, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Butt of) sword; armour, bearded

End of 15th c.	Litslena, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	<i>Ciborium</i> , sword; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Sigtuna, Church of St Mary	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Värdsberg, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Burr of) sword; armour, bearded; with Sts Olaf and Knut
End of 15th c.	Risinge, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Tortuna, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Börje, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Fryksände, Värmland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, leaf (?); armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Nora, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Depiction of a beheaded royal saint
End of 15th c.	Mora, Dalarna	Embroidery on altarcloth	Sword, globe; unidentifiable
End of 15th c.	Högsby, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Kungs-Husby, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Depiction of St Erik's beheading and enshrinement
End of 15th c.	Srängnäs Cathedral	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
End of 15th c.	Huddinge, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Virmo, Finland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, beardless, tre kronor
End of 15th c.	Vika, Dalarna	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; plain clothes; with another (beardless) royal saint
End of 15th c.	Stenberga, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; insecure identification
End of 15th c.	Grangårde, Dalarna	Wooden sculpture	None; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
End of 15th c.	Adelsö, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Lost, no picture
End of 15th c.	Säby, Småland	Wall painting in church	Lily sceptre; plain clothes; with St Olaf
End of 15th c.	Nordmaling, Ångermanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Lost, no picture
End of 15th c.	Hägerstad, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?
End of 15th c.	By, Dalarna	Wooden sculpture	Globe; plain clothes, bearded, no <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Olaf?

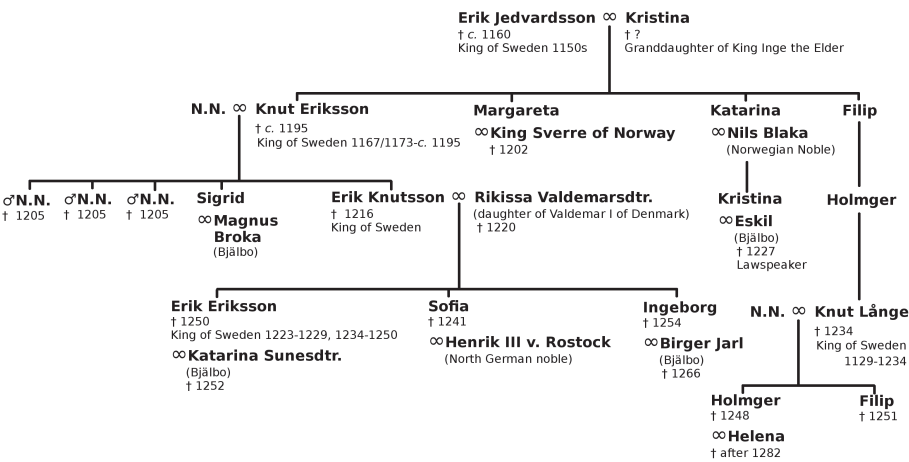
Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes, appearance, company
End of 15th c.	Skee, Bohuslän	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword; armour, beardless; with St Olaf
c. 1500	Högsby, Småland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless
c. 1500	Adelöv, Småland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, lily sceptre; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
c. 1500	Alnö, Medelpad	Embroidery on chasuble	Sword, globe; plain clothes, bearded
c. 1500	Alsike, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Olaf
c. 1500	Sorunda, Södermanl.	Embroidery on chasuble	Sword, globe; armour, <i>underliggare</i> (crowned)
c. 1500	Tövsala, Finland	Picture on altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Henrik
c. 1500	Tortuna, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture	Globe; plain clothes, bearded
c. 1500	Haraker, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture	Globe; armour, beardless
c. 1500	Knivsta, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, banner; armour, beardless, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Henrik
c. 1500	Sätersta, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Spear (?), armour; beardless, <i>underliggare</i> ; possibly St Knut?
c. 1500	Nysätra, Västerbotten	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless
c. 1500	Tegelsmora, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless
before 1503	Stöde, Medelpad	Lost	No information; SDHK 34618
1503	Viksta, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Knut
1504	Tegelsmora, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
1507	Torekov, Skåne	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	No picture (lost), with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Skog, Ångermanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, beardless; with St Henrik
Beginning of 16th c.	Multrä, Ångermanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, bearded
Beginning of 16th c.	Västerås cathedral	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, bearded
Beginning of 16th c.	Funbo, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, bearded; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Västra Ed, Småland	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Njutånger, Hälsingland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, bearded; with St Olaf

Beginning of 16th c.	Sättna, Medelpad	Picture on altarpiece	Sword; armour; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Venjan, Dalarna	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, bearded
Beginning of 16th c.	Tortuna, Västmanland	Wall painting in church	Sword, ciborium; armour, bearded (?); with Sts Olaf, Knut, and Henrik
Beginning of 16th c.	Bollnäs, Hälsingland	Wooden sculpture	<i>Ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Hög, Hälsingland	Embroidery on altarcloth	Sword, book; armour
Beginning of 16th c.	Hemmesjö, Småland	Picture on altarpiece	Sceptre, globe with three crowns; armour, beardless
Beginning of 16th c.	Forsa, Hälsingland	Wooden sculpture	None; plain clothes, bearded, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Vaksala, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; plain clothes, beardless; with St Olaf
Beginning of 16th c.	Österhaninge, Småland	Engraving on goblet	Sword; armour, beardless
First half of 16th c.	Tensta, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword; plain clothes
c. 1510	Runtuna, Södermanl.	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, globe; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1510–1520	Arboga, Västmanland	Picture on altarpiece	St Erik's banner with three crowns; armour, bearded
1510–1520	Arboga, Västmanland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword; armour, bearded
1510–1520	Vallby, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
1514	Värmdö, Uppland	Picture on altarpiece	Globe, sceptre; plain clothes, bearded; with St Olaf
1514	Odensala, Uppland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	None; armour, bearded, <i>underliggare</i> ; with St Olaf
c. 1520	Ore, Dalarna	Wooden sculpture	Globe; armour, beardless
c. 1520	Alnö, Medelpad	Wall painting in church	None visible; plain clothes; with St Olaf
1520–1530	Rasbokil, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Sword, banner; plain clothes, beardless
1521	Linde, Gotland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	No good picture; with Sts Olaf and Knut
1522	Kumla, Närke	Embroidery on chasuble	Sword; plain clothes, bearded
1523	Folkärna, Dalarna	Engraving on goblet	Sword; armour; with St Olaf

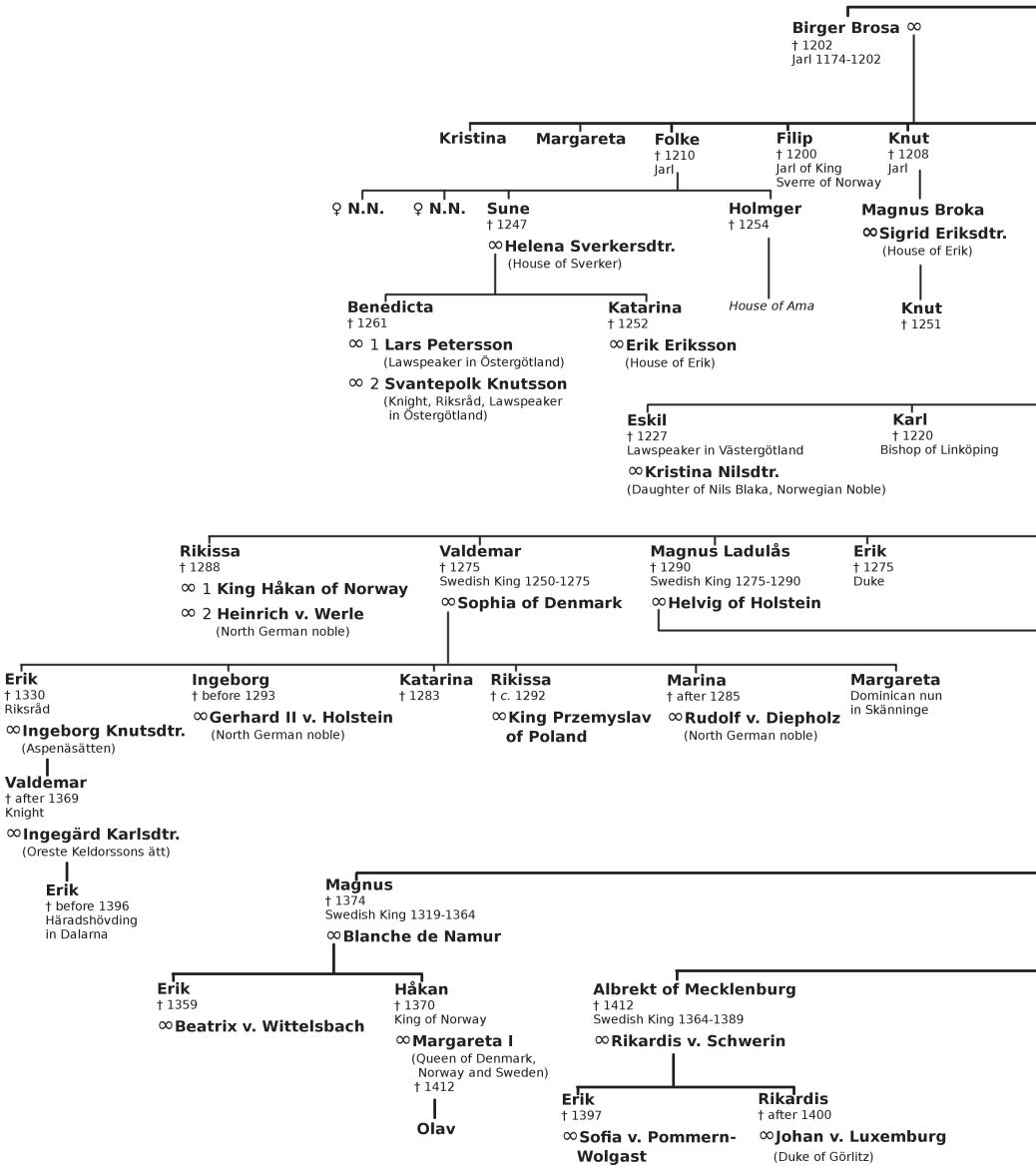
PICTURES SHOWING ALL THREE SCANDINAVIAN ROYAL SAINTS

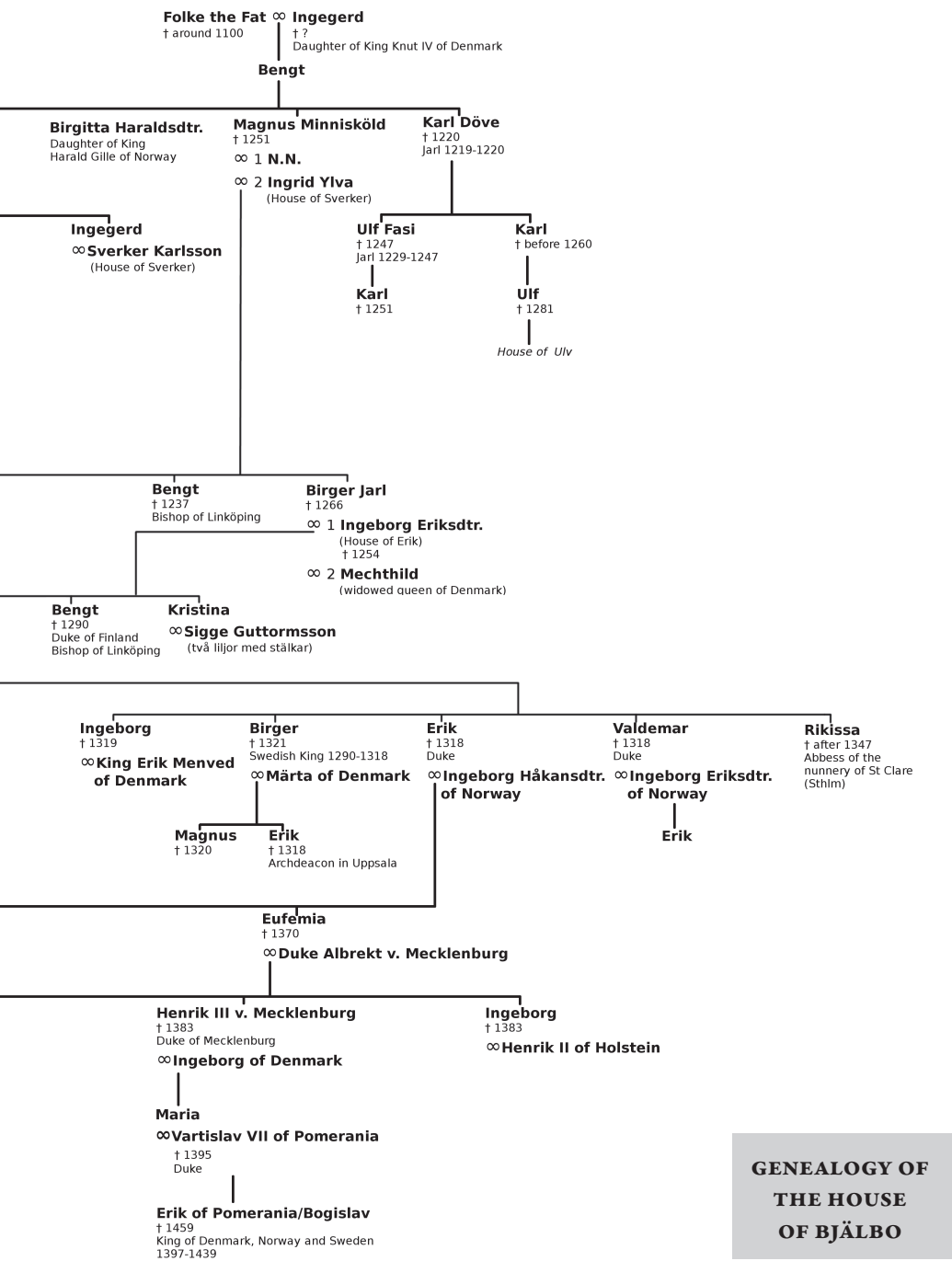
Date	Place	Sort of Depiction	Attributes and appearance
1450–1475	Norra Strö, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Spear (!), <i>ciborium</i> ; plain clothes, beardless
1451–1452	Vendel, Uppland	Wall painting in church	Unidentifiable; plain clothes
Second half of 15th c.	Skivarp, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes but martial, bearded
Second half of 15th c.	Gualöv, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe
Second half of 15th c.	Torpa, Södermanl.	Picture on altarpiece	Sword, globe; armour, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Mogata, Östergötland	Wall painting in church	Sword
Second half of 15th c.	Östra Herrestad, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Spear (!), lily sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Östra Vemmerlöv, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Parchment/paper leaf; plain clothes, beardless
Second half of 15th c.	Vallby, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Globe; plain clothes, bearded but young
Second half of 15th c.	Oppmanna, Skåne	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Globe; armour, beardless
c. 1475	Fogdö, Södermanl.	Embroidery on wall-hanging	Sword, sceptre; plain clothes, beardless
1476–1488	Brunnby, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword; plain clothes, bearded
1498	Linderöd, Skåne	Wall painting in church	Sword, globe; plain clothes, beardless
End of 15th c.	Algutsrum, Öland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	Sword, sceptre; armour, beardless
End of 15th c.	Vårdsberg, Östergötland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	(Butt of) sword; armour, bearded
Beginning of 16th c.	Tortuna, Västmanland	Wall painting in church	Sword, <i>ciborium</i> ; armour, bearded
1521	Linde, Gotland	Wooden sculpture in altarpiece	no good picture

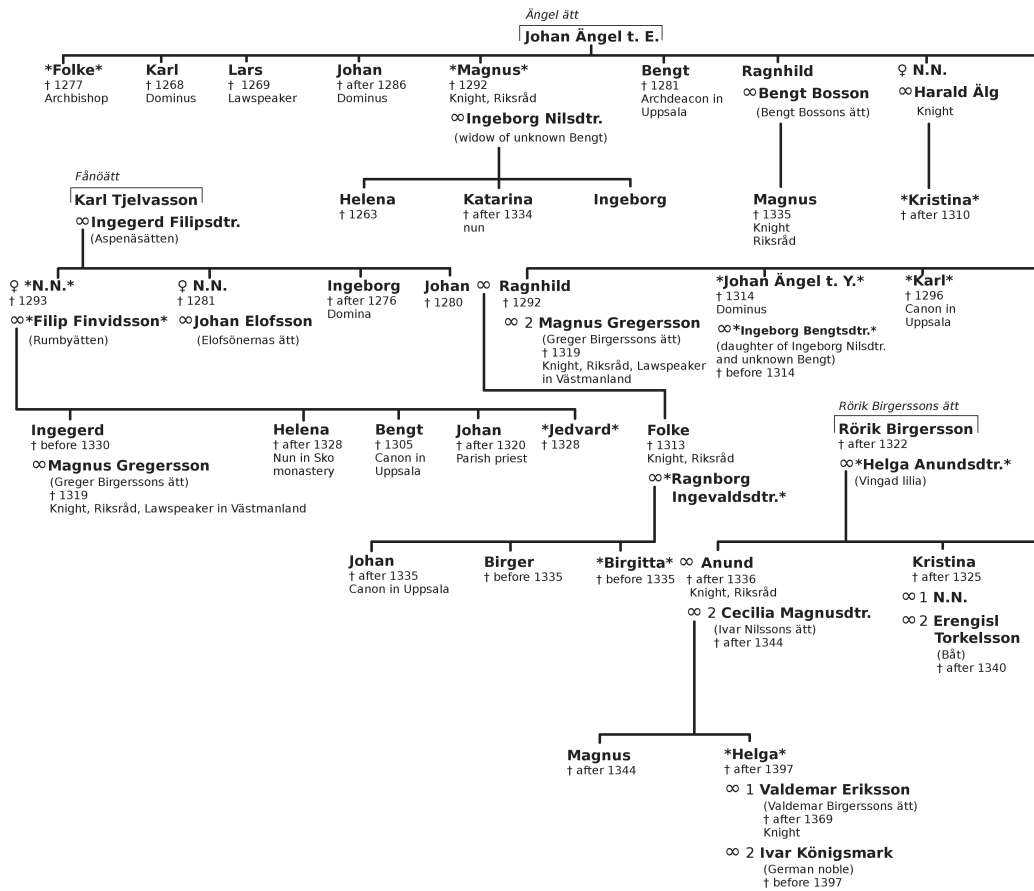
GENEALOGICAL TABLES

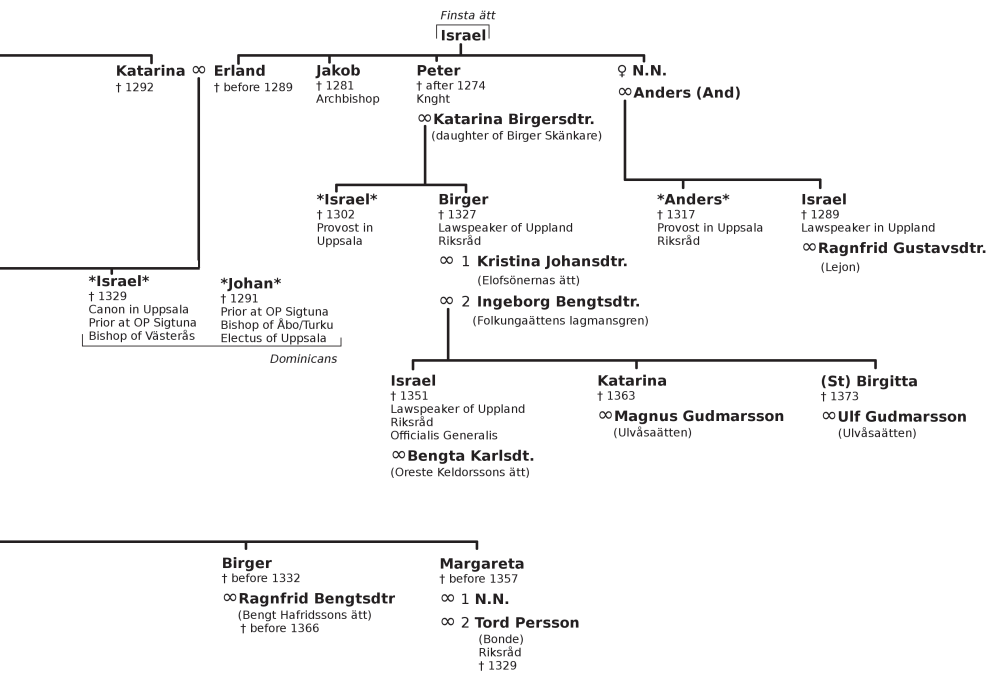


GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF ST ERIK

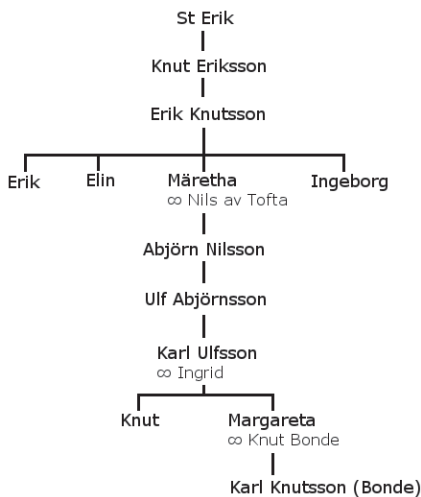




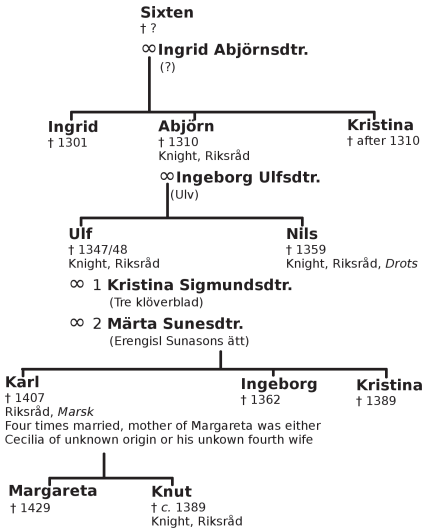
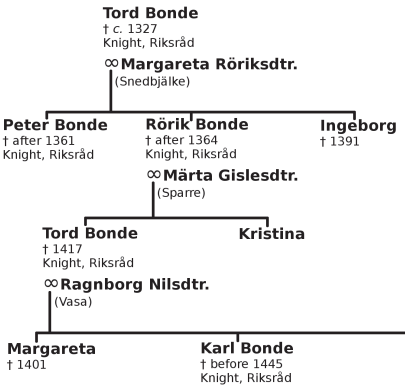




NETWORK OF THE ARISTOCRATIC FAMILIES
OF UPPLAND CONNECTED WITH ST ERIK

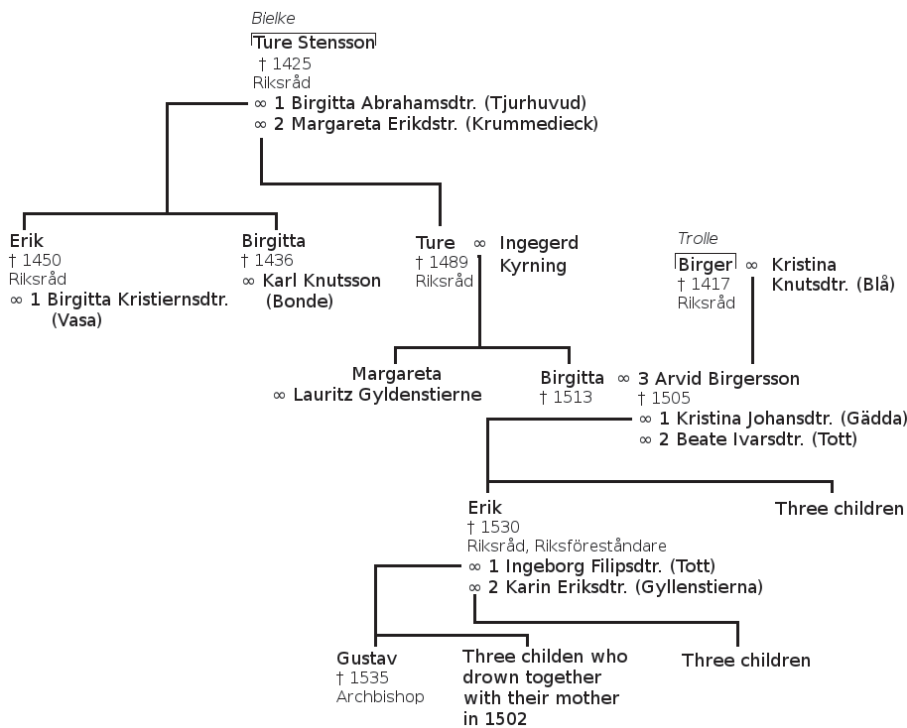


THE ORIGIN OF KARL KNUTTSON (BONDE) ACCORDING TO THE ‘NEW INTRODUCTION TO THE ERIKSKRÖNIKA’



THE ORIGIN OF KARL KNUTTSON (BONDE) ACCORDING TO MODERN RESEARCH





THE BIELKE AND TROLLE FAMILIES
AND THE THREE NORDIC SAINTS

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