

January 19, 1955

Memorandum to the Board of Trustees:

At a meeting of the Faculty of the Institute on December 21, 1954, the School of Historical Studies reported that it had voted unanimously in favor of the election of Andreas Alföldi of the University of Basle to a professorship in the School of Historical Studies. The vote lay over, and at the following meeting of the Faculty, on January 14, 1955, the Faculty unanimously voted its approval. I now transmit this vote to the Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study, with a request for their concurrence. I recommend that Professor Alföldi's salary be fixed at \$18,000 a year, with the usual arrangements for retirement, travel and assistance. Since Professor Alföldi is 60 years old, I recommend that the Director be authorized to make any substitute arrangements with Professor Alföldi which the latter may desire, and which have the effect of decreasing his present salary and increasing his payments during retirement, so long as the total charges on the Institute shall not exceed those which a conventional arrangement would involve.

I enclose a brief account of Professor Alföldi's career and scholarship, and a few letters that we have had about him.

This appointment, which is ardently desired by Alföldi's colleagues at the Institute, in some respects replaces the appointment of Professor Herbert Bloch, which was voted last spring. After long hesitation, Professor Bloch has informed us that he prefers to remain at Harvard. We have ascertained that Alföldi will accept a professorship at the Institute if it is offered to him.

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The international recognition of his achievements is attested to by the fact that at least seven academies have bestowed upon him honorary

membership (l'Institut de France, British Academy, Pontificale Accademia di Archeologia, Bavarian, Danish, Hungarian, Bulgarian Academies), while he is a corresponding member of most archaeological and philological associations in Europe.

Alföldi was visiting professor at Dumbarton Oaks in 1950 and is returning there to serve in the same capacity for the spring term of 1955, after which he will join for a summer session the faculty of the American Numismatic Society in New York.

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Princeton, New Jersey

Department of Art and Archaeology

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The Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton, N. J.

Dear Professor Kantorowicz:

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Alföldi belongs to that generation of historians who have a deep insight into a certain phase of history because they know how to use competently evidence from many different fields and how to coordinate the results. It is difficult to classify a scholar like Alföldi who is an eminent archaeologist and knows, like any professional in his field, his monuments in a wide field of Roman empire art and, related to and growing out of it, Germanic, Celtic, Scythian monuments and those of many other nations. As a historian, he has increased our knowledge of one of the most critical periods in history--the 3rd and 4th centuries--from so many different points of view, to mention only imperial, ceremonial, religious policy of the Constantinian dynasty and cultural activities alongside of strictly political history. In my opinion nobody can study today, as an archaeologist or historian, this phase of history without coming to grips with Alföldi's writings. Philologists have a high regard for his sound knowledge of literary sources. He has his reputation as an epigraphist, and he is an acknowledged numismatist.

In this diversity of interests in many fields and in his ability lies Alföldi's strength as a humanist who masters and at the same time transcends the study of details.

All this you know, of course, better than I do, but I would also like to take this opportunity to add a personal note. Ever since I met Alföldi many years ago in this country, I have remained in contact with him and have been impressed by his personal charm and willingness to share and to exchange his knowledge with his colleagues. His presence in Princeton would be stimulating to other people's research, including my own, and I also feel sure that he would be most welcome by my colleagues.

With kind regards,

As always, yours sincerely,

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I called him to Dumbarton Oaks as Visiting Professor for the spring term in 1950 because of his eminence in his field and because we felt the need of his assistance. My colleagues in Dumbarton Oaks, now that I am no longer director, have again asked him for the spring term of this current year. After that he is to be one of the chief lecturers at the American Numismatic Society in their well-known summer seminars.

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Sincerely,

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Marquand Professor of Art and
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This note was written to Professor Kantorowicz
from Professor Grabar of the Collège de France

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Si vastes que soient les perspectives que nous ouvrent les travaux d'Alföldi, ils sont centrés généralement sur un domaine défini: l'Antiquité romaine ou le Monde barbare à la fin de l'Antiquité et au début du Moyen Age. Ce programme a dû s'établir dans l'esprit d'Alföldi parce que en Hongrie, où il a vécu et travaillé pendant longtemps, il a été attiré, avant tout, par les monuments de l'ancienne Pannonie, romaine d'abord, barbare, ensuite.

Au départ il s'était attaché à des études de numismatique et d'archéologie locales, mais, contrairement à tant d'érudits provinciaux, il a voulu "situer" l'histoire locale par rapport à la grande histoire, et appuyer les moindres de ces travaux, sur une documentation exhaustive.

Cette documentation, si complète, lui ouvrit alors la voie aux études qui dépassaient les problèmes pannoniens, sans qu'il ait jamais interrompu la lignée des recherches particulières réservées au passé de son pays et de ses ancêtres Hongrois. Du côté de la grande histoire de Rome, il se manifesta d'abord par deux longs mémoires consacrés aux origines des cérémonies de la Cour impériale tardive, des insignes du pouvoir et des autres manifestations de la conception nouvelle de la monarchie universelle. Avec un sens surprenant de l'histoire, Alföldi réussit à fixer dans ces deux recherches les premières étapes d'un processus qui conduira à la monarchie byzantine et occidentale du moyen-âge, et c'est pourquoi son travail a servi de clef ou de base à d'autres historiens qui, après lui, ont étudié la doctrine et les manifestations extérieures de la monarchie chrétienne.

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L'époque romaine tardive pose à chaque pas le problème des rapports du monde latin avec l'Orient sémitique, iranien et égyptien. Alföldi s'est penché maintes fois sur ce problème, et en a traité, dans des études brillantes, notamment à propos du culte d'Isis à Rome, au IV^e siècle. Ce qui le mettait, en outre, sur la voie des recherches sur la réaction païenne à Rome, après Constantin - sujet des plus passionnants et qui, à son tour, rentre dans la catégorie des thèmes essentiels de la fin de l'Antiquité, - ceux de l'essor des croyances religieuses de toute origine, au sein de la société romaine. Les contributions d'Alföldi à l'étude de la vie religieuse mouvementée de cette époque, et d'époques plus anciennes et plus récentes à Rome, sont parmi les plus attachantes qu'on connaisse, et dans le nombre je relèverais surtout celles qui, typiques pour Alföldi, intéressent à la fois les activités religieuses et politiques, que ce soit en Grèce classique, dans la Rome républicaine et surtout impériale, ou chez les "peuples cavaliers" de race Turque, Huns, Avars, Hongrois.

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Alföldi s'est taillé là un domaine d'études qui lui est propre, et l'on ne peut qu'exprimer le souhait qu'il y persevère, pour le plus grand bien de la recherche historique.

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