

## The Society of History and Archaeology of Hunedoara County at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

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The Society of History and Archaeology of Hunedoara County was established in 1880. The Society's goal, as expressed in its mission Statement, was to 'spread light over the past and present of Hunedoara County'<sup>1</sup>. To meet its goal, 'the Society must gather specialists, organize a library and archive, edit works, hold conferences on historical and archaeological topics, hold public gatherings, organize field trips, study ancient items and artistic and natural monuments. [...] And the results of this activity are to be collected and preserved in the permanent museum, sited at Deva, as a faithful image of the past and future of this beautiful county, and accessible to a wide audience, [...] to arouse an interest in the county's archaeological, historical and natural history curiosities in many people as possible'<sup>2</sup>.

Leadership was to be ensured by a 33-member Executive Board of the Society that met each month to decide upon the Society's current activities, and the so-called functionaries: president, vice-president, secretary, jurist, treasurer, librarian, director of the museum (BODÓ 2012. 372). The General Assembly was held once a year.

After the central authorities' approval of the Statute in December 1880, and for over 40 years, the Society's members tried to put the ideas they set out with into practice, experiencing highs and lows, but managing to overcome many of their difficulties, until after the First World War, and the Society's tacit disbandment in the early 1920s. In the following pages, we will enumerate some of the problems they faced at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the solutions they found. We will focus on the way the Society and its museum got through the Great War and organized themselves in the two years after it (under new political and administrative conditions, when Transylvania became part of the Kingdom of Romania) until the Society's patrimony was taken over by the County Museum, founded at the end of 1920 by order of the Hunedoara County Prefecture.

From the beginning, two problems would drag down the Society's activities and sometimes discouraged its members: low financial means and the challenge of obtaining suitable space for the Society's patrimony (for the museum and, implicitly, the library).

The establishment of the Society of History and Archaeology of Hunedoara County was based on the will of a community and did not benefit from the generous donation of any individual personality for the core of its collections or the material resources which were necessary at the beginning (BODÓ 2021. 117). The actions of several personalities from the founders' generation had much impact on the

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<sup>1</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 3v.

<sup>2</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 3v-4.

evolution of the Society's activity: Géza Kuun<sup>3</sup>, Ferencz Sólyom-Fekete<sup>4</sup>, Gábor Téglás<sup>5</sup>, Pál Király<sup>6</sup>, and Róbert Kun<sup>7</sup> – in fact, the first generation of officials: president, vice-president, director of the museum, librarian, and the secretary.

In its first years, member involvement in the life of the Society was remarkable. However, as time went by, the number of active members decreased and various problems emerged. As stated above, weak financial resources and the lack of an adequate house for the museum and library increasingly left their mark over the Society's activities.

The first signs of a possible crisis appeared at the end of the Society's first decade. In 1889, there weren't enough persons present at the February Executive Board meeting in order for it to be statutory<sup>8</sup>. Writing on the 25 years history of the Society, Ernő Ballun stated that during 1891–1892 the first signs of weakness were observed regarding its activity – even that no remarkable event occurred between the two General Assemblies of those years (BALLUN 1909. 56). If we pay attention to the meetings' minutes, we may notice the decreasing number of participants towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Moreover, some of the Society's active members gradually withdrew, most of them after leaving Deva, retiring, or moving elsewhere with work. In this context, we note that most active members, including the secretary, assistant secretary, librarian, originated among teachers (from the Superior Royal Hungarian Realschule in Deva, most of them, as well as the Deva Pedagogical School), and they were assigned territorially depending on the educational system's needs<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Géza Kuun (1838–1905) was a well-known scientist, linguist, orientalist and philologist of his time. In 1869, he inherited Lajos Gyulay's Mintia property (his uncle), so he spent long periods at this residence, where there was a rich collection of documents, books and antiques that he maintained, studied and enriched. He it was converted the estate into a cultural center not only for the Hunedoara County's elite but also for other intellectuals. He bequeathed the library and archive to the Transylvanian Museum Association, and the Roman-era stone monuments to the Society of History and Archaeology of Hunedoara County (KRENNER 1905. 4–28).

<sup>4</sup> Ferencz Sólyom-Fekete (1839–1906), a licensed attorney, was president of the Hunedoara Tribunal starting in 1875. As a Society member, he presented scientific papers in front of the Executive Board of the Society and published studies in the Society's yearbook, as well as in 'Századok'. Toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century he began to suffer worsening vision problems, leading to his retirement in May 1899 (TÁRCA 1907. 127–128).

<sup>5</sup> Gábor Téglás (1848–1916) became a teacher at the Deva Realschule in 1871, and was headmaster there between 1883 and 1903. He became a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Science in 1888. As soon as he arrived in Deva, he began investigating the area, at first geologically, and then became increasingly interested in archaeology, under Zsófia Torma's influence. The Society of History and Archaeology of Hunedoara County offered him the needed frame for his scientific activity. He was director of museum between 1880 and 1903 (GÁLL 2014. 219–293).

<sup>6</sup> Pál Király (König) (1853–1927) arrived in Deva in 1877 as history and geography teacher at the Superior Realschule. He was a founding member of the Society. He had a passion for history, but was 'diverted' a few years to archaeology, participating in the Sarmizegetusa archaeological excavations, and focusing on studying the Roman era. After leaving Deva in 1891, he gradually returned to studying mediaeval and modern history (DEJU, BODÓ 2006. 634–639).

<sup>7</sup> Róbert Kun (1842–1897) was appointed as a teacher at the Deva Superior Realschule in 1878. He was involved in preparations to constitute the History Society, becoming a member since 1880. He collected, copied, studied and published many documents regarding the history of Hunedoara County (TÉGLÁS 1898. 139–147).

<sup>8</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 192.

<sup>9</sup> This is how Pál Király (history teacher; in 1891), Gábor Szinte (visual art teacher; in autumn 1897), Samu Kolumbán (in 1905), members with remarkable scientific and administrative contributions, departed.

In addition, Géza Kuun and Ferencz Sólyom-Fekete, the president and the vice-president of the Society, were finding it increasingly difficult to perform their duties because of their health problems. In such conditions, Sólyom-Fekete, who for years had been handling all administrative matters, could no longer replace President Kuun when he was travelling abroad. Thus, after 1900, the presidency was assumed by a member of the Executive Board – Lajos Réthi, Director of the School Inspectorate (BODÓ 2021. 102–103).

During the meeting on October 3, 1903, Lajos Réthi even asked the members of the Executive Board if the Society could continue its activity considering the fact that most of its active members have left or were about to leave the association, or the Executive Board, respectively. Around this time, Endre Veress<sup>10</sup> also resigned from his position of secretary, and Gábor Téglás, museum director, had retired and was to leave for Budapest. All present members decided that the Society must continue its activity. Therefore, the meeting president decided to call the General Assembly for the next month<sup>11</sup>.

The General Assembly took place on November 8, 1903, under the presidency of Lajos Réthi. We might state this is the meeting that resurrected the Society's activity. The following were elected: Count Géza Kuun – president for life of the Society, Ferencz Sólyom-Fekete – honorary president; the functionaries in charge of administrative matters were: Béla Fáy – 'associated' president, Lajos Réthi – vice-president, Samu Kolumbán (teacher) – secretary, Oszkár Mailand (teacher) – director of museum, Ernő Ballun (teacher) – librarian, Lajos Szöllősy (teacher) – cashier, Gyula Réthi (lawyer) – jurist, József Hajduczky (teacher) – president of the Deva Fortress Hill commission<sup>12</sup>.

This meeting was followed by a fruitful period which reflected the Society's leadership and members' determination to preserve the ideals of the people who had succeeded in laying this cultural associations' foundations more than 20 years previously, and to give them a new impulse.

The Society's members continued their research; alongside archaeology, history and ethnography, natural sciences becoming ever more important. After Gábor Téglás left, the lack of an archaeological investigation specialist determined the General Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries (A Múzeumok és Könyvtárak Országos Főfelügyelősége) to support the archaeological research up to 1907. Even that Oszkár Mailand<sup>13</sup> led two archaeological excavations campaigns to Sarmizegetusa, in 1906 and 1907<sup>14</sup>, his main preoccupation was ethnography, upon which he focused his research, with Samu Kolumbán until 1905 and Imre Szabó (BODÓ 2021. 239–241). The latter also identified and acquired ethnography pieces after the Society was also included in the program to create ethnographic collections that the Inspectorate financed (this aid also ceased in 1907)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 384v. Endre Veress arrived at Deva in 1897 with a teaching post at the Deva Superior Realschule, immediately joining the Society as an active member; he was preoccupied with the study of Deva documents and history. At the same time, he involved himself in administrative matters, serving as the Society's secretary. He maintained strong collaborative ties with the Society even after departing for Cluj (ENGEL 1968. 480–488).

<sup>11</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 384v.

<sup>12</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 144.

<sup>13</sup> Oszkár Mailand (1858–1924) taught German, French and Romanian at the Superior Realschule in Deva. He made a name for himself as an ethnographer, spending time studying the culture of the Romanian and Csángós in Hunedoara County (FARAGÓ 1981. 487–490).

<sup>14</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 492–492v, 499v, 552v.

<sup>15</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 64–68, 70, 85, 101, 102v.

Archaeological investigations at Sarmizegetusa were only resumed by the Society in 1913, under the direction of Béla Jánó, history professor at the 'Kún' College from Orăștie/Broos/Szászváros<sup>16</sup>. József Mallász resumed the research in the caves situated north of the Mureș River in 1912–1913 as well (continuing the project began by Gábor Téglás), in the context of collaborating with the Cave Research Commission<sup>17</sup> established within the Hungarian Geography Society (Magyarhoni Földtani Társulat) (A MÚZEUMOK 1914. 129).

As we pointed out above, natural sciences grew in importance within the Hunedoara Society's research at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, thanks to József Mallász<sup>18</sup> and Márton Péterfi<sup>19</sup>, the former making his name in entomology, and the latter in bryology. István Gaál worked alongside them, focusing on geology. The Society also offered them financial support for their travels (BODÓ 2021. 242–244). The focus on natural sciences led to a 1913 proposal to rename the cultural association as the Society of History, Archaeology and Natural Sciences of Hunedoara County, so that its name would reflect the importance of the latter discipline (HIVATALOS 1914. 71–72). Even if no approval was ever sought from central authorities for this change, after the end of 1913 the new name was even used in correspondence with third parties (BODÓ 2021. 100).

The Society's Yearbook, first issued in 1882, was continuously published; eleven issues appeared between 1901 and 1914. Also, the first volume of the Hunedoara County Monograph, signed by Géza Kuun, Zsófia Torma and Gábor Téglás, was finally published in 1902 (HUNYADVÁRMEGYE 1902).

The Society continued to attend to the two monuments it administered: the Amphitheatre from Sarmizegetusa, in the Society's care since 1888 (KUN 1889. 153), and Deva Fortress Hill, bought by the Society in 1893<sup>20</sup> (BODÓ 2021. 73–74, 259–265).

Starting in 1904, attempts were made to improve the museum headquarters's situation. Since 1895, the museum and library had been located in a small house, annex building of the Superior Royal Hungarian Realschule from Deva, which shortly became overcrowded. Due to the lack of space, numerous stone items were deposited in the hallway of the Administrative Palace. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the museum's director had repeatedly drawn attention on the improper state of the museum. In the General Assembly of November 1899, Gábor Téglás announced that the museum had reached its display and storage limits. Consequently, urgent intervention by the Society's leadership and the support of Hunedoara County were necessary in order to obtain a definitive building for housing the artefacts, if they wanted to 'avoid stagnation or even inevitable decline, which do not however fit the brilliant past'<sup>21</sup>.

The lack of adequate space for the Society's patrimony negatively affected Society members' capacity to act. Moreover, this problem was one of the causes the General Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries cut off financial support after 1907 (since they judged that the available space was barely

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<sup>16</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 135.

<sup>17</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 135.

<sup>18</sup> József Mallász (1875–1933) was an alumnus of the Deva Superior Realschule, then studied and worked in economics. Still, he never gave up on the passion of his teens: studying nature. He became one of his era's best-known entomologists (BOÉR 2006. 11–16).

<sup>19</sup> Márton Péterfi (1875–1922) was known for his studies in bryology. He moved to Cluj in 1906, where he worked at the Botanical Gardens (BORZA 1923. 1–13).

<sup>20</sup> MCDR. CIM. 60444/3–6.

<sup>21</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 3. 53.

enough for already existing items), together with the lack of specialists. In 1901, Mór Wosinsky, the inspector for antiquity collections, noticed the unenthusiastic atmosphere. He records that, in the General Assembly of December 1900, Géza Kuun emphasised that reviving the Society's activity, commenced with such enthusiasm, depended on the creation of a proper museum and that 'it seems impossible that, after all, the state, the county, the town and the community do not move a finger in order to arrange a building suitable for the museum, after the model of the neighbouring Lower Alba County (Alsó-Fehér)' (KŐHEGYI, SZABÓ 1996. 15).

Oszkár Mailand, director between 1903 and 1913, began to put the museum collections in order immediately upon taking up its leadership. He requested support from the General Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries and from Béla Pósta, who sent Márton Roska, a fresh graduate of the University of Cluj/ Kolozsvár, to Deva. He managed to inventory almost 4,000 artefacts (prehistoric, Dacian, Roman, migration period, Egyptian)<sup>22</sup>, such that when he left, it was possible to state that 'he enabled a warehouse to become a museum' (VINCZE 2014. 160).

Still, specialists' efforts were in vain in the context of a constantly deteriorating building, despite annual interventions. Simultaneously, numerous steps were taken to claim the castle *Magna Curia* from Deva as a new museum headquarters, with no results (BODÓ 2021. 165–170).

The last complete list of the Society's leadership is from 1913: Béla Fáy (landlord from Biscaria/Dédács, today Simeria municipality, the brother-in-law of Géza Kuun) – president, Béla Pogány (deputy lord-liutenant) – vice-president, Kristóf Tarján (teacher) – secretary, József Bottyán – assistant secretary, József Mallász – museum director, Dezső Szegedy (teacher) – librarian and archivist, Mihály Leitner – jurist, György Heves (teacher) – cashier, József Hajduczky (retired teacher) – president of the Deva Fortress Hill commission<sup>23</sup>.

The election of József Mallász as a functionary breathed new life into the Society's activities. He immediately took steps to improve the museum and drew up a suitable document to the Inspectorate in which, after expounding on future projects and announcing the Society's name change to include Natural Sciences, he made a firm request to have the *Magna Curia* handed over to the Society, along with annual financial support of 2,000–3,000 Kr. (Austro-Hungarian Kronen) for enacting the expounded projects (MEMORANDUM 1914). He personally handed this document to Imre Szalay at the inauguration of the Arad Cultural Palace on October 26, 1913 (MEMORANDUM 1914. 87).

In the same time he organized public conferences aiming to draw new members – and ultimately to educate the inhabitants of the county – such that 60 new members had enrolled into the Society by the end of 1913 (A MÚZEUMOK 1914. 129). These conferences continued the next year, on the first Saturday of each month<sup>24</sup>.

As a man of action, Mallász took a series of measures shortly after being appointed in his position: despite the precarious financial conditions, he resumed the ordering of the museum. As a result, the inventory of the prehistoric, Roman (excepting the Lapidarium) and ethnography pieces was

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<sup>22</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 73v.

<sup>23</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 2. 701.

<sup>24</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 135v.



completed<sup>25</sup>. Concurrently, Mallász began repairs to the building of the museum, also reorganized the interior space, personally engaging in physical labour if need. He even obtained furniture, allowing for a better systematisation of the artefacts (A MÚZEUMOK 1914. 128–129). At the same time, the library was rearranged and the archive was organised (HIVATALOS 1914. 84–85).

Mallász thus hoped to regain for the museum the financial support from the Inspectorate, which was even promised during inspector Béla Pósta's work visit in June 1914<sup>26</sup>. The latter took note of and reported on the Deva museum's new situation, recommending that this 'museum with a grand tradition' be supported in future to become the county's main cultural hub (VINCZE 2014. 296–297, 303, 325). Also in 1914, thanks to 250 Kr. of extraordinary financial aid from the Inspector, the Roman-era stoneworks bough from Countess Margit Lónyay<sup>27</sup> were transported to Deva and placed in the *Magna Curia's* lobby<sup>28</sup>.

Relying on the Inspectorate's future support, the museum director ordered new furniture for a better systematization of space, and to protect the exhibits. But the looked-for aid did not materialize, causing Mallász to respond with complete disappointment – to this, and to address no. 90 of February 8, 1915<sup>29</sup>, in which he was required to send a report for the previous year, despite receiving no financial support: 'I did not have it in me to continue my report, as I do not work for nothing! To work, to strive towards my ideal objective when the only lawful authorities cannot or will not recognize my effort – it's against my nature. Your esteemed self [the chief inspector] and Professor Pósta made firm promises of support [...]. And the results? Promises to encourage, which were however nothing but words'<sup>30</sup>. Ultimately, the Inspectorate would send 1,240.60 Kr. as extraordinary aid to pay for the new furniture (VINCZE 2014. 743).

The start of the Great War in July 1914 affected the Society and its museum. General mobilization curtailed any possible development of the Society, and financial support was hampered by the authorities redirecting part of the funds originally earmarked for cultural institutions toward the war's requirements<sup>31</sup>, which caused the museum to not receive Government support in 1914 (A MÚZEUMOK 1915. 53).

From 1914 minutes of four meetings of the Executive Board are preserved, but the Society was continuously active. Of course, the main focus was the museum, often called the 'Hunedoara County Museum', and its director's activity was remarkable in keeping the cultural association alive. In 1915–1918 only four meetings of the Board were held. On June 7, 1915, one was held in memory of Béla Fáy, shortly after his death<sup>32</sup>; on February 28, 1916, homage was held for founding museum director Gábor

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<sup>25</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 135.

<sup>26</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 140v.

<sup>27</sup> In 1909 Margit Lónyay, granddaughter of Menyhért Lónyay (1822–1884, Finance minister, prime-minister of Hungary, president of the Hungarian Academy of Science 1871–1884; he bought important tracts of land in Hunedoara County around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), put Roman-era stoneworks from the Fărcădinul de Jos/Alsó-Farkadin mansion (nowadays, General Berthelot) up for sale.

<sup>28</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 143–143v.

<sup>29</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 140.

<sup>30</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 140v.

<sup>31</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 141, 143.

<sup>32</sup> *Hunyadvármegye* XIV: 24. 1915. June 13. 3.

Téglás, who had died in Budapest<sup>33</sup>. The next two meetings, on April 2, 1917<sup>34</sup> and February 12, 1918<sup>35</sup> focused on usual matters: functionaries' reports (museum director, secretary, and cashier) and scientific communiques.

Throughout the war, relations with the General Inspectorate of Museums and Libraries were maintained, with the Society's museum receiving an extraordinary support of 1,240.60 Kr. (VINCZE 2014. 743), and in 1917, further financial aid worth 500 Kr., for research<sup>36</sup>. Inspector Géza Horváth also visited in 1916 (A MÚZEUMOK 1917. 159). At the end of 1915, the Society's patrimony was 12,128 items, including 10,810 in the museum and 1,318 in the library (with the addendum that some books and the archives were on order). As for the financial situation, the Society's wealth had reached 12,296.82 Kr. at the end of 1915 (A MÚZEUMOK 1916. 95).

Considering the financial situation, functionaries with this right (the museum director, secretary, cashier and librarian) took in money periodically as remuneration for their activities throughout the war, until 1917: 200 Kr. (100 in 1916) for the museum director<sup>37</sup>, 100 Kr. for the cashier<sup>38</sup>, 100 Kr. for the secretary<sup>39</sup>, 50 Kr. for the librarian (1915 only, as he died on the frontlines the next year)<sup>40</sup>. We note that József Mallász renounced his 200 Kr. remuneration in 1914 and 1915 in favour of the archaeological digs fund, and to enrich the museum's patrimony<sup>41</sup>. He also kept acting on the Society's and museum's behalf in the difficult, change-ridden period following the end of the war. For this, and in accordance with Statute, he took the remuneration he was entitled to from the 'cash desk of the History and Archaeology Society of Hunedoara County': 200 Kr. in June 1919 for his work as museum director in 1918<sup>42</sup>, and 200 Kr. as half the sum he was due for acting as director and cashier in 1919<sup>43</sup>.

Returning to the museum's evolution throughout the Great War, up until the Kingdom of Romania entered on the side of the Allied powers on August 27, 1916, and the southern part of the county was turned into an Area of Operations, the museum could function in close to normal conditions. Still, József Mallász, as a functionary of the state, had a period of increased workload, being forced to interrupt his activities ordering items and developing the museum for a while (MIHALIK 1915. 5).

Still, he was able to resume activity and through his efforts, the museum was improved, the items ordered, and thereby material and moral support from the General Inspectorate regained. Even if no wonders could be performed and the museum building's condition remained dismal, through his actions, the artefacts were visible and accessible. This is how the museum's patrimony's value became evident, which convinced the Inspectorate to abandon the idea of moving the cultural centre of the county (the

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<sup>33</sup> *Hunyadvármegye* XV: 10. 1916. March 5. 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Hunyadvármegye* 41: 14. 1917. April 8. 3.

<sup>35</sup> *Hunyadvármegye* 42: 7. 1918. February 17. 3–4.

<sup>36</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 150.

<sup>37</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 291.

<sup>38</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 282, 283, 290, 296, 298.

<sup>39</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 281, 289, 294, 295, 300.

<sup>40</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 288.

<sup>41</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 37. 137, 146.

<sup>42</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 305.

<sup>43</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 310.

museum) from the Deva, the administrative centre of the county, to Orăștie<sup>44</sup> (A MÚZEUMOK 1915. 53). In July 1916, when Inspector Géza Horváth made his official visit, he could also note the changes, underlining that all the work, from ordering the inventory to cleaning and mopping, was undertaken by Mallász. Though his special setup, the items were protected and accessible: the collections were housed in six chambers, four containing the archaeological collections, one for the ethnography pieces, and another for the mineral collection (A MÚZEUMOK 1917. 159).

The situation took a dramatic turn in the second half of 1916, when the boarding school of the Superior Realschule in Deva were converted into a German military hospital. In these conditions, the museum very quickly sustained damage and destruction, including its patrimony (A MÚZEUMOK 1917. 160). Although he could have moved away from the fighting, due to his public function, Mallász requested to stay in Deva, thinking it was duty to protect the Society's museum's collections (A MÚZEUMOK 1917. 159). As with many Transylvanian museums, the most valuable transportable patrimony was sent to safe keeping at the Budapest National Museum (MIHALIK 1916. 180–193). Mallász made this decision, and executed it, by himself. At the start of September he packed the items into seven crates, which he sent to Budapest, along with a telegram, on September 3, to announce the packets' impending arrival. For safety, he personally went to Budapest to inform the Inspectorate of the measures he'd taken. Parallel to this, he buried the large objects remaining at Deva (Mithraic pieces, statues, Roman-era inscriptions) in a cellar, covering them with bricks (MIHALIK 1916. 184, 192, VINZCE 2014. 743–744).

At the same time, in 1916, Mallász proposed the investigation of military trenches dug along defence lines in the context of the Great War. As it was evident that these works would affect some archaeological sites, he considered that it was his duty to enrich the knowledge regarding the past of Hunedoara County by recuperating the eventual vestiges. He checked the trenches from Sarmizegetusa and Vețel without any result, and then crossed the Mureș River to the north, making two important discoveries belonging to the Early Iron Age at Șoimuș-Bălata and Hărău (A MÚZEUMOK 1917. 158–159).

The museum patrimony returned to Deva by train on July 20, 1918, and was received by the museum director<sup>45</sup>. The uncertainty of the following period affected the museum as well: it was robbed twice within months. The first break-in occurred on October 30, 1918, but, fortunately, the Mallász's personal inquiry led to the recovery of most stolen pieces; for safety, he took the most valuable ones home<sup>46</sup>. The second robbery took place at night between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1919, this time with significant damage: all coins ('all Greek, Roman and newer silver coins, with only a Polish denar being left behind') and medals were stolen from a cupboard, as well as many ethnographic items<sup>47</sup>. This time Mallász could not intervene, as his movements had been restricted (he'd been 'interned') for being a functionary of the Hungarian state.

As soon as his internment conditions were relaxed in May 1919<sup>48</sup>, Mallász started preparing the new house of the museum, by cleaning and disinfecting it. The Society had begun negotiations with the Hunedoara County Women's Association to obtain the girl's orphanage building for museum purposes

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<sup>44</sup> At Orăștie, the Inspectorate supported the 'Kún' Reformed College's collections.

<sup>45</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 45. 3v.

<sup>46</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 45. 1v.

<sup>47</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 45. 1v.

<sup>48</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 45. 2.



before the Great War (HIVATALOS 1911. 222). In 1918, Mallász managed to conclude the process but could not move in because, at that time, the space was occupied by soldiers and wounded<sup>49</sup>. Throughout 1919, Mallász has taken the necessary steps to transform the building into a space suitable for a museum. To improve security, he ordered 11 new keys for the door locks (worth 66 Kr., paid on May 18<sup>50</sup>); locksmithing and tinsmithing works (150 Kr., invoiced on June 4, 1919)<sup>51</sup>, disinfection and painting (260 Kr., on June 26, 1919)<sup>52</sup>, reparations to the museum entrance gate (30 Kr., on July 27, 1919)<sup>53</sup>. He inscribed the Museum's name on the new building, above the entrance (40 Kr., invoiced on May 3, 1919)<sup>54</sup>. We can thus follow some of the steps taken to manage this space under the leadership of Mallász, and paid from the funds of the Society of Archaeology, History and Natural Sciences of Hunedoara County, prior to moving the museum's collections. This move was done throughout August 1919, with inmate help; on August 13, six people participated (receiving tobacco and cigarettes worth 14 Kr. from the museum director<sup>55</sup>). Inmate work continued for six more days in August, with payments as of the 31<sup>st</sup> being 17.60 Kr.<sup>56</sup>, and six more days in September, with payments as of the 30<sup>th</sup> being 36,80 Kr.<sup>57</sup>.

Arranging the new space required other expenses: the extant furniture had to be partially disassembled for moving, and then reassembled; windows were also repaired (worth 150 Kr., on November 8, 1919)<sup>58</sup>. Bills for electricity and the wood used for heating begin to be paid in the autumn of the same year<sup>59</sup>.

All expenses to prepare the new museum were taken from Society of Archaeology and History of Hunedoara County's funds, under the careful coordination of József Mallász, whose aim was to house the collections in a safer, more suitable site.

After he brought the museum and library's patrimony to an acceptable state at the end of 1919, but especially throughout 1920, Mallász could handle the Society's other goods: the Sarmizegetusa amphitheatre (maintenance and supervision), the Deva Fortress Hill (guarding the site, alley restoration and other needed maintenance and repairs), the latter in collaboration with Deva City Hall<sup>60</sup>.

Ultimately, Romanian authorities decided the fate of the Society's patrimony: at December 31, 1920, the order of the prefect established the 'Hunedoara County Museum'. Still, it was impossible to overlook József Mallász's remarkable activity, and he was named the museum's director, running it until his death in 1933.

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<sup>49</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 45. 2.

<sup>50</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 306.

<sup>51</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 308.

<sup>52</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 309.

<sup>53</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 311.

<sup>54</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 307.

<sup>55</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 312.

<sup>56</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 313.

<sup>57</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 314.

<sup>58</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 318.

<sup>59</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 317, 323–327.

<sup>60</sup> SJHAN. FSIACH. Own Fund. 29. 332–344.

After the last few attempts to resume activity in November 1922 and March 1923, the Society would disband tacitly, but its name and attributions would remain in the Hunedoara County Museum's Statute until its replacement in 1942<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> SJHAN. PJH. 158/1942.

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