

= Ladislaus I of Hungary =

Ladislaus I or Ladislav I , also Saint Ladislaus or Saint Ladislav (Hungarian : I or Szent László ; Croatian : Ladislav I. ; Slovak : Svätý Ladislav I ; c . 1040 ? 29 July 1095) was King of Hungary from 1077 and King of Croatia from 1091 . He was the second son of King Béla I of Hungary . After Béla 's death in 1063 , Ladislaus and his elder brother , Géza , acknowledged their cousin , Solomon as the lawful king in exchange for receiving their father 's former duchy , which included one @-@ third of the kingdom . Géza and Ladislaus cooperated with Solomon for the next decade . Ladislaus 's most popular legend , which narrates his fight with a " Cuman " (a Turkic nomad marauder) who abducted a Hungarian girl , is connected to this period . Géza 's and Ladislaus 's relationship with Solomon deteriorated in the early 1070s , and they rebelled against him . Géza was proclaimed king in 1074 , but Solomon maintained control of the western regions of his kingdom . During Géza 's reign , Ladislaus was his brother 's most influential adviser .

Géza died in 1077 , and his supporters made Ladislaus king . Solomon resisted Ladislaus with the assistance of King Henry IV of Germany . Ladislaus supported Henry IV 's opponents during the Investiture Controversy . In 1081 , Solomon abdicated and acknowledged Ladislaus 's reign , but he conspired to regain the royal crown and Ladislaus imprisoned him . Ladislaus canonized the first Hungarian saints (including his distant relatives , King Stephen I and Duke Emeric) in 1085 . He set Solomon free during the canonization ceremony .

After a series of civil wars , Ladislaus 's main focus was the restoration of public safety . He introduced severe legislation , punishing those who violated property rights with death or mutilation . He occupied almost all Croatia in 1091 , which marked the beginning of an expansion period for the medieval Kingdom of Hungary . Ladislaus 's victories over the Pechenegs and Cumans ensured the security of his kingdom 's eastern borders for about 150 years . His relationship with the Holy See deteriorated during the last years of his reign , as the popes claimed that Croatia was their fief , but Ladislaus denied their claims .

Ladislaus was canonized on 27 June 1192 by Pope Celestine III . Legends depict him as a pious knight @-@ king , " the incarnation of the late @-@ medieval Hungarian ideal of chivalry . " He is a popular saint in Hungary and neighboring countries , where many churches are dedicated to him .

= = Early years (before 1064) = =

Ladislaus was the second son of the future King Béla I of Hungary and his wife , Richeza (or Adelaide) , who was a daughter of King Mieszko II of Poland . Ladislaus and his elder brother , Géza , were born in Poland , where Béla had settled in the 1030s after being banished from Hungary . Ladislaus was born around 1040 . Ladislaus 's " physical and spiritual makeup testified to God 's gracious will even at his birth " , according to his late @-@ 12th @-@ century Legend . The almost contemporaneous Gallus Anonymus wrote that Ladislaus was " raised from childhood in Poland " and almost became a " Pole in his ways and life " . He received a Slavic name ; " Ladislaus " is the Hungarian version of " Vladislav " .

Béla and his family returned to Hungary around 1048 . Béla received the so @-@ called " Duchy " ? which encompassed one @-@ third of the kingdom ? from his brother , King Andrew I of Hungary . The Illuminated Chronicle mentions that Andrew 's son , Solomon , " was anointed king with the consent of Duke Bela and his sons Geysa and Ladislaus " in 1057 or 1058 .

Béla , who had been Andrew 's heir before Solomon 's coronation , left for Poland in 1059 ; his sons accompanied him . They returned with Polish reinforcements and began a rebellion against Andrew . After defeating Andrew , Béla was crowned king on 6 December 1060 . Solomon left the country , taking refuge in the Holy Roman Empire . Béla I died on 11 September 1063 , some time before German troops entered Hungary in order to restore Solomon . Ladislaus and his brothers , Géza and Lampert , went back to Poland , and Solomon was once again crowned king in Székesfehérvár . The three brothers returned when the Germans left Hungary . To avoid another civil war , the brothers signed a treaty with Solomon on 20 January 1064 , acknowledging Solomon 's reign in exchange for their father 's duchy .

= = Duke in Hungary (1064 ? 1077) = =

Ladislaus and Géza probably divided the administration of their duchy ; Ladislaus seems to have received the regions around Bihar (now Biharia , Romania) . Géza and Ladislaus cooperated with King Solomon between 1064 and 1071 . The most popular story in Ladislaus 's later legends ? his fight with a " Cuman " warrior who abducted a Christian maiden ? occurred during this period . The relationship between the king and his cousins became tense in the early 1070s . When Géza accompanied Solomon on a military campaign against the Byzantine Empire in 1072 , Ladislaus stayed behind with half of the ducal troops in Nyírség to " avenge his brother with a strong hand " if Solomon harmed Géza .

Realizing that another civil war was inevitable , the king and dukes launched negotiations to obtain the assistance of foreign powers . First , Ladislaus visited the Kievan Rus ' , but he returned without reinforcements . He then went to Moravia , and persuaded Duke Otto I of Olomouc to accompany him back to Hungary with Czech troops . By the time they returned to Hungary , the royal army had already invaded the duchy and routed Géza 's troops at the Battle of Kemej on 26 February 1074 . Ladislaus met his fleeing brother at Vác , and they decided to continue the fight against Solomon . A legend preserved in the Illuminated Chronicle mentions that before the battle , Ladislaus " saw in broad daylight a vision from heaven " of an angel placing a crown on Géza 's head . Another legendary episode also predicted the dukes ' triumph over the king : an " ermine of purest white " jumped from a thorny bush to Ladislaus 's lance and then onto his chest . The decisive Battle of Mogyoród was fought on 14 March 1074 . Ladislaus commanded " the troops from Byhor " on the left flank . Solomon was defeated , but instead of surrendering to his cousins , he fled to the western borders of the kingdom to seek assistance from his brother @-@ in @-@ law Henry IV of Germany .

Géza was proclaimed king , but Solomon established himself in Moson and Pressburg (now Bratislava , Slovakia) . During his brother 's reign , Ladislaus administered all of their father 's former duchy . He repelled Solomon 's attack on Nyitra (present @-@ day Nitra , Slovakia) in August or September 1074 , but he could not seize Pressburg . Ladislaus was also his brother 's main advisor . Legend says that Géza decided to build a church dedicated to the Holy Virgin in Vác after Ladislaus explained the significance of the wondrous appearance of a red deer at the place where the church would be erected :

As [King Géza and Duke Ladislaus] were standing at a spot near [Vác] , where is now the church of the blessed apostle Peter , a stag appeared to them with many candles burning upon his horns , and it began to run swiftly before them towards the wood , and at the spot where is now the monastery , it halted and stood still . When the soldiers shot their arrows at it , it leapt into the Danube , and they saw it no more . At this sight the blessed Ladislaus said : " Truly that was no stag , but an angel from God . " And King [Géza] said : " Tell me , beloved brother , what may all the candles signify which we saw burning on the stag 's horns . " The blessed Ladislaus answered : " They are not horns , but wings ; they are not burning candles , but shining feathers . It has shown to us that we are to build the church of the Blessed Virgin on the place where it planted its feet , and not elsewhere . "

= = His reign = =

= = = Consolidation (1077 ? 1085) = = =

Géza I died on 25 April 1077 . Since Géza 's sons , Coloman and Álmos , were minors , his supporters proclaimed Ladislaus king instead . Gallus Anonymus emphasizes that King Boleslaus II the Bold of Poland " drove out " Solomon " from Hungary with his forces , and placed [Ladislaus] on the throne " ; Boleslaus even called Ladislaus " his king " . Although the Illuminated Chronicle emphasizes that Ladislaus " never placed the crown upon his head , for he desired a heavenly

crown rather than the earthly crown of a mortal king " , all his coins depict him wearing a crown , suggesting that Ladislaus was actually crowned around 1078 . Shortly after his coronation , Ladislaus promulgated two law books , which incorporated the decisions of an assembly of the " magnates of the kingdom " , held in Pannonhalma . The majority of these laws were draconian measures to defend private property , showing that Ladislaus primarily focused on internal consolidation and security during the first years of his reign . Those who were caught stealing were to be executed , and even criminals who committed minor offenses against property rights were blinded or sold as slaves . His other laws regulated legal proceedings and economic matters , including the issuing of judicial summons and the royal monopoly on salt trade .

If someone , freeman or bondman , should be caught in theft , he shall be hanged . But if he flees to the church to evade the gallows , he shall be led out of the church and blinded . A bondman caught in theft , if he does not flee to the church , shall be hanged ; the owner of the stolen goods shall take a loss in the lost goods . The sons and daughters of a freeman caught in theft who fled to the church , was led out and blinded , if they are ten years old or less , shall retain their freedom ; but if they are older than ten years they shall be reduced to servitude and lose all their property . A bondman or freeman who steals a goose or a hen shall lose one eye and shall restore what he has stolen .

The Illuminated Chronicle claims that Ladislaus planned to " restore the kingdom " to Solomon and " himself have the dukedom " , but almost all contemporaneous sources contradict this report . Ladislaus approached Pope Gregory VII , who was the primary opponent of Solomon 's ally , Henry IV of Germany . At the Pope 's request , Ladislaus sheltered Bavarian nobles who had rebelled against Henry . In 1078 or 1079 , Ladislaus married Adelaide , a daughter of Rudolf of Rheinfelden , whom the German princes had elected to take the place of Henry IV as king . Ladislaus supported Leopold II , Margrave of Austria , who also rebelled against Henry IV ; however , the German monarch forced Leopold to surrender in May 1078 .

Taking advantage of the internal conflicts in the Holy Roman Empire , Ladislaus besieged and captured the fortress of Moson from Solomon in early 1079 . However , Henry IV stormed the western regions of Hungary , and secured Solomon 's position . The German invasion also prevented Ladislaus from assisting Boleslaus the Bold , who fled to Hungary after his subjects expelled him from Poland . Ladislaus initiated negotiations with Solomon , who abdicated in 1080 or 1081 in exchange for " revenues sufficient to bear the expenses of a king " . However , Solomon soon began conspiring against Ladislaus , and Ladislaus imprisoned him .

The first five Hungarian saints , including the first king of Hungary , Stephen I , and Stephen 's son , Emeric , were canonized during Ladislaus 's reign . Stephen 's canonization demonstrates Ladislaus 's magnanimity , because Ladislaus 's grandfather , Vazul , had been blinded by Stephen 's orders in the 1030s . Historian László Kontler says that the canonization ceremony , held in August 1083 , was also a political act , demonstrating Ladislaus 's " commitment to preserving and strengthening " the Christian state . Ladislaus even dedicated a newly established Benedictine monastery ? Szentjobb Abbey ? to Stephen 's right arm , known as the " Holy Dexter " , which was miraculously found intact . Ladislaus released Solomon at the time of the ceremony ; legend said that Stephen 's grave could not be opened until he did so .

[The] Lord , in order to show how merciful [King Stephen I] had been while living in a mortal body , demonstrated his approval of [Stephen 's revelation as a saint] before all other works when [the king] was already reigning with Christ to the point that though for three days they struggled with all their might to raise his holy body , it was not by any means to be moved from its place . For in that time , because of the sins , a grave discord arose between the said king Ladislas and his cousin Solomon , because of which , Solomon , captured , was held in prison . Therefore when they tried in vain to raise the body , a certain recluse at the church of the Holy Savior in Bökénysomlyó , by the name of Karitas , whose famous life at the time was held in esteem , confided to the king by a revelation made to her from heaven that they exerted themselves in vain ; it would be impossible to transfer the relics of the holy king until unconditional pardon was offered to Solomon , setting him free from the confinement of prison . And thus , bringing him forth from the prison , and repeating the three @-@ day fast , when the third day arrived for the transferal of the holy remains , the stone lying over the grave was lifted up with such ease as if it had been of no weight before .

After his release , Solomon made a final effort to regain his crown . He persuaded a Pecheneg chieftain , Kutesk , to invade Hungary in 1085 . Ladislaus defeated the invaders at the upper courses of the Tisza River .

= = = Expansion (1085 ? 1092) = = =

In August 1087 , German princes who opposed Henry IV 's rule held a conference in Speyer . The contemporaneous Bernold of St Blasien mentions that Ladislaus sent envoys to the meeting , and " promised that he would assist [them] with 20 @,@ 000 knights , if it became necessary " . Ladislaus also recognized Pope Victor III as the legitimate pope , rather than Clement III , who had been elected pope at Henry IV 's initiative . However , Ladislaus provided no further support to Henry IV 's opponents after he was informed of Solomon 's death in 1087 .

King Demetrius Zvonimir of Croatia 's wife , Helen , was Ladislaus 's sister . After the death of Zvonimir and his successor , Stephen II , a conflict developed between factions of Croatian noblemen . At Helen 's request , Ladislaus intervened in the conflict and invaded Croatia in 1091 . The same year , he wrote to Oderizius , Abbot of Monte Cassino in Italy , about his invasion . Thomas the Archdeacon 's chronicle describes how Ladislaus " occupied the entire land from the River Drava to the mountains called the Iron Alps without encountering opposition " . However , his opponents crowned a local nobleman , Petar Sva?i? , as king . Sva?i? fought in the Gvozd Mountains , preventing the complete conquest of Croatia . Ladislaus appointed his nephew , Álmos , to administer the occupied territory . Around the same time , Ladislaus set up a separate diocese in Slavonia , with its see in Zagreb . The bishop of the new see became the suffragan to the archbishop of Esztergom in Hungary .

Ladislaus admitted in his letter to Oderizius that he could not " promote the cause of earthly dignities without committing grave sins " . Historian Bálint Hóman says that Ladislaus was referring to a developing conflict with Pope Urban II , who objected to Ladislaus 's refusal to acknowledge the Holy See 's suzerainty over Croatia . In the letter , Ladislaus styled himself as " king of the Hungarians and of Messia " . Historian Ferenc Makk writes that the latter title referred to Moesia , implying that Ladislaus had taken the regions between the Great Morava and Drina rivers from the Byzantine Empire . No other documents refer to Ladislaus 's occupation of Moesia , suggesting that if Ladislaus did occupy the region , he lost it quickly . Alexandru Madgearu says that " Messia " should rather be associated with Bosnia , which was occupied during Ladislaus 's campaign against Croatia .

The Cumans invaded and plundered the eastern part of the kingdom in 1091 or 1092 . Makk argues that the Byzantines persuaded them to attack Hungary , while the Illuminated Chronicle states that the Cumans were incited by the " Ruthenians " . In retaliation , the chronicle continues , Ladislaus invaded the neighboring Rus ' principalities , forcing the " Ruthenians " to ask " for mercy " and to promise " that they would be faithful to him in all things " . No Rus ' chronicle documents Ladislaus 's military action .

Bernold of St Blasien writes that Duke Welf of Bavaria prevented a conference that Emperor Henry IV " had arranged with the king of the Hungarians " in December 1092 . A letter written by Henry refers to " the alliance into which [he] once entered " with Ladislaus . Pope Urban II also mentioned that the Hungarians " left the shepherds of their salvation " , implying that Ladislaus had changed sides and acknowledged the legitimacy of Antipope Clement III . In the deed of the Benedictine Somogyvár Abbey , Ladislaus stated that the abbot should be obedient to him , proving that Ladislaus opposed the Church 's independence , which was demanded by the Gregorian Reforms . Ladislaus personally presided over an assembly of the Hungarian prelates that met in Szabolcs on 21 May 1091 . The synod recognized the legitimacy of a clergyman 's first marriage , in contrast to the requirements of canon law , which states that members of the clergy may not marry at all . According to a scholarly theory , the sees of the dioceses of Kalocsa and Bihar were moved to Bács (now Ba? , Serbia) and Nagyvárad (present @-@ day Oradea , Romania) , respectively , during Ladislaus 's reign .

= = = Last years (1092 ? 1095) = = =

Ladislaus intervened in a conflict between Wladislaw I Herman , Duke of Poland , and the duke 's illegitimate son , Zbigniew , on the latter 's behalf . He marched to Poland and captured Wladislaw I Herman 's younger son , Boleslav , in 1093 . At Ladislaus 's demand , Wladislaw I Herman declared Zbigniew his legitimate son . The Illuminated Chronicle also mentions that the Hungarian troops captured Cracow during Ladislaus 's campaign , but the credibility of this report has been questioned .

The Illuminated Chronicle states that " messengers from France and from Spain , from England and Britain , and especially from Willermus , the brother of the King of the Franks " visited Ladislaus in Bodrog (near present @-@ day Ba?ki Mono?tor in Serbia) on Easter 1095 , asking him to lead their crusade to the Holy Land . Ladislaus 's legend says that he decided " to go to Jerusalem , and to die there for Christ " . The whole story was invented , probably during the reign of King Béla III of Hungary (who was actually planning to lead a crusade to the Holy Land in the 1190s) , according to historian Gábor Klaniczay . However , Ladislaus did plan to invade Bohemia , because he wanted to assist his sister 's sons , Svatopluk and Otto . He became seriously ill before reaching Moravia . The Illuminated Chronicle narrates that Ladislaus , who had no sons , " called together his chief men " , telling them that his brother 's younger son , Álmos , " should reign after him " .

Ladislaus died near the Hungarian @-@ Bohemian border on 29 July 1095 . A papal bull issued by Pope Paschal II in 1106 states that Ladislaus 's " venerable body rests " in Somogyvár Abbey , implying that Ladislaus had been buried in Somogyvár . On the other hand , Ladislaus 's late 12th @-@ century Legend says that Ladislaus 's attendants decided to bury him in Székesfehérvár , but the cart carrying his body " set out to Várad on its own , unassisted by any draft animal " .

= = Family = =

Historian Gyula Kristó says that Ladislaus had a first wife , but her name and family are not known . She gave birth to a daughter , whose name is also unknown . Ladislaus 's daughter married Prince Iaroslav Sviatopolkich of Volhinia around 1090 . Ladislaus again in 1078 , to Adelaide , a daughter of the German anti @-@ king Rudolf of Swabia . Their only known child , Piroska , became the wife of the Byzantine Emperor John II Komnenos in 1105 or 1106 .

Ladislaus 's family and relatives who are mentioned in the article are shown in the following family tree .

* According to a scholarly theory suggesting that Ladislaus had two wives .

= = Legacy = =

= = = Consolidation of the Christian monarchy = = =

For centuries , hagiographers and historians have emphasized Ladislaus 's prominent role in the consolidation of the Christian monarchy . The chronicles also stressed his idoneitas , or personal suitability , to reign , because the legitimacy of his rule was questionable . The Illuminated Chronicle clearly states that Ladislaus knew that " the right of law between him and [Solomon] was not on his side but only the force of fact " .

After Ladislaus 's victories over the Pechenegs and the Cumans , the nomadic peoples of the Pontic steppes stopped invading Hungary until the Mongol invasion of 1241 . Kristó suggests that the Székely people ? a community of Hungarian @-@ speaking warriors ? started settling the easternmost borderlands under Ladislaus . The " historic association of the Kingdom of Hungary and Croatia " , which ended in 1918 , began with Ladislaus 's conquest of Croatia . His conquest marked the beginning of a period of Hungarian expansion , which ensured that Hungary developed into a leading Central European power during the following centuries . It became a customary rite for a newly crowned Hungarian monarch to take a pilgrimage to Ladislaus 's shrine at Várad . Louis I of

Hungary , who made many attempts to expand his territory in the Balkan Peninsula , showed a special respect for Ladislaus .

Hungary had never had as great a king , so they repute

And the land thereafter never bore that much and splendid fruit .

= = = The Holy King = = =

Gábor Klaniczay emphasizes that Ladislaus " seemed expressly designed to personify the knight @-@ king ideal " of his age . During the reign of Ladislaus 's successor , Coloman the Learned , Bishop Hartvik said that Ladislaus 's " character was distinguished by the respectability of morals and remarkable for the splendor of his virtues " . The so @-@ called *Gesta Ladislai regis* (" The Deeds of King Ladislaus ") , which are the texts about Ladislaus 's life and reign preserved in 14th @-@ century Hungarian chronicles , were written during Coloman 's rule . Five significant events of Ladislaus 's life , which were not included in his official legend , were only preserved in the *Gesta* .

The most popular story describes Ladislaus 's fight with a " Cuman " warrior after the Battle of Kerlés (at present @-@ day Chirale? , Romania) in 1068 . In the battle , the united armies of Solomon , Géza and Ladislaus routed a band of Pechenegs or Oghuz Turks who were plundering the eastern parts of the kingdom . According to the version recorded in the *Illuminated Chronicle* , Ladislaus spotted a pagan warrior fleeing from the battlefield with a captive Hungarian maiden . Ladislaus pursued the " Cuman " , but he could not stop him . On Ladislaus 's advice , the maiden pulled the warrior off his horse , allowing Ladislaus to kill the " Cuman " after a long fight on the ground . Archaeologist Gyula László says that murals depicting this legend in medieval churches preserved the elements of pagan myths , including a " struggle between forces of light and darkness " .

[The] most blessed Duke Ladislaus saw one of the pagans who was carrying off on his horse a beautiful Hungarian girl . The saintly Duke Ladislaus thought that it was the daughter of the Bishop of Warad , and although he was seriously wounded , he swiftly pursued him on his horse , which he called by the name of Zug . When he caught up with him and wished to spear him , he could not do so , for neither could his own horse go any faster nor did the other 's horse yield any ground , but there remained the distance of a man 's arm between his spear and the Coman 's back . So the saintly Duke Ladislaus shouted to the girl and said : " Fair sister , take hold of the Coman by his belt and throw yourself to the ground . " Which she did ; and the saintly Duke Ladislaus was about to spear him as he lay upon the ground , for he wished to kill him . But the girl strongly pleaded with him not to kill him , but to let him go . Whence it is to be seen that there is no faith in women ; for it was probably because of strong carnal love that she wished him to go free . But after having fought for a long time with him and unmanned him , the saintly Duke killed him . But the girl was not the bishop 's daughter .

During the reign of Stephen II of Hungary , Ladislaus 's shrine in the cathedral of Várad became a preferred venue for trials by ordeal . However , it cannot be determined whether Ladislaus became subject to veneration soon after his death , or if his cult emerged after he was canonized by Béla III of Hungary on 27 June 1192 . Béla had lived in the Byzantine court , where Ladislaus 's daughter , Empress Irene , was venerated as a saint . According to Thomas the Archdeacon , Pope Innocent III declared that Ladislaus " should be enrolled in the catalogue of saints " , but his report is unreliable , because Celestine III was Pope at the time . Celestine III 's bulls and charters make no reference to Ladislaus 's canonization , implying that Ladislaus was canonized without the Holy See 's authorization . The nearly contemporaneous *Regestrum Varadinense* says that a bondsman , named " Tekus , son of the craftsman Dénes " , opened Ladislaus 's tomb at the beginning of the ceremony , after which Tekus was granted freedom . Parts of Ladislaus 's head and right hand were severed so that they could be distributed as relics . The 15th @-@ century silver reliquary that contains Ladislaus 's head is displayed in the Gy?r Cathedral .

Ladislaus 's official legend , which was compiled after 1204 , attributes a number of miracles to him . According to one of his legends , a pestilence spread throughout the kingdom during Ladislaus 's reign . Ladislaus prayed for a cure ; he then shot an arrow into the air at random , hitting a herb

which cured the illness . This plant became known as " Saint Ladislaus 's herb " in Hungary .

Ladislaus is a patron saint of Hungary , especially along the borders . In particular , soldiers and the Székely people venerate him . A late medieval legend says that Ladislaus appeared at the head of a Székely army fighting against and routing a plundering band of Tatars in 1345 . He is also called upon during times of pestilence . He is often depicted as a mature , bearded man wearing a royal crown and holding a long sword or banner . He is also shown on his knees before a deer , or in the company of two angels .

= = = Gallery = = =