

HUNGARIAN HISTORIANS' VIEWS ON ST. ADALBERT

László Veszprémy

The problem of St. Adalbert's Hungarian activities relates to hagiographic research in the first place. Above all because reliable contemporary information on his stay in Hungary is very scarce. This lack of information is what forced Hungarian

chroniclers in the second half of the 11th century to introduce a person, namely St. Adalbert, who supposedly converted and baptised the first king of Hungary. To give the patronage of the first archbishop's see in Hungary to St. Adalbert was a conscious decision taken first and foremost by the imperial court. That Adalbert had some influence on Otto's special political and clerico-political relations with the new Christian states of Hungary and Poland is highly probable. Even if one can only guess what this role entailed, its importance is greatly underestimated by modern historiography in Hungary. It is not unlikely that Adalbert's real historical role ought to be seen rather in this kind of influence, not in the traditional legendary motives of his confirmation and of matchmaking. Otto III, in any case, recognised this role, and this is why he founded the independent organisation of the church, the archbishoprics in both states, on the relics and the memory of the saint who, following his martyrdom and the cult that was a result of it, became the most important figure of Hungarian Christianity, which he remains even today.