

Ferenc Gosztonyi

**The History of Hungarian Art History Writing
(1875–1918)
“Pasteiner’s department”**

My dissertation entitled *The History of Hungarian Art History Writing (1875–1918)* examines the most significant aspects concerning the history of “Pasteiner’s department”. The dates within the title refer to the forty-three year old professoriate of the art historian Gyula Pasteiner (1846–1918).

But what is meant by “Pasteiner’s department”? Broadly speaking, one can refer to it at the earliest from 1885 when Pasteiner was appointed as private docent on the side of Imre Henszlmann (1813–1888), the first professor active since the founding of the department in 1872. In it’s own right “Pasteiner’s department” was set up only after Henszlmann’s death. From 1888 on until his retirement in 1916/18 Pasteiner was the only professor at the department of art history. Meanwhile, two private docents — from 1905 László Éber, from 1911 Tibor Gerevich — widened the spectrum of courses.

As far as the method is concerned my analysis follows the history of institution. Elaborating the history of “Pasteiner’s department” within the given time limit and with detailed documentation my intention was to attempt to answer the question familiar from another context: “Art historians exist; how are they possible?” (“Because they had been trained.”)

So far, there has been limited information about who was concerned to be a „professional” art historian, namely, those taking part in mastery education and passing a final doctorate exam successfully. A qualified art historian — a title automatically implying PhD degree — choose art history as a main subject, thus, writing a doctoral dissertation on an art historical problem. I would not assert, that „art historians” are only those who hold a degree; my approach was either to point on the institutional narrative of Hungarian art history writing. As from 1872 on the discipline disposes of a self standing department, I consider my perspective a legitimate aspect deserving detailed discussion.

The dissertation is comprised of three chapters. Each main chapter contains an excursus.

In the first chapter entitled *Gyula Pasteiner, the Professor*, I have tried to outline the circumstances of Pasteiner’s nomination to the professoriate. During his lifelong career the main methodological concept of Gyula Pasteiner was the „proper” art historical viewpoint, namely, the emphasize of the historical idea

regarding the duties of the discipline. In this chapter my aim was to outline the common narrative of his university career and the theory he proclaimed.

The connecting excursus introduces one of the minor figures of the dissertation, the archaeologist József Hampel becoming involved in a polemy with Pasteiner. The career of the two professors was similar in certain aspects and interconnected until the death of Hampel in March 1913.

The Pupils of Pasteiner is the second, central chapter of the dissertation. According to the register of final doctorate exams kept in the Archives of the Eötvös Loránd University I have managed to compile the list of students taking final doctorate exam of art history as a main subject. The twenty names listed below are the graduated art historians of "Pasteiner's department" (date of doctoral exam assigned): Lipót Goldschmied (1891), László Éber (1894), Simon Meller (1898), Dezső Rózsaffy (1901), Kornél Neuschlosz (1903), Zoltán Takács (Felvinczi) (1904), Tibor Gerevich (1904), Elemér Czakó (1904), Petronella Sztrachon (1905), Hugó Kenczler (1907), Kálmán Pogány (1907), Olga Elefánt (1907), László Nécsey (1907), Magda Alexander (1909), Edit Freund (1909), Mária Freund (1910), Edith Hofmann (1910), Antal Géza Gaspartz (1911), Vera Vikár (1913), Béla Barát (1914).

In this Chapter I have examined the pupils' doctoral dissertations on issues advised by Pasteiner. In addition to outline the intellectual profile of the pupils, I have also proposed a contribution to the Hungarian reception of Hildebrand, Riegl, Schmarsow, Wölfflin, Berenson etc.

In Excursus II. entitled "*The Simon Meller Case*" I have examined the story of the unsuccessful habilitation of Simon Meller, one of the first pupils of Pasteiner. From their prior tense relation a direct conflict broke out in 1906, when Meller applied for a private docent status to "Pasteiner's department". Relying upon recently found archive sources I managed to reconstruct the course of events from 1906 to 1910 and set up a hypothesis on Meller's unsuccessful habilitation that might have been in connection with the habilitation of "the favoured pupil" Tibor Gerevich, appointed as private docent with the support of Pasteiner in 1911.

In Chapter three (*The end of "Pasteiner's department"*. Documented history of the continuity of professoriate in 1917–18) I have tried to reconstruct the yet unknown story of the competition for "Pasteiner's department" announced in 1916 — not devoid of scandals — and set up relation with the circumstances of inauguration of the classic archaeologist Antal Hekler in 1918.

In Excursus III. I have sought to resolve the memorial speech of Tibor Gerevich entitled *Remembrance of Gyula Pasteiner* (1931).

Appendix I. contains the complete contemporary course listing of the department of art history. In Appendix II. I disclose the entire list of students passing final doctorate exam of art history either as main or as optional subject. Appendix III. contains the annotated text of two manuscripts, both written by

Pasteiner. He wrote the first as a member of a committee of the Faculty of Arts preparing new nomination to the post vacant since his retirement in 1916.

The next one is a protest against the committee's resolution regarding Pasteiner's successor.

My dissertation is intended to be a preparatory work to a monograph on the history of Hungarian art history writing.