

INTRODUCTION

James H. Richardson and Federico Santangelo

Andreas Alföldi died in February 1981. The conference from which this volume derives took place some thirty years after his death – that is, almost a generation, or thereabouts. Certainly in 1981 both editors of this collection were only small children. Although the study of antiquity is one of those fields where older scholarship can remain relevant for considerably longer than is the case in others, this is certainly by no means the rule, and much that is written inevitably falls by the wayside. It is, therefore, some measure of the importance and originality of Alföldi's work that so much of it continues to exert an influence, and that many of his ideas are still being engaged with today. This is the case even for some of those hypotheses and approaches that have been less well received. It should be noted too that, while it is now slightly more than thirty years since Alföldi died, it is a century since the appearance of his first publication, a book review that came out in 1914, when Alföldi was just 19 years of age.¹

In these increasingly bureaucratized times, it is often supposed that an effective way to measure the importance of a scholar's work is simply to count up the number of references made to it. The relevance of Alföldi emerges clearly from the use of this questionable criterion.² Anyone who cares to look (if they do not already know) will find that Alföldi's work continues to be cited in publication after publication, in any contribution that seriously engages with one of the periods or topics with which he had concerned himself. And again, this is the case even for those works that have been less well received. A case in point is his book *Early Rome and the Latins*, the central thesis of which was challenged by several authoritative reviewers and has now generally been discredited. Subsequent archaeological discoveries have also gone a long way towards undermining Alföldi's thesis. But the book is so extraordinarily rich, erudite, original, and stimulating that no serious student of the period can afford to ignore it.

A considerably better measure of Alföldi's achievement is the recognition and honours that he received from his peers during his lifetime. The point was already well made by J. F. Gilliam in his obituary for Alföldi, which appeared in 1981 in the *American Journal of Archaeology*. Gilliam's words are worth quoting in full (p. 515):

A short list of some of Alföldi's academic honors should be more instructive than most familiar phrases. He received honorary doctorates from the universities in Utrecht, Ghent, Bonn, and Paris. His academies included the Institut de France, the Swedish, Hungarian, Lincei (Rome),

1 Alföldi 1914.

2 One tally may be noted here: the bibliography of Syme's *The Roman Revolution* contains more works by Alföldi than it does by anyone else, apart only from Syme himself.

Austrian, British, Munich, Mainz, Göttingen, Danish, and Bulgarian. He was an honorary member of many learned societies, among them, the Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, Society of Antiquaries (London), Society for Promotion of Roman Studies, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Finnish Archaeological Society, Turkish Historical Society, at least eight Numismatic Societies, Society of Sciences in Lund, and considerably more. Among his special honors were the German Orden pour le mérite für Wissenschaften und Künste, Les palmes académiques (France), the Gold Medal of the City of Rome "Cultori di Roma," and the Huntington Medal of the American Numismatic Society. For some years he was the only "Ehrenmitglied" of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

As F. Kolb has said, '[h]ardly any contemporary scholar in his field received as many honors as Alföldi'.³

The range of topics with which Alföldi concerned himself, and of which he had mastery, was extraordinary. At the time of his death his bibliography contained more than 300 items (written in Hungarian, German, English, French, and Italian), and covered considerable ground, both metaphorically and geographically. The main headings alone in the bibliography of Alföldi's work that was compiled for the obituary published by the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton may suffice to give some impression: 'Theory and Practice in the Study of Antiquity', 'Archaic Rome and the Roman Republic', 'The Roman Empire', 'The Carpathian Basin in Antiquity', 'Crisis and Decline of the Ancient World', 'History and Culture of the Peoples of the Steppes'. Under each of these headings can be found a wealth of studies, dealing with archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, religion, symbolism and ideology, cultural, social, and political history, and more.

Such prolificacy, combined with a command of so many fields inevitably makes any assessment of Alföldi's overall achievement difficult. As T. P. Wiseman observes in his contribution to this volume, '[w]hen the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres published an obituary appreciation of Alföldi, it took three scholars even to attempt to cover his range: Jacques Heurgon on early Rome, Jean-Baptiste Giard on numismatics, André Chastagnol on late antiquity'. The effects of this are also to be seen in the present book, where the attempt to engage with Alföldi's work has inevitably been selective; even apart from the number of people it would take to engage fully with his entire output, the resulting publication would fill several volumes.

Given Alföldi's distinctions and accomplishments, and the enduring importance of his work, the general lack of international attention which the man himself, and his work as a whole, have received since his death seems striking. After all, Alföldi's work may be compared for breadth of scope, originality, and intellectual vigour to that of great figures like B. G. Niebuhr, Th. Mommsen, M. Rostovtzeff, G. De Sanctis, A. Momigliano, or R. Syme. But, unlike those scholars, whose lives and work have been the focus of considerable scholarly attention, Alföldi has, by comparison, been somewhat neglected, and especially so in English-language scholarship. (This is somewhat of a paradox, since Alföldi was based at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton from 1956 until his death in 1981, published numerous important studies in English, and had many more translated into that language). Alongside the several obituaries that appeared after his death, volume 33 of the

3 Kolb 1982, 18.

Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis (which was published in 1998) was devoted to Alföldi and his work; a slender, but invaluable volume to commemorate his 100th birthday appeared in 1999; and an essay on Alföldi's migration to Switzerland by P. Forisek was published in 2008, in a volume in honour of J. Sarkady (volume 16 of *Hungarian Polis Studies*). Unfortunately, none of these works is particularly easy to get hold of. More readily available, however, is the long essay that can be found in K. Christ's *Neue Profile der Alten Geschichte*, which appeared in 1990.

It is to be hoped that this collection will go at least some way towards filling this gap and, ideally, towards stimulating further research, not only on Alföldi's vast and wide-ranging output, but also on the man himself. As it happens, a major biography of Alföldi is currently being prepared by P. Forisek (in which Forisek's own contribution to the Lampeter conference will be incorporated) and will hopefully be available in the not too distant future. Even apart from his scholarship, Alföldi's life was an extraordinary one, and his flight from Hungary also happens to serve as a timely reminder that freedom to think, speak, and write must never be taken for granted, that its loss has dreadful consequences, and that vigilance is essential, whether the threat is coming from an oppressive political regime, as in Alföldi's case, or – *si parua licet componere magnis* – from the ever-increasing commercialisation of education and academia, as in our own times.

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The roots of Alföldi's fascination with the ancient world stretched right back to his childhood. Alföldi was born in Pomáz, Hungary in 1895, and the Roman presence in the area was still evident. As he says himself in the foreword to his book *Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates*, he grew up near the site of Aquincum, where Roman masonry was still visible. Roman potsherds were easy to find, and the farmers' ploughs regularly turned up Imperial coins and other artefacts. The study of this material became one of Alföldi's lifelong goals.⁴

For his doctoral dissertation, which he undertook at the University of Budapest and completed in 1918, Alföldi chose to study clay moulds and the portrayal of emperors on them. The work was written while he was recuperating from a wound he had received while serving in the infantry in World War I. The doctors had intended to amputate his leg, after the wound became infected, but Alföldi (with a pistol to keep them at bay) had refused. The result was eight months spent in hospital.

4 Alföldi 1974, 9: 'In den Außenbezirken des pannonischen Legionslagers Aquincum, in dessen direkter Nachbarschaft ich aufgewachsen bin, ragte noch an manchen Stellen, römisches Mauerwerk aus dem Boden hervor. Römische Scherben waren, auf den Feldern verstreut, leicht zu entdecken. Der pflug entriß dem Boden ständig neue Kaisermünzen, Metallgegenstände und Hausrat. Das Leben dieses Eckpfeilers des römischen Wehrsystems, dessen vom selten unterbrochenen Anbränden der Fremdvölker geprägte Geschichte ein Leidensweg gewesen ist, wurde mir durch die Entdeckung ständig neuer Überreste zum täglichen Erlebnis, seine Erforschung zum Lebensziel'.

It was in that same year, 1918, that Alföldi began work at the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest. Then, from 1923 until 1930, he served as Professor of Ancient History at Debrecen, before moving back to Budapest, where he was Professor of both Ancient History and Archaeology of the Hungarian Territory until 1947, in which year he fled from Hungary to Switzerland. The academic environment in which Alföldi worked while he was in Hungary, and the role that he played in it are discussed by J. Szilágyi in his contribution to this volume, while his move to, and time spent in Switzerland (where he taught at Berne from 1948 to 1952, and then at Basle, from 1952 to 1956) are the focus of S. Ruprecht's paper. Ruprecht's study also brings to the fore, for the first time, a wide range of archival material that sheds light on the difficult personal and political circumstances that preceded and determined Alföldi's decision to leave Hungary, the fate of his library and his archive, and his reception in a new academic environment.

According to the accounts of many contemporary witnesses, Alföldi was a charismatic teacher and research supervisor. He gathered a circle of pupils in Budapest, and offered a venue for the publication of the work of many of them in a new academic series, the *Dissertationes Pannonicae*; he also launched a series with similar remit and ambitions, the *Dissertationes Bernenses*, after his move to Switzerland. And yet, when the chance was presented to him of taking up a post that involved no teaching or administrative duties, he keenly accepted, and moved to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. It was at Princeton that he spent the rest of his career and it was there that he continued to pursue his research on a great range of topics, both old and new. He still retained close bonds with Europe, where he travelled regularly and for extended periods; he also maintained a second home in Switzerland. But he never returned to his native Hungary, and he eventually acquired US citizenship.⁵

The quarter of a century during which Alföldi was based at Princeton afforded him the opportunity to write the series of monographs that he had been planning since he was in Hungary, as a letter to U. Kahrstedt published in Ruprecht's paper shows. Many of those projects were grounded in decades of reading, filing, and on the patient gathering of textual and visual evidence, which is reflected in the extensive archive that he gathered in Budapest, and which he managed only in part to take with him to Switzerland. A. Marcone, in his contribution to this volume, rightly notes that Alföldi was deeply loyal to his research interests. If one goes through his bibliography, it readily becomes apparent that he continued to work on the same general themes over the space of several decades. In some cases the same issues were revisited from different viewpoints; in others, various preparatory studies were later brought together and published as a single volume. There is one significant exception. His work on Pannonia and the Danubian regions – which is dis-

5 After his move to the US, Alföldi went by the name of 'Andrew Alföldi', effectively dropping his native first name, András. Much of his work, and not just that published in German, appeared under the name 'Andreas Alföldi', and this is how we refer to him in the title of the present volume and in this introduction; some contributors, however, have chosen to use 'Andrew' or 'András' and we have respected their preferences. It is also worth noting that Alföldi signed some of his papers in French as 'André' and some of his works in Italian as 'Andrea'.

cussed in this volume, from different angles, by the late G. Alföldy and by Z. Visy – was brought to an end in the second half of the 1940s, when Alföldy was separated from the relevant section of his extensive Budapest archive.

During his time in Hungary, Alföldy focused heavily on late antiquity. At least four strands in his research may be identified. First, the ground-breaking work on the crisis of the third century AD, an interest which Alföldy shared with M. Rostovtzeff, and which he developed from an original angle, that of ‘world crisis theory’. The view of a third-century ‘crisis’ was long dominant in scholarship, although it has become the object of considerable debate and revision in the last couple of decades, most notably in scholarship in German. A number of scholars, however, including Alföldy in his contribution to this topic in the present volume, still acknowledge its fundamental value.

Secondly, Alföldy had a strong interest in the reconstruction of the religious climate in the city of Rome during the rise of Christianity. In a series of studies published in the 1930s and 1940s, he put forward the view that there was a staunch resistance to the rise of the new religion by sizeable sectors of the Pagan population, especially at the level of the elite. Much of his argument rested on the analysis of notoriously difficult evidence, that of the medallions known as *contorniati*, which Alföldy proposed to view as pieces of anti-Christian propaganda issued by the mint, under the direct control of the senatorial elite. As P.F. Mittag notes, this view attracted heavy criticism, most notably from J.M.C. Toynbee; Alföldy did not come back to these issues in his later published work and did not directly confront the objections that were raised against his reconstruction, although he would have conceivably done so in the new work on the *contorniati* that was in preparation at the time of his death.⁶

Alföldy’s work on Constantine, which appeared first in Hungarian and subsequently in English, followed in the same fashion, although it focused on the Christian context. As F. Ziosi shows, it has two fundamentally innovative points: a rejection of the then predominant paradigm developed by J. Burckhardt in the mid-nineteenth century, which portrayed Constantine as a cynical monarch who exploited Christianity to pursue a plan of tyrannical rule; and a strong interest in the evidence for the Christian iconography in Constantine’s coinage. Both aspects of his approach require considerable qualification in light of the work of the last few decades, but Alföldy’s original assessment of the age of Constantine had a profoundly innovative impact on scholarship on the period.

Fourthly, his interest in the *Historia Augusta* and its value as a source for the reconstruction of late antiquity informed Alföldy’s teaching and research as early as the late 1920s, as A.R. Birley discusses in his chapter. This interest accompanied Alföldy throughout his life, and fed into several publications that appeared in the

6 Some of the research that Alföldy carried out for this project eventually fed into Alföldy-Alföldy 1990, but as Metcalf 1991, 755 observes in his review of the book: ‘Much of Andreas Alföldy’s original thesis has been reiterated, even down to the verbiage. Large chunks of the original text [of 1943]... have simply been reset. As is noted, Alföldy held to his original thesis right up to his death, but did not have time to formulate his own restatement, so this is perhaps the most appropriate reflection of the author’s views’. On this matter, see further Mittag’s chapter.

decades following his departure from Hungary. Perhaps even more importantly, Alföldi was the driving force behind the formation of a circle of international scholars that shared an interest in the *Historia Augusta* and which in due course gave shape, thanks to the decisive contribution of J. Straub, to the ‘Bonner HA Colloquia’ and their later incarnations.

Particularly noteworthy from the Budapest period are also two deservedly famous papers that appeared in 1934 and 1935: ‘Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells am römischen Kaiserhofe’ (*MDAI(R)* 49 [1934], 1–118) and ‘Insignien und Tracht der römischen Kaiser’ (*MDAI(R)* 50 [1935], 1–171), both of which were reprinted together in a single volume, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche*, in 1970. The impact of these studies, as students of medieval and early modern history know, reached well beyond the boundaries of *Altertumswissenschaft*. The range of Alföldi’s erudition and his unique ability to make textual and visual evidence contribute to a wider and coherent historical reconstruction make these essays necessary reading for anyone who has an interest in the self-representation of monarchic power in any historical period.

Following the move to Switzerland, Alföldi’s research interests expanded even further. He began to publish on early Rome. His first contribution was a book on the origins of the patriciate, *Der frühromische Reiteradel und seine Ehrenabzeichen* of 1952, which characteristically drew upon a wide range of evidence, literary, numismatic, and archaeological. At the same time, Alföldi also began to write about the Roman Republic, especially its last century. He never published a comprehensive account of the fall of the Republic, but made an original contribution to the study of this period by focusing on two fundamental strands: the role of the numismatic evidence, on which he published a ground-breaking, if controversial paper in 1956, and the figures of Caesar and Octavian.⁷

In the very year after his book on the origins of the patriciate came out, there appeared another volume, the *Studien über Caesars Monarchie*, his first contribution devoted to the study of Julius Caesar. Alföldi’s work on Julius Caesar is possibly best known for his interpretation of a denarius which, in his view, depicted alongside Caesar’s image the diadem that had been offered to him at the Lupercalia, and so provided a clear indication of his final aims (see fig. 5 in Kolb’s paper). Many scholars have since asserted that the ‘diadem’ is in fact merely a *lituus*, and that the die was defective or damaged. Whatever the reality may be, it is important that the interpretation of one coin is not allowed to overshadow (as arguably, to an extent, it has) Alföldi’s wider contribution to the understanding of Caesar’s career and ambitions, which certainly did not rely solely on his interpretation of this one image (this is a point that Kolb makes in his paper on Alföldi’s work on Julius Caesar and its place in historiography). As E. Rawson wrote in 1988, Alföldi’s ‘picture of Caesar must count as one of the most challenging presented this century’.⁸

Alföldi’s interest in Octavian and his rise to power also clearly emerged in the 1950s. As P. Assenmaker notes in his contribution, the critical attitude to the August-

7 Alföldi 1956.

8 Rawson 1988, 324.

tan settlement that is apparent in his work from this time onwards is at odds with the admiration he had expressed in some of his publications from the 1930s, notably in the essay of 1937 on the cuirass of the Prima Porta Augustus.⁹ Important methodological lessons may be learnt from Alföldi's work on this period. His essays on portraiture on late Republican coinage which appeared in the 1950s laid the foundations for the study of Octavian, and opened up a new avenue of enquiry into the political history of the last decades of the Republic. They are perhaps the most impressive manifestation of the methodology that Alföldi used in his work on Roman coinage: the analysis of stylistic features is singled out as the key criterion for the dating of coin issues (rather than the evidence of coin hoards, which is the cornerstone of M. Crawford's discussion in his *Roman Republican Coinage* of 1974, in which the assessment of Alföldi's numismatic work is unreservedly critical). While one may have reservations about Alföldi's conclusions in these studies, they certainly serve as a powerful illustration of one of the main characteristics of his scholarship, namely his habit of addressing bold, indeed challenging questions by grounding them, first and foremost, in the detailed analysis of difficult and often overlooked evidence.

In order to get a full grasp of Alföldi's views about Julius Caesar and Octavian, it is also necessary to take into consideration his arguments concerning the concept of the *pater patriae*, as well as his ideas about the people's desire for a saviour, someone who would lead the community back to the Golden Age. Alföldi saw the evidence for this desire in the coinage of the last century of the Republic. The result of his work on this theme was a series of papers, published throughout the 1970s, which were subsequently brought together in a single volume, along with his book *Aion in Mérida und Aphrodisias* (1979), that was entitled (as the papers themselves had been) *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* (1997). The phrase is of course taken from line six of Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*, and had been the main focus of a much earlier paper, 'Der neue Weltherrscher der vierten Ekloge Vergils', which was published in *Hermes* in 1930, and which came to serve as the proemium of the volume of collected papers. Again, as F. Santangelo notes in his paper, Alföldi's long-term commitment to some fundamental methodological assumptions and widely encompassing historical theses is relevant to the formation of this line of scholarly inquiry. The *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* series is based on the view that the numismatic evidence is the best vantage point for the understanding of political and ideological developments. As Alföldi once put it, in a well-known but questionable statement that Marccone revisits in his paper, the role of coins may be compared to the role that stamps play (or at least used to play) in the modern world.

The other fundamental theme of the *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* studies is Alföldi's interest in how the views, aspirations, and needs of the masses influenced broader historical developments and, more specifically, the agendas of the political and social elites. Alföldi's thesis is that the view that the arrival of a saviour and the beginning of a new age were imminent first began to develop among the populace

9 Alföldi 1937. On Alföldi's politics in the 1930s, cf. Brown 1995, 500 and Birley's contribution to this volume.

of the city of Rome after the age of the transmarine wars, and was directly influenced by the coming of Near Eastern migrants to Italy. The Roman political elite then responded to this widespread aspiration by acknowledging and developing it in the iconography of the coinage that was struck at the time. The role of the masses in shaping political developments was a central issue during Alföldi's lifetime, and a recognition of the masses' historical force and their ability to determine highly transformative outcomes also shaped his approach to the ancient world. It is a view that Alföldi shared with another great historian of antiquity, Rostovtzeff, and which he developed – in this respect – to a greater level of subtlety and originality. Alföldi may have belonged on the right of the political spectrum, but he was no unreconstructed reactionary: there was no simplistic dismissal of the crowd as a dangerous, uncontrollable force in his historical vision, and he refused to explain Roman religion with a top-down model whereby the elites exploited the gullibility of the masses.¹⁰ There is a discernible *fil rouge* joining up his work on Constantine and the age of the so-called Pagan resistance with his exploration of prophetic doctrines in late Republican Rome.

Recognising the historical importance of the masses did not lead Alföldi to overlook the weight of monarchic themes in Roman political discourse; in fact, the history of what he understood to be the *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* theme is deeply intertwined with the rise of new models of political leadership. His work on the *pater patriae* resulted in a series of studies, published in the 1950s, and similarly later republished in a single collection (*Der Vater des Vaterlandes im römischen Denken*, 1971). These studies, which are the focus of T.R. Stevenson's chapter, foregrounded arguments that Alföldi would later develop in the *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* papers: the *pater patriae*, the 'Father of the Fatherland', was to be seen as a charismatic leader who would fulfil the desires of the people for a saviour. At the same time, the concept of the *pater patriae* could be used as a way to mask the sort of power that Alföldi argued was Caesar's goal. The title *rex* was offensive at Rome; the title *pater patriae*, in contrast, was not merely acceptable, but brought with it desirable associations with the fulfilment of popular longings. This should not, however, be seen as some cynical move on Caesar's part, for Alföldi's Caesar, as Kolb discusses in his paper, was deeply concerned for the masses; he was a man of genuine clemency, and Caesar's *clementia* was, in Alföldi's view, central to the understanding of the man himself, as well as his ultimate aims.

Alföldi's work on archaic Rome, which started to appear soon after his move to Switzerland, may, at first sight, seem to represent a significant change in direction from the interests he had hitherto pursued. According to Gilliam, the circumstances of the move, in which materials and unpublished studies, including a supplementary volume to *CIL* III, were lost, provides a partial explanation.¹¹ But there is actually less of a change than may first be anticipated. His 1930 paper on the fourth

10 Whether Alföldi's interest in the impact of prophetic doctrines on public opinion had anything to do with his part-Jewish ancestry (a matter that Alföldi discussed sparingly during his lifetime, and to which Birley draws attention in his contribution to this volume) remains a matter for speculation.

11 Gilliam 1982, 8.

Eclogue dealt with a number of themes that he would continue to pursue, and as noted earlier, it later came to serve as the first chapter of the *Redeunt Saturnia Regna* collection. The interest in insignia and symbolism that characterised his papers of the mid-1930s on monarchic ceremonial at the imperial court and the attire of the Roman emperor is also to be seen in his work on early Rome, in particular in his first publication on this period, the book of 1952 on the clothing and insignia of the patrician order, the origins of which Alföldi found in the regal cavalry (*Der frühromische Reiteradel und seine Ehrenabzeichen*). As Kolb has noted, Alföldi's work on Pannonia had shaped his thinking in several important areas,¹² firstly in his adherence to a model of migration (which is so apparent in his work on the peoples of Etruria and Latium, and pervades works like *Early Rome and the Latins*), and secondly, in the development of his views about the ways in which Indo-European and Asiatic peoples thought and sought to explain the world around them. Thus his book on *Die Struktur des voretruskischen Römerstaates* contains discussion of peoples such as the Celts, the Chinese, the Germans, the Huns, the Indians, the Iranians, the Mongolians, the Persians, the Scythians, and the Turks, alongside of course the Romans, the Etruscans, and the Greeks. Despite the considerable geographical and chronological range, Alföldi's views about mythological patterns, for instance, that were, he believed, spread throughout Eurasia allowed him to employ comparative methods, and thus to draw upon an enormous range of evidence, from other peoples and other times. Alföldi's early work on late antiquity was therefore not without influence on his later work on early Rome. Finally, the simple fact that so many of his arguments were supported with numismatic evidence likewise helps to reduce the sense of a break.

Alföldi's use of comparative approaches, whether through the study of mythological patterns or patterns in human activity and modes of living, is handled in quite different ways and with quite different results in the papers of D. Briquel and Wiseman. This is in part due to the different approaches of the two scholars; while Briquel employs similar comparative methods in his own work, Wiseman, a champion of empirical observation, has denied the value of such methods.¹³ In his paper Briquel picks up and develops observations made by Alföldi about the foundation myth of Lavinium which, Alföldi believed, adhered to the same pattern as the foundation myth of Rome. Elaborating on this idea, Briquel draws out a series of comparisons between the foundation myths of Rome, Praeneste, and Lavinium, in order to try to recover the underlying mythical pattern, and so reconstruct the authentic foundation myths of these cities. Wiseman's contribution, in contrast, focuses on the wider development of Alföldi's methods, his attitude towards both the sources and his own convictions, and attempts to assess his contribution with reference to a very specific group of scholars, Sir James George Frazer, Georges Dumézil, and Andrea Carandini, scholars who have likewise offered grand reconstructions, and whose own methods and approaches may be broadly comparable with Alföldi's (at least as far as early Rome is concerned).

12 Kolb 1982, 16–17; Wiseman, in his contribution to this volume, suggests that Alföldi's experiences of central Europe also influenced his views.

13 Cf. Wiseman 1995, 18–30.

The debate about the use of comparative methods is ultimately a debate about evidence, about what evidence cannot be used, what can, and how. One of the most controversial aspects of Alföldi's *Early Rome and the Latins*, and one that is still frequently discussed, was his view that much of what the literary tradition has to say about early Rome is simply unreliable, as the tradition was largely fabricated by one man, Fabius Pictor. Pictor, in Alföldi's opinion, had sought to present to the wider world an image of Rome as a great and influential city from the earliest stages of its history, whereas Rome had in fact, he believed, long been small and insignificant. If the literary evidence presents a distorted and unreliable account of the early history of Rome, as Alföldi believed it did, then any attempt to write an account of that period may seem to be precluded. Alföldi maintained, however, that sufficient reliable material – scraps of literary and archaeological evidence, from Rome, Etruria, and elsewhere – did nonetheless survive to allow for the early history of Rome to be pieced together. But, as Wiseman discusses, Alföldi's approach to the evidence was such that he was on occasion able (and willing) to reject it when it did not agree with his argument, and enthusiastically accept it when it did, and to do so, moreover, with the customary, fierce commitment to his own views that often prevented him from engaging in a productive debate with his critics. This problem, and the related question of how different types of evidence, from different times and different cultures, can (and cannot) be used together are discussed by J. H. Richardson, whose paper considers the way in which the evidence for the careers of the Vibenna brothers, Etruscan heroes from Vulci, has been used, by Alföldi and by a number of subsequent scholars.

The question of the evidence and what can be done with it is one that runs through many of the papers in this collection; on the one hand, Alföldi was a pioneer, a scholar whose use of disparate, difficult, and often overlooked evidence was truly ground-breaking; on the other, many of his methods look dated today, or are simply out of date, and his handling of the literary evidence, especially for early Rome, could be controversial even in his own day. Nonetheless, no matter how his work has fared in the decades since it first appeared, it is above all Alföldi's unsurpassed knowledge of the ancient evidence and his ability to extract information from even the most difficult of sources and bring together seemingly unrelated material to answer specific questions that ensure, perhaps more than anything else, that his scholarship remains some of the most stimulating, inspiring, and indeed awe-inspiring, even when it fails to convince.

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The aim of this volume is not to produce an account of Alföldi's life, nor is it to attempt to provide a unilateral vindication of the value and importance of his scholarly work against its many critics. Its brief is quite simply summarised in the title: 'Andreas Alföldi in the Twenty-First Century'. The intention is simply to present readers with a range of critical assessments of some of the main aspects of Alföldi's scholarship, with as broad a coverage as is viable in a single volume. The aim is to establish what place Alföldi's arguments had in the scholarship of the time when

they were first put forward, how they helped to shape subsequent developments in the debate and, most importantly, what value and interest they may retain today. As will readily become apparent, the answer to each of these questions varies considerably as one looks at the different aspects of Alföldi's vast output. Evaluating the importance of Alföldi's work also requires some discussion of the reasons that led him to develop certain research questions and to make certain methodological choices. It is on account of this that we have also included a couple of papers dedicated primarily to aspects of Alföldi's life, notably his formation and work in Hungary and his exile and move to Switzerland. It is with these that the volume begins.

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