

THE CORVINS' CASTLE ACCORDING TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES

– ABSTRACT –

THE CORVINS' CASTLE in Hunedoara watches over the town and surrounding area for over six hundred years, in some shape or another but, although it is named one of the most beautiful castles in the world, or the best preserved building with a double functionality (military and civilian) in Romania, it wasn't the subject of a monograph for over 149 years.

The research concerning the castle has begun during the "Romantic" period of speciality literature, when History and Archaeology were still being practiced by passionate dilettantes. Unfortunately, the Romanian historians and art historians never prioritized the research of the most important medieval castle in Transylvania, their basis being Hungarian studies.

The first pieces of information concerning the castle come from foreign travellers, who mention here in Hunedoara a bright and powerful fortress built in stone.

The Corvins' Castle started to be studied especially after the devastating fire of 1854, when Doctor Arányi Lajos starts a public campaign to save this monument from total ruination. We owe him the first monograph of the castle. As for an in-depth architectural study we have to look in 1913, when Möller Istvan writes the paper "A Vajda – Hunyadi Vár Építési Korai", the corner stone for all other specialists since then.

As in many other medieval monuments' cases, this castle's architecture was thoroughly modified, especially during the seventeenth century and during the restoration works of the nineteenth century. We normally agree that this monument is the result of five great construction stages (the fourteenth century royal fortress, John of Hunedoara – post 1440, post 1446, Matthias Corvinus, the seventeenth century – Gabriel Bethlen) the planimetry of these stages still being the one published by Möller at the turn of the twentieth century.

The archaeological excavations, starting with Möller still and ending in 2008 (but also the restoration and rehabilitation works of certain spaces in the castle where the presence of an archaeologist was not deemed necessary) extended over most of the monument and today there are very few areas where one could conduct archaeological researches.

This paper is meant to be especially a working instrument for those of us who will wish to study further the Corvins' Castle in Hunedoara.