Fig. 24.1: Altar shrine with St Erik of Sweden (to the right) and St Olav of Norway (to the left), mid-fifteenth century. Noticeably, the scenes from the two saints' lives depicted on the wings correspond with each other; the two royal martyrs are construed as saints of the same kind. From Länna Church, Sweden. Statens historiska museer, Stockholm.

Biörn Tjällén

Chapter 24

Zion in the North: Jerusalem and the Late Medieval Histories of Uppsala

The clergy of Uppsala referred to the site of their cathedral as the Mountain of the Lord, *mons Domini*. This is a curious place name, and it raises questions about how the Uppsala clergy thought and talked about their church and its role in the Swedish nation. The name referred to the topographical fact that the church was built on a ridge that raised it above the surrounding plains. But it was also a biblical topos – *mons Domini* was a synonym of Zion and thus a reference to a whole set of ideas about the relations between God, man and human society. This chapter, however, suggests that the *mons Domini* place name was only one expression of a broader discursive development: in the self-fashioning of the Swedish archdiocese, two cities that were historically and geographically separated – Jerusalem and Uppsala – were becoming discursively entangled.

The following pages trace the development of the Zion motif in three texts that evince this self-fashioning of the Uppsala institution: the versified office for St Erik, king and martyr (compiled in the late thirteenth century)¹; the versified office for the so-called patrons of the realm (c.1474)²; and the first national history of Sweden, the *Chronica regni Gothorum* (c.1471).³ They are all historiographical texts – the fact that two of them were hagiographies does not change the fact that they describe the history of the Swedish realm. They are all from the cathedral of Uppsala. And finally, they all use the motif of Jerusalem – or its metonymy, Zion – to merge the Swedish history of Uppsala with the universal history of salvation.

¹ *The Historia of St. Erik: King and Martyr, and Patron Saint of Sweden*, ed. Ann-Marie Nilsson, Bromma: Reimers, 2000. Nilsson's edition reconstructs the liturgy for St Erik, including the *vita* and other readings, the poetic parts of the versified office and musical notation, as this ensemble would have appeared towards the end of the thirteenth century.

² The text is edited in Sven Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1989), 259–65.

³ The text is edited in *Ericus Olai. Chronica regni Gothorum. Textkristische Ausgabe*, ed. Ella Heuman and Jan Öberg, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1993.

St Erik: Rex, Martyr and Builder of Zion

Major Christian feasts were celebrated universally, and the Psalms, which formed the core of the Divine office, were the same everywhere as well. The calendar of the saints, however, varied significantly between dioceses. Cults of historical individuals from the locality served to bring the great Christian mysteries closer to home and allowed distinct traditions and identities to develop. In the cult of Swedish saints, clerics could express how God intervened in the history of their own realm. And no cult was more significant in this respect than that of St Erik, the twelfth-century *rex et martyr* who became one of the most prominent saints of Sweden's later Middle Ages.⁴ As a royal saint, the discourse on Erik described two roles: that of a Swedish king who ruled his people, and that of a saint who succoured them. It rolled out two types of history: the history of salvation and the history of the Swedish realm. In the texts for Erik, these multiple roles and histories – celestial and terrestrial – had to be conjoined and reconciled into one single narrative. The motif of Zion was a versatile narrative device that helped achieve this unity.

Erik was one of three Scandinavian kings who were venerated as saints in the Middle Ages. Compared to Norway's St Olav (d. 1030) and Denmark's St Knud (d. 1086), St Erik was a latecomer.⁵ He was killed c.1160, and extant calendars attest that veneration begun in the Uppsala diocese before the end of that century. The establishment of a new native and royal cult fit well with the needs of Uppsala at this time. In 1164, the rather peripheral church was made the metropolitan church of a new Swedish province, more or less independent from the former archbishopric of Danish Lund.⁶ A Swedish royal cult would manifest prestige, attract donations and hence support Uppsala in its new-found position of ecclesiastical leadership. The initiative to disinter the dead king and promote his veneration must have had support from his dynasty; with all likelihood, Knut Eriksson, who was Erik's son, heir and ruler from 1167–1195/96, was an enthusiastic supporter.⁷ However, no proper texts survive from these early days of the cult. Erik's *vita* and versified office are products of the second half of the thirteenth century.⁸ At this second stage of cult development, the Uppsala church and Erik's relics were transferred from its old site to a new location, and a new cathedral built on an elevated ridge overlooking the

⁴ For a recent overview of the cult development, see Christian Oertel, *The Cult of St Erik in Medieval Sweden: Veneration of a Royal Saint, Twelfth–Sixteenth Centuries* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016).

⁵ For medieval royal saints in general and Scandinavian royal saints in particular, see Chapters 5 and 14 (Øystein Ekroll), 86–93 and 270–98.

⁶ The archbishop of Lund would have the right to consecrate the Swedish archbishop elect, but this practice was soon contested by the Swedes.

⁷ Ingrid Lundegårdh, "Kampen om den norrländske Olavskulten," in *Helgonet i Nidaros. Olavskult och kristnande i Norden*, ed. Lars Rumar (Stockholm: Riksarkivet, 1997).

⁸ Nilsson provides an account of the coming into being and potential authors of the texts, *Historia of St. Erik*, 16–22.

river Fyris. The place name, Uppsala, was transferred as well. The first phase of the cult had been supported by Knut Eriksson, and this second phase had the support from the royal dynasty of Bjällbo, who were heirs on their maternal side of the old dynasty of Erik.⁹

Erik's versified office is the product of the ecclesiastical milieu around Uppsala. And Uppsala, including both the old and the new sites of the cathedral, is the centre stage for the historical events that these texts describe. According to the *vita*, it was in Uppsala that St Erik was elected king, that he enacted his important deeds as ruler, and that he was martyred.¹⁰ But behind the surface of this rather provincial historical stage, the readers and singers that performed and attended the liturgy of Erik would catch a glimpse of a city much more splendid. By the means of a considered set of scriptural allusions, the author or authors of the proper texts made the mud and masonry of Uppsala refract Zion. How exactly was this done, and what type of relation between Uppsala and Jerusalem did the authors imply?

The main account for Erik's life, his *vita* or legend, was intoned in short passages at the canonical hour of Matins on his feast days. It presents a straightforward narrative of events that take place in Uppsala. However, after only a few readings, these events are paralleled with similar occurrences in Jerusalem. The author established this link to Biblical history with the conventional statement that King Erik imitated the holy kings of the Old Testament. While the *vita* presents three chief areas of Erik's activity as a ruler – law-making, crusading and building a church in Uppsala – it appears to rate his generosity to Uppsala the highest. If Erik was anything like the holy kings of the Old Testament, then, it was primarily because he contributed to the church:

He followed the examples set by the holy kings of the Old Testament. First by the construction of churches and by the renewal and augmentation of the divine service . . . First and foremost, by the means of great and painstaking work, he endeavoured with care to complete the Uppsala church, which had been founded and built up a bit by the kings of old, who were his forefathers, and to station ministers there for the divine service.¹¹

Erik followed the example of Old Testament kings. But which king or kings did he imitate? A reader versed in Scripture would probably come to think of Solomon and his building of the temple. But if the reader did not catch this reference right away,

⁹ Lundegårdh, "Kampen om den norrländske Olavskulten," 118–26.

¹⁰ Whether the account of the *vita* and the rest of the office is historically accurate in its description of Erik and his reign is a different matter entirely, and will not be discussed in this chapter.

¹¹ "Imitatus namque sanctorum veteris testamenti regum exempla. Primo ad edificacionem ecclesiarum et divini cultus reparacionem ac ampliacionem . . . Nam upsalensem ecclesiam ab antiquis regibus suis scilicet progenitoribus fundatam et aliquantulum edificatam primo et pre ceteris aggrediens ac ministros divini cultus inibi ponens opero pregrandi et laborioso sollicitè studuit consummare." *Historia of St. Erik*, 127. All translations in this chapter are my own.

Fig. 24.2: Uppsala Cathedral. Detail of woodcut by Olof Rudbeck. Illustration in Olof Rudbeck's *Atlantica*, 1679. Upplandsmuseet, Sweden.

he was prodded to do so by the explicit references that were made in the proper texts of the versified office, in the hymns, responsories, antiphons and capitula. These texts were made to intersperse the readings of the Psalms, which constituted the bulk of the divine office, but they also functioned as commentary and a clarification, a sort of exegesis, which brought out the spiritual significance of the historical account of the *vita*. Most significant in this respect was the capitulum, which was read for Vespers and Lauds. The text derived from the Wisdom of Solomon (*Sapientia*), and concerns temple building. Solomon speaks:

You Lord have chosen me to be the king of your people and judge of your sons and daughters, and told me to build a temple on your holy mountain, and in the city where you dwell an altar, like to the holy tabernacle that you had prepared from the beginning.¹²

The capitulum was there to remind the reader that Erik's church building in Uppsala was not an isolated event: Solomon – king of God's chosen people – was called to build a temple on the Lord's holy mount (*in monte sancto tuo*). It was followed by a hymn that continued to stress the likeness between Erik and Solomon in their cares for their respective institutions of worship: "Like peaceful Solomon, the magnificent king [Erik] multiplied the ministers for the divine service and rebuilt the temple."¹³

The historical account of the *vita* referred explicitly to Erik as a church builder in twelfth-century Uppsala. But in the liturgy, this story came wrapped in hymns and readings that alerted the reader not just to the specific parallel of Solomon and Jerusalem's temple, but also to the fact that the story could be read in many ways.

¹² The text used as capitulum was Sap 9:7–8. "Tu domine elegisti me regem populo tuo et iudicem filiorum tuorum et filiarum et dixisti aedificare templum in monte sancto tuo et in civitate habitationis tuae aram similitudinem tabernaculi sancti tui quod praeparasti ab initio." *Historia of St. Erik*, 134.

¹³ "Ministros rex magnificus / cultus Dei multiplicat / ut Salomon pacificus / et templa reedificat." *Historia of St. Erik*, 47.

The authors of this poetry were adept in biblical exegesis, and they expected their readers to interpret accordingly. They were used to search for the eschatological, moral or allegorical significance that lay hidden under the literal or historical surface of a text,¹⁴ and to identify typological relations that may seem far-fetched to a modern reader.¹⁵ To the medieval readers, a wide array of allegorical meanings of the building of the Jewish temple were possible, but in the specific context of St Erik's *vita* the building of the temple foreshadows the spread of the church. Erik's office celebrates the spread of the church in the specific institutional guise of Uppsala. It was a liturgy that established a figurative or typological connection between Solomon and Erik and Jerusalem and Uppsala, one city and one king foreshadowing the other. But what does this tell us about how the Uppsala clergy thought of themselves and their church?

St Erik rebuilt the old cathedral church in Uppsala, but he was martyred at a different location, after hearing mass in a parish church called Holy Trinity nearby. It was there that he was overpowered and beheaded by his enemies and thus, according to the *vita*, "chang[ed] his temporal realm for that of heaven."¹⁶ As mentioned above, by the time that St Erik's *vita* was compiled in the thirteenth century, the old Uppsala cathedral had been abandoned and a new cathedral built at the site of the parish church near the place of Erik's death. The fact that Uppsala was used as a name for two consecutive sites is confusing for modern readers, and an aside in the *vita* indicates that medieval readers found it puzzling too. Right at the peripeteia of Erik's martyrdom in the narrative, the author felt the need to clarify the exact location of the event:

And on that day, he [Erik] attended mass in the church of the Holy Trinity, at what is called Our Lord's mountain [*monte qui dicitur domini*], where the cathedral now is established.¹⁷

It must have been a particular moment, each year, when this passage was intoned in the cathedral. Erik's death had happened right there, near the *mons Domini*, the Lord's Mountain, where the celebrants read and sang to his glory. The new Uppsala

¹⁴ Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'écriture*, vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions Mouton, 1959).

¹⁵ Dennis P. Quinn, "Typology/Figura," in *International Encyclopaedia for the Middle Ages-Online. A Supplement to LexMA-Online* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

¹⁶ "Sique ille de bello ad pacem victor transiens: regnum terrenum in celeste feliciter commutavit." Here, another hymn comments on the death, with yet a reference to Old Testament kingship, but also to Zion: Erik is a "novus David", who dies manly and enters holy Zion. From heaven he shall rule in triumph and come to the aid of many people. *Historia of St. Erik* 2000: 62. "Novus David viriliter / agens dum mundo moritur / sanctam Sion feliciter / regnaturus ingreditur. / Victor regnans in ethere / magnis fulgens miraculis / miro virtutum munere / multis succurrit populis." *Historia of St. Erik*, 129.

¹⁷ "Cumque illa die in ecclesia sancte trinitatis in monte qui dicitur Domini vbi nunc metropolitana fundata est ecclesia missarum sollemniis interesset . . ." *Historia of St. Erik*, 128.

cathedral was indeed built on a ridge that accentuates its prominence in the landscape even today. But the new epithet for this hill, the *mons Domini*, was a curious blend of place name and biblical topos. As synonym of Zion, the Lord's Mountain, or the Mountain of God, or the Holy Mountain, appears ubiquitously in the Psalms, which were read throughout the week in the divine office and therefore always familiar, and in the prophets. It appears in the passage from Wisdom of Solomon that was read at Erik's feast, where it forged a link between events in the Bible and events in Uppsala. And at least by the late thirteenth century, *mons Domini* was present right there at the ecclesiastical city on the hill. It is an interesting name. It indicates that the exegetical habits of figurative thinking and allegorical reading had rubbed off on the local topography and ecclesiastical institution.

Patrons of a Swedish Zion

By the mid fifteenth century, the cult of St Erik had changed character, from a local Uppsala concern to a high-ranking feast in all Swedish dioceses. Also, the artistic renditions of the saint had changed: he now appeared armed and iron clad, and he fronted the seal of the realm as a Swedish *rex perpetuus*. The context that explains this transformation was the national political mobilization from the 1430s that came with the strife and intermittent ruptures of the personal union between Denmark, Norway and Sweden.¹⁸ With the battle of Brunkeberg in 1471, Sweden effectively withdrew from the union, though a definite break would not come until the 1520s. The path of independence was echoed in the nation's cult life. In 1474, Uppsala introduced another high-ranking feast to be celebrated in the whole Swedish province. It was devoted to a group of saints who were considered the special patrons of the realm, and included Erik, but was spearheaded by the first missionary, St Ansgar.

The theme of the versified office for this *festum patronorum regni Suecie* is the fulfilment of the history of salvation through the mission and conversion of the remote Swedish nation. In the texts for St Erik, the image of Jerusalem's temple had served as a narrative bridge that linked the history of Uppsala to the greater story-world of salvation. The office for the patron saints does not mention Uppsala by name, though it is argued below that this particular location was implied. What is certain is that author of the office made consistent use of the motif of Jerusalem, and more particularly Zion, to frame the history of the nation within the history of salvation.

Hans Helander, who edited this "national anthem of the medieval Swedish liturgy," remarked that the text, in fact, pays little attention to the biographies of the

¹⁸ Nils Ahnlund, "Den nationella och folkliga Erikskulten," in *Erik den Helige: historia – kult – reliker*, ed. Bengt Thordeman (Stockholm: Nordisk rotogravyr, 1954).

patrons. Compared to the Office of St Erik, the office of the patrons is an institutional history focused on the church and the salvation of the nation. Instead of biographies, it presents a set of more general motifs that relate the narrative of salvation. Thus, it presents Sweden as the lost sheep, and it depicts a Sweden summoned to the great heavenly banquet in the eleventh hour; but, as Helander would note, most important for the telling of this story was the motif of Zion.¹⁹ Three antiphons in the office hone in on the progression of salvation through time and space.²⁰ They describe an expanding movement, from Zion and the Jewish people in the middle of the world to the peoples of the north who arrive late and meet up in the end:

Ant. 4. The king of the heavens chose the middle of the world [to be] incarnate and living on earth. Once salvation was wrought, he spread the benefits from there to those living in foreign lands.²¹

Ant. 5. From Zion, the law and the word of the Lord issued forth, so that gradually the gentiles are won for his name.²²

Ant. 6. From the far north the totality of the nations arrives with saints and patrons. Salvation, born among the Jews, was spread afar, bestowing the gift of life.²³

The antiphons provide an historical account of the expansion of the church, in the sense that they describe a development over time. However, this is a history that has been foretold. When antiphon 5 declares that the “law and the word” of the Lord has spread from Zion to Sweden, this is not only a historical description but a statement that the prophecy of Isaiah has been fulfilled.²⁴ It is a story of the expansion of the church from Zion to foreign lands; but it unfolds within the meta-history of salvation, and in this larger narrative, Jerusalem is the origin but also the end, as the Heavenly Jerusalem. This last idea is expressed by a responsory that envisions how Zion is founded and ornamented with the help of the Swedish patrons:

¹⁹ Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 183, 226.

²⁰ Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 226, 61.

²¹ My prose translations of these liturgical poems aim to account for their central narrative content. Inevitably the result are texts that, at best, approximate their originals. “Rex celorum incarnatus / et in mundo conuersatus / elegit terre medium; / hic, salutem operatus, / ad extremos incolatus / diffudit beneficium.” Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 261.

²² “Dum de Syon lex exiuit / verbumque vocis domini / succesius acquisiuit / gentes suo nomini.” Helander notes a parallel with Isaiah, Cf. Is. 2:3. “. . . quia de Sion exhibit lex et verbum Domini de Hierusalem”. Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 261.

²³ “Ab extremis aquilonis / intrat, sanctis cum patronis, / plenitudo gentium; / salus ex Iudeis nata / ad extremos dilatata, / vite confert premium.” Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 261.

²⁴ Helander notes the parallel with Is a 2:3. “. . . quia de Sion exhibit lex et verbum Domini de Hierusalem”. Helander, *Ansgarskulten i Norden*, 184.

Resp. Zion, founded with saphire and jasper, and ornamented by Christ with the glorious men who have fought for him.²⁵

Which Zion is built and where? This is liturgical poetry and not historical prose, and the meaning is vague and may allow for multiple interpretations. The gemstones in the description bring the Heavenly Jerusalem to mind,²⁶ in contrast to the historical Jerusalem that is the concern of the previous antiphons. But the responsory is not just about the above and beyond. It speaks about the contribution made by saints active in Sweden. Hans Helander argued that the office of the patrons was to be taken quite literally, as an expression of the patriotism and institutional pride that was characteristic of the Swedish archdiocese at this time. The office, then, declared that through the works of the patrons a Zion had been built in Sweden. This Swedish Zion followed the example of the historical Zion and would be fulfilled in the heavenly Jerusalem. But what about Uppsala? The poem does not say, though Helander considered it likely that it implied a lead role for the Uppsala cathedral.²⁷ Fortunately, we have a third and final text from Uppsala, and one that is more explicit about how the clergy at the Swedish diocese talked and thought about the relationship between their own cathedral and Jerusalem.

The Zion of the *regni Gothorum*

The author of the office for the Swedish patrons was unknown until Hans Helander remarked that the motif of Zion was also prominent in another historiographical text written about the same time by a canon in Uppsala, Ericus Olai (d. 1486): *Chronica regni Gothorum*.²⁸ This was the first major national history of Sweden, and it was completed after the Brunkeberg battle in 1471, which means that if Ericus was indeed also the author of the office for the patrons, he worked on the two texts at the same time, or he had recently brought his magisterial history to a close when he addressed the theme of the conversion and the early missionaries and saints. As can be expected, there are great generic differences between the *Chronica* and the office for the patrons, but they are both, in their respective ways, histories of the realm, and they have, as Helander noted, one significant motif in common: both

²⁵ “Fundans Syon in saphiris, / propugnansque iaspidibus / gloriosis ornat viris / Christus pro se certantibus.” Helander, *Ansgarskulden i Norden*, 226.

²⁶ Cf. Rev 21:19.

²⁷ Helander, *Ansgarskulden i Norden*, 226.

²⁸ Helander 1989, *Ansgarskulden i Norden*: 229. Some of the following can be found in Biörn Tjällén, *Church and Nation: The Discourse on Authority in the Chronica regni Gothorum* (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2007).

use Zion as a narrative device to connect the particular history of the realm with the broader sweep of the history of salvation.

The *Chronica regni Gothorum* is a national history in the sense that it recounts the history of the Swedish realm from its origins until the time of the text's composition. For a story of this kind it has a curious introduction. It does not start with a description of the country or of its first king. Instead, it begins with a dense paragraph that asserts the universal social order: Ericus explains that the church (that is, the social body at large) is divided into laity and clergy, and that the government of this body is shared between spiritual and temporal authorities.²⁹ He then proceeds with a brief account of the spread of the church, from its foundation in Jerusalem, where both priestly and royal authority were present, to Uppsala, a northern seat of bishops and kings.³⁰ These first pages of the *Chronica* are illustrative of the level of learning and the social and political attitudes in existence at the Uppsala cathedral, but they are heavy reading and hard to account for in modern prose. It is perhaps no surprise that later editors sometimes ignored them.³¹ In this prologue, Ericus proceeded as a theologian rather than as an historian.³² The text is heavy with references to Scripture and frequently interrupted by an authorial voice preoccupied with Biblical exegesis.

"The prophet reminds us," Ericus says with a reference to Psalm 86, "that the church militant was founded on holy mountains."³³ This psalm of course said nothing about the church, but it was common to interpret it as if it did; the *Glossa ordinaria* suggested that the "holy mountains" could refer to the apostles.³⁴ But Ericus explicitly rejects this manner of interpreting which sought to uncover a deeper and "mystical" meaning of the text [*sensu quodam mistico*]. He preferred an approach

²⁹ Ericus Olai, I, 1–3; Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, 57–64.

³⁰ The bulk of this narrative, save the more detailed account about Uppsala, covers no more than one and a half page in the modern edition, at Ericus Olai, I, 1–23.

³¹ The omission of these sections from the early modern prints of the *Chronica* was also a result of their Catholicism and hierocratic tenor, as discussed in Biörn Tjällén, "The Spiritual and Temporal Office of the King: Confessional Anxieties in the Seventeenth-Century Editions of the *Chronica regni Gothorum*," in *Hortvs troporvm: florilegium in honorem Gvillae Iversen*, ed. Erika Kihlman and Alexander André (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2008).

³² On Ericus's education, career, theological works and teaching, see Tjällén, *Church and Nation*, 30–5.

³³ "Fundamenta vero militantis ecclesie in montibus sanctis propheta rememorans . . ." Ericus Olai 1993: I, 4. Cf. Ps 86:1. "Fundamenta eius in montibus sanctis / diligit Dominus portas Sion / super omnia tabernacula Iacob / gloriosa dicta sunt de te civitas Dei." The similarity was suggested by the editor, Ericus Olai *Chronica regni Gothorum II: Prolegomena und Indices*, ed. Jan Öberg, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995.

³⁴ *Glossa ordinaria*: Psalmus LXXXVI: "Basilus & Theodoretus . . . Montes vero sancti supra quos fundamenta iecit, Salvatoris nostri sunt Apostoli."

that he considered more literal [*sensu accipi literali*].³⁵ When God said “here I will dwell, for I have chosen it” (Ps 131:14), it meant just that: God chose the physical location of Mount Zion. Jerusalem was in the middle of the world [*in medio terre*], and it was there that the Lord appeared to mediate between God and man and to work salvation.³⁶ Focusing on the historical/literal aspects of this place, Ericus also noted another significant feature: by God’s decree, the holy city of Jerusalem was a seat of both priestly and royal power. If the psalm, then, had prophesied that the church militant would be founded on holy mountains and Zion was the first of these mountains, surely the topographical and institutional features that pertained to this location were significant. Ericus’s conclusion was that when God spread the church from this point of origin, he did so by multiplying the features of Zion, which was his dwelling place, all over the world.³⁷ That meant that prominent places (hilly or perhaps in other respects notable) that housed priestly and royal authorities had a particular role to play. And with their function as a new Zions came the place name: “God preordained that every distinguished place where episcopal and royal government [. . .] would be assembled should take on the name of Zion.”³⁸

Ericus’s procedure is exegetical and his account of the spread of the church militant is essentially a story about the spread of salvation. But it is not ahistorical; it is chronological and focused on the expansion of the church as an institution. Ericus identified the old and the new law as two great phases in this history, and God had chosen Jerusalem and Rome as the respective and consecutive centres of these phases.³⁹ The choice of Rome was providential, because the fact that the empire had gathered all realms under the rule of one facilitated the progress of salvation.⁴⁰ The early expansion of the church was the story of proselytising apostles like Peter.⁴¹ But

³⁵ Ericus might have been influenced by Nicholas of Lyra (d. 1349), author of the *Postilla litteralis super totam Bibliam* that accompanied the *Glossa ordinaria* in late medieval Bibles. Lyra championed the *duplex sensus litteralis*, according to which there could be a Jewish sense and a Christian sense of one and the same passage, very different from one another but both equally literal. This meant, for instance, that the literal sense of the Song of songs was not necessarily that it was a poem about carnal love, but about “desire for supernatural felicity.” See Mary Dove, “Literal Senses in the Song of Songs,” in *Nicholas of Lyra. The senses of Scripture*, ed. Philip D.W. Krey and Lesley Smith (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 129–30 and literature there referred to. Lyra’s comment about the “holy mountains” in Ps 86, however, differs from Ericus’s interpretation; Lyra says that the mountains refer to Sion and Tabor, where Christ preached or taught, etcetera.

³⁶ Cf. *Prelude*, 5.

³⁷ *Ericus Olai*, I, 5–7.

³⁸ “‘Hic’, inquit, ‘habitabo, quoniam elegi eam’, vt Syon nomine omnis locus accipiatur insignis, in quo episcopalia gubernacula et regalia moderamina . . . collocanda sunt, Deus prouiderat ordinanda.” *Ericus Olai*, I, 6.

³⁹ *Ericus Olai*, I, 16–17.

⁴⁰ *Ericus Olai*, I, 8–9.

⁴¹ *Ericus Olai*, I, 11–14.

then it had been the story of the multiplication of cathedral churches. This too was preordained, as Ericus attests with another passage from Scripture: John's vision of the heavenly throne surrounded by twenty-four lesser thrones was significant – the lesser thrones denoted important bishoprics.⁴²

Ericus was more or less aware of the historical paths that had shaped the church, but he was convinced that these paths were preordained and thus retraceable through attention to Scripture. With exegetical skill, he seemed to think, they could be followed, from Jerusalem in the middle of the world to the cathedral churches in countries far removed. His account of the expansion of the church is very similar to the one sketched in the versified office for the Swedish patrons. Helander was certainly right to suggest that the two texts were written by the same author.

By the help of yet another paraphrase of a psalm, Ericus restates what he had said from the start: that the church was founded on holy mountains. What had started at mount Zion had then spread all the way to the North – that is, to the latitudes that he had set out to chronicle. And there too, those special churches should be known by the name of Zion:

The church, which is the city of the great king, was founded with joy all over the world, in every place chosen by the Lord, which is in his holy mountain, Mount Zion. It goes by the name of Zion, also in the northern parts of the world [*apud latera aquilonis*].⁴³

The psalm that Ericus was loosely paraphrasing here of course says nothing in literal terms about the church, and nor does it say anything about locations in Scandinavia. It calls to praise the Lord in his holy mountain, Zion, which is founded on “the northern side of the city of the great king.” Ericus's paraphrasing was in tune with the needs of his project. He read the psalm as a prophecy not just of the foundation of the church in general, but of a church in the North.

What else could be found *apud latera aquilonis*? Certainly Sweden and Uppsala! In the sentence immediately following the quote above, Ericus slides effortlessly from the vast tableau of salvation history to his more local concern, and the actual topic of the *Chronica*:

In the northern parts of the world (*in lateribus aquilonis*) there is a great country once famous under the name of Gothia but now more commonly called Sweden, in the midst of which there

⁴² *Ericus Olai*, I, 20–22. Cf. Rev 4:4.

⁴³ “Fundatur igitur exultatione universe terre catholica per orbem ecclesia, que est civitas Regis magni, in omni loco, quem elegerat Dominus, in monte videlicet sancto eius, qui est mons Syon, hoc est Syon nomine appellatu, eciam apud latera aquilonis.” *Ericus Olai*, I, 23. Cf. Ps 47:3. “Magnus dominus et laudabilis nimis / in civitate dei nostri in monte sancto eius / fundatur exultatione universe terre / montes Sion latera aquilonis / civitas regis magni.” Ericus does not mention the fact that he is paraphrasing Scripture.

is a beautiful and prominent place, more distinguished so to speak because of its comeliness in the centre (*caput*) of the realm, and the first to be inhabited after the Flood.⁴⁴

And another few lines into the *Chronica*, Ericus articulates the name of this Zion in the North: Uppsala. But, just as stated in the old *vita* of St Erik, Uppsala was not the name of choice among the clergy that staffed its cathedral. With the conversion to Christianity the hill that had housed the cult of three heathen gods (Oden, Thor and Frej) had been transformed into the property of the Lord, a fact that was expressed through the genitival compound that served as its new name, *mons Domini*:

From the beginning and in the native language, this place is called Uppsala, but after the filthy gods were done away with and the church of the Holy Trinity built there, it is called the Lord's Mountain [*mons Domini*].⁴⁵

The matter of the conversion from heathendom, and the rich imagery of the hill in Uppsala and its part in this drama, apparently brought Isaiah's description of Zion (Is. 2) to Ericus's mind. As mentioned above, Ericus paraphrased this description from Isaiah in his office for the Swedish patrons, where he described Zion as the place from whence the law and the word would issue forth. It was difficult from that poetical text to tell if he spoke of the Heavenly Jerusalem to come, or of the building of a Swedish Zion. In the *Chronica*, however, Ericus makes it clear that a Zion existed in Sweden. Isaiah too had talked about Zion as the *mons Domini*, and he had prophesied that at the end of time people would discard their idols and climb this mountain to be taught the ways of the Lord. Ericus quotes some of Isaiah verbatim, and then articulates his understanding of how the prophecy applies to Uppsala:

Though this prophecy may be fulfilled in a general and mystical sense with the realm of Christ and the church, it is truthful also according to the letter about this place, which by its proper name is called *mons Domini*, [and] where the Uppsala church is founded . . .⁴⁶

⁴⁴ "Extat enim in lateribus aquilonis regio quedam amplissima Gochia quidem famosius sed Suecia nunc wlgarius nominata, in cuius quasi medio locus quidam amenus et eminens tamquam insignior ob sui decenciam in caput regni a primo mox regionis incolatu post diluuium exstiterat constitutus." *Ericus Olai*, II, 1.

⁴⁵ "Locus autem a primordio natiua lingua patrie Vpsala dicebatur sed postmodum, eliminata deorum spurcicia et edificata ibidem sancte Trinitatis ecclesia, mons Domini deinceps est vocatus." *Ericus Olai*, II, 4.

⁴⁶ "Que prophecia etsi de regno Christi et ecclesia vniversaliter et mystice sit impleta, de loco tamen, qui proprio nomine dicitur mons Domini, in quo fundate est Vpsalensis ecclesia, eciam habet ad literam veritatem . . ." *Ericus Olai*, II, 24. This passage ends with a concluding reference to Rev 22:17.

Conclusion

At least from the end of the thirteenth century, the clergy at the Swedish archdiocese called the site of their metropolitan church the *mons Domini*. The cathedral of Uppsala is indeed situated on a ridge, which makes it a significant landmark above the surrounding plains. But the moniker of mountain of the Lord was still a curious place name, partly a recognition of the natural topography and partly a biblical topos that brought Zion and the larger biblical Jerusalem cluster to mind. The place name was, in fact, only the most explicit expression of a broader discursive entanglement, which linked Uppsala with the image of Jerusalem.

Through tracing the discursive entanglement of these two cities, as it developed in three texts that chronicle the history of the church in Sweden, we can observe how the Uppsala institution appropriated the image of Jerusalem to promote itself but also to understand its own role within wider society. The earliest example examined is the late thirteenth-century *vita* and versified office of St Erik, Swedish king and martyr. This text indicates that this tradition of discursive entanglement may have been of a considerable age by the time when the two latter texts were compiled, towards the end of the fifteenth century. In these – the office for the Swedish patron saints and in the *Chronica regni Gothorum* – this entanglement was more explicitly expressed.

The blurring of the discursive boundaries between their own ecclesiastical institution and the authoritative example of Zion seems to have been part of a self-image that was cultivated at the Uppsala diocese. It is unlikely that this type of appropriation of the Jerusalem commonplace was unique to the Swedish cathedral, but the task of making such wider comparisons fall outside the remit of this article. Why did the Uppsala clergy, or any other clerical community, want the two cities entangled in this way? On the one hand, Uppsala's appropriation of Zion was part of its institutional self-fashioning. Jerusalem was singled out by God as the seat of priestly and royal authority over the chosen people, and indeed a place central to the mediation between God and man by the way of the incarnation. It was a convenient short hand for expressing Uppsala's claims to leadership on the level of the realm. But beyond these institutional ambitions, it served another and more existential end. It helped the Swedish clergy connect the history of their realm, and indeed their daily work in the cathedral, with the greater storyworld of the history of salvation.