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**ART HISTORY AS A NEW DISCIPLINE AT
THE ESTONIAN UNIVERSITY IN TARTU
AFTER THE LONG 19TH CENTURY**

During the last twenty years numerous academic studies have been published on the American and German art historiography in the English language. However, only a few studies have been made available for the Anglophone readership about Estonian, Baltic or even Scandinavian art historiography.¹ In fact there are very few studies on Estonian art historiography even in the native language as this field of study has been revived only recently. The following article is the first attempt to present the beginnings of Estonian professional art history in the 1920s in a regional and global context. It strives to situate the University of Tartu (Dorpat), established originally in 1632 and re-established in 1802, in the pan-European network of universities, where art history had gradually become regarded as a *new* discipline during and after the long 19th century (1780s–1910s).

Last year Estonian art historians celebrated the centenary of their profession in Estonia.² The pretext was the inauguration of the first

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1 Krista Kodres, Giedrė Mickunaite, Stella Pelše, 'Cultures of Interruptions. Art History in the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania', *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, ed. by Matthew Rampley, Thierry Lenain, Hubert Locher, *et al.* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 249–274; Dan Karlholm, Hans Dam Christensen, Matthew Rampley, 'Art History in the Nordic Countries', *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, ed. by Matthew Rampley, Thierry Lenain, Hubert Locher, *et al.* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 421–438.

2 *Eesti kunstiteaduse aastasada = The Centenary of Estonian Art History*, <https://kunstiteaduseaastasada.wordpress.com> [accessed 17/12/2022].

professor of art history – Swede Helge Kjellin (1885–1984) – at the University of Tartu in 1922. In fact, a year before, the Viennese Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941) had won the competition, but he declined and the chair was left for Kjellin, who had come second. In January 1922 Kjellin started lecturing art history in Tartu. By that time art history had been taught at the university for almost 120 years. However, during this time the discourse of art history had significantly changed. Art history had been emancipated as an academic discipline, acquired new methods and tools, and adapted to modern and nationalist ideologies.

The development of art history as a discipline at the University of Tartu is analysed on a very granular level, based on primary sources from Estonian and Swedish archives. The relevant Estonian archives have been neglected for almost 30 years, whereas Swedish archives could not be used by Estonian researchers during the Soviet occupation. It was very difficult to get a permit to travel abroad, let alone with the purpose of studying a subject relating to the interwar period of Estonian independence. However, consulting primary sources, especially correspondence, enables us to demonstrate how developments in Tartu were in a close dialogue with those in the Nordic countries (including Finland) and Germany, but also with the wider European intellectual and socio-cultural sphere.

The first introductions to Estonian art historiography were made by Mart-Ivo Eller (1936–2003) and Elo-Mirjam Peil (1939–2022) in the 1970s.³ Eller and Peil both wrote about the teaching of art history at the University of Tartu in the interwar period.⁴ For Germanophone readers the Swedish and Estonian art historian Sten Karling (1906–1987) published an overview of art historical research in Estonia from the end of the 19th century until the 1980s.⁵ In 1993 Jutta Keevallik

3 Mart Eller, 'Kunsti ajaloo uurimine', *Leninlik etapp Eesti ajalooteaduses. Historiograafilisi artikleid*, ed. by Endel Laul (Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1970), 252–282; Mirjam Peil, 'Kunsteadlased Tartu Ülikoolis 1919–1940', *Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo küsimusi VII* (Tartu: Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1979), 118–126; Mart Eller, 'Professor Voldemar Vaga – kunsti ajaloolane ja pedagoog', *Tööd kunsteaduse ja -kriitika alalt 3* (Tallinn: Kunst, 1980), 6–24.

4 Peil, 'Kunsteadlased Tartu Ülikoolis 1919–1940'; Mart Eller, 'Tartu Ülikooli osast eesti kunsteaduses 1920–1930-ndail aastail I', *Kunsteadus. Kunstikriitika. 5* (Tallinn: Kunst, 1983), 60–75; Mart Eller, 'Tartu Ülikooli osast eesti kunsteaduses 1920–1930-ndail aastail II', *Kunsteadus. Kunstikriitika. 6* (Tallinn: Kunst, 1986), 158–173.

5 Sten Karling, 'Kunsthistorische Forschung in Estland. Eine Übersicht', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der baltischen Kunst*, hrsg. von Erich Böckler (Giessen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1988), 13–28.

published a study on art collections and scholarly art history in Estonia in the 19th century with a summary in German.⁶ Starting in 1999 several special issues of art history magazines were published to mark the centenaries of Estonian art historians.⁷ However, very little has been written about the first professor, Kjellin since Eller's article from 1983.⁸ Professor of the Estonian Academy of Arts Krista Kodres has been the leading art historian in recent years with her study group,⁹ under the auspices of which I have carried out archival research in Estonia and Sweden. The current article partly summarises my articles published in Estonian.¹⁰

6 Jutta Keevallik, 'Kunstsammeln in Estland im 19. Jahrhundert. Kunstwissenschaft in Estland im 19. Jahrhundert Zusammenfassung', *Kunstikogumine Eestis 19. sajandil. Kunsteadus Eestis 19. sajandil* (Tallinn: Akademie der Wissenschaften Estlands. Institut für Geschichtswissenschaften, 1993), 183–197.

7 *Eesti kunsteadus ja -kriitika 20. sajandil: konverents prof Voldemar Vaga 100. sünniaastapäeva tähistamiseks Tallinnas, 21.–22. okt. 1999*. Eesti Kunstiakadeemia toimetised 9 (Tallinn: Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus, 2002); *Sten Karling and Baltic art history*, ed. by Krista Kodres, Juhan Maiste, Vappu Vabar (Tallinn: Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus, 1999); *Art and the church: religious art and architecture in the Baltic Region in the 13th–18th centuries: conference dedicated to the centenary of Sten I. Karling in Tallinn, Sept. 6–9, 2006*, ed. by Krista Kodres, Merike Kurisoo (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2008); *Kunsteaduslikke Uurimusi*, 3 (17) (2008) [special issue dedicated to the 100th birthday of Armin Tuulsee]; *Kunsteaduslikke Uurimusi*, 3–4 (18) (2009) [special issue dedicated to the 100th birthday of Villem Raam]; *Baltic Journal of Art History*, 2 (2010) [special issue dedicated to the 100th birthday of Villem Raam].

8 One of the first to write about Kjellin's activities in Estonia was Ragnar Nurk in 'Muinsuskaitsest Eesti Vabariigis 1920.–1930. aastatel Tallinna keskaegsete linnakindlustuste näitel', *Vana Tallinn XIX (XXIII)* (Tallinn: Estopol, 2008), 78–116.

9 Estonian Research Council's Personal Research Funding 788: Historicizing Art: Knowledge Production in Art History in Estonia amidst Changing Ideologies and Disciplinary Developments (1/01/2015–31/12/2018). Leading researcher professor Krista Kodres. Members: PhD Virve Sarapik and PhD students Kristina Jõekalda, Kädi Talvoja, Maria Jäärats and Eero Kangor.

10 During the last decade I have published several academic and non-academic articles on this subject: Eero Kangor, 'Art Historical Photograph Collection of the University of Tartu. From the past to the future', *Baltic Journal of Art History*, 1 (2009), 153–178; Eero Kangor, 'Looking for the Professor and Defining Estonian Academic Art History', *Art History & Criticism*, 7 (2011), 166–179; Eero Kangor, 'Tartu Ülikooli kunsti ajalooõpetuse moderniseerimisest ja kollektsioonide rollist kunsti ajaloo professori valimisel aastatel 1919–1921', *Tartu Ülikooli Ajaloo Küsimusi XL* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2012), 93–119; Eero Kangor, 'Miks ei saanud ühestki tüdrukust kunsti ajaloolast?', *Sirp*, 26/05/2017, 30–31; Eero Kangor, 'Kjellini lühike, kuid viljakas aeg Tartus', *Sirp*, 02/08/2019, 24–25; Eero Kangor, 'Sakste värk ja liigne luksus? Kunsti ajaloo kohast eesti rahvusülikoolis ja Eesti Rahva Muuseumis', *Tartu Ülikooli Ajaloo Küsimusi XLVII* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2019), 63–83; Eero Kangor, "'Rootslasena oli ta meie võõram". Kunsti ajaloo professori Helge Kjellini õpiaastad ja kujunemine enne Tartut', *Tartu Ülikooli Ajaloo Küsimusi XLVIII* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2020), 104–133; Eero Kangor, 'Kunsti ajalugu kui rahvusteadus. Tartu Ülikooli kunsti ajaloo õppetooli rajamisest ja esimese professori valimisest 1920.–1921. aastal', *Studies on art and architecture*, 30 (1-2) (2021), 7–38; Eero Kangor, "'Kunsti ajalugu on ju siinses ülikoolis uus distsipliin." Tartu ülikooli kunsti ajaloo kabineti rajamine', *The Estonian Historical Journal*, 179 (1) (2022), 31–69.

TOWARDS ART HISTORY AS A SCHOLARLY DISCIPLINE

Art history, as we know it today, is rooted in the Age of Enlightenment.¹¹ In 1764, when Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) published his *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (History of classical art) in Dresden, he caused a sensation, as he was for the first time applying history in a strict sense to art.¹² However, Winckelmann was not educated as an art historian. He studied theology at the University of Halle (Saale) and medicine at the University of Jena. In 1748 he entered the service of Count Bünau at Nöthnitz near Dresden where he worked as an assistant librarian. This gave him access to one of the greatest collections of books in private hands. In the nearby capital of the Kingdom of Saxony, he became acquainted with the great art collections, made friends among artists and started to take a deeper interest in art and the antiquities. After emigrating to Rome in 1755 and travelling extensively in present-day Italy, in 1763 he was appointed inspector of the antiquities of Rome (*Prefetto dell' Antichità di Roma*).¹³

Around 1800 Winckelmann was institutionalised as the father of a new *archaeology* that replaced the earlier antiquarian study of iconographical motifs and textual resources.¹⁴ He was also a source of inspiration for the German classical scholar, professor at the University of Halle, Fr. A. Chr. W. Wolf (1759–1824), a founder of the new discipline of *classical philology* in 1787. In 1803 his student, Johann Karl Simon Morgenstern (1770–1852) started to lecture at

11 Marlite Halbertsma, 'Die Kunstgeschichte in den deutschsprachigen Ländern und der Niederlanden 1764–1933: ein Überblick', *Gesichtspunkte: Kunstgeschichte heute*, eds. von Marlite Halbertsma, Kitty Zijlmans (Berlin: Reimer, 1995), 36.

12 Hans Belting, *Art History after Modernism* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 126. Originally published as *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte. Eine Revision nach zehn Jahren* (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1995). Belting explains that Winckelmann stepped further from previous writers on art who were simply narrating artist's biographies, and aimed to describe art as an object of its own history. (Ibid., 128.) Winckelmann himself was aware of his paradigmatic endeavour (Élisabeth Décultot, 'Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768)', *Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte. Von Winckelmann bis Warburg*. Band I, hrsg. von Ulrich Pfisterer [München: Verlag C. H. Beck oHG, 2007], 12) and soon acquired international renown (Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000], 11).

13 The most extensive biography of Winckelmann was compiled by the German art historian Carl Justi (Carl Justi, *Winckelmann und seine Zeitgenossen* [Leipzig: Verlag von F. C. W. Vogel, 1898]). For a shorter version see John Harry North, *Winckelmann's 'Philosophy of Art': A Prelude to German Classicism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 7–21.

14 Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal*, 14.



FIG. 1. FRANZ GERHARD VON KÜGELGEN, *Portrait of Johann Karl Simon Morgenstern*, oil on canvas, 1809. ILLUSTRATION: UNIVERSITY OF TARTU LIBRARY.

the re-established Imperial University of Tartu (in the Russian Governorate of Livonia) and there laid the foundations for the curriculum of classical philology, in the sense of classical studies (*Altertumswissenschaft*).¹⁵ A year before he had been inaugurated as the first full professor of rhetoric, classical philology, aesthetics, *art history* and literary history. Morgenstern was also chosen as the first university librarian¹⁶ and considered this more important than his lectures and writings on classical studies.¹⁷ As a professor of classical

15 Jaanika Päll, 'Karl Morgenstern – a torchbearer of the Halle school of classical philology in Tartu', *Qui vult, potest. Karl Morgenstern 250*, comp. by Jaanika Anderson (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2020), 37–38. In 1821, following the example of Wolf, he established the seminar of classical philology (*Seminarium Philologicum*). Anne Lill, 'Kakssada aastat klassikalist filoloogiat Eestis: kahe alguse lugu', *Kakssada aastat klassikalist filoloogiat Eestis. Morgensterni Seltsi Toimetised I*, comp. by Ivo Volt (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2003), 10.

16 Malle Ermel, 'Karl Morgenstern – the first librarian of the Imperial University of Tartu 1802–1839', *Qui vult, potest. Karl Morgenstern 250*, comp. by Jaanika Anderson (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2020), 61.

17 Jaanika Anderson, 'Karl Morgenstern as a teacher of classical art and archaeology', *Qui vult, potest. Karl Morgenstern 250*, comp. by Jaanika Anderson (Tartu: University of Tartu Press, 2020), 141–142.

studies he also became the director of the university art museum, which was established in September 1803.¹⁸ However, in the same year the university also invited drawing and engraving teacher Karl August Senff (1770–1838) from Germany, who, for the purposes of teaching, also established a collection of graphic art and art books.¹⁹

It seems that teaching art history in the Russian province was an early phenomenon even on the European scale. As Heinrich Dilly has declared in his fundamental study of the history of the discipline of art history, it was not until 1813 that Johann Dominicus Fiorillo (1748–1821) was appointed the first full professor of art history at the University of Göttingen (then Kingdom of Westphalia).²⁰ Until then, Fiorillo had been an extraordinary professor of the faculty of philosophy, while in 1781 he had been invited to Göttingen as a 'Master of Drawing' (*Zeichenmeister*) and later became the inspector of the collection of engravings of the library. However, Horst Bredekamp and Adam S. Labuda suggest that the emancipation of the discipline of art history started to take place even earlier, in 1810, with Aloys Hirt as the professor of the Theory and History of Fine Arts (*Theorie und Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste*) at the newly established University of Berlin (Kingdom of Prussia).²¹ But this is only a half truth. While in Berlin the untenured professor of modern art history Gustav Friedrich Waagen (1794–1868), the untenured professor of literary history and aesthetics Heinrich Gustav Hotho (1802–1873) and the *Privatdozent* Franz Kugler (1808–1858), also a professor at the Academy of Arts, started lecturing on *newer, post-antique* or *general* art,²² and the first full professor of *newer and middle* art history (*Neuere und Mittlere Kunstgeschichte*) in German universities was Anton Heinrich

18 Öie Utter, 'Tartu Ülikooli kunstivara ajaloo', *Tartu Ülikooli Ajaloo Küsimusi I* (Tartu: Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1975), 71–72. In fact, at that time the university had only a few buildings at its disposal and so the art museum was located in Morgenstern's own apartment until 1810 (Jaanika Anderson, Ingrid Sakk, Kristiina Tiideberg, 'Tartu Ülikooli kunstimuuseum 215: teostatud ja teostamata ruumiplaanid', *Tuna*, 4 [2018], 142).

19 Inge Kukk, 'Karl August Senff ja kunstiõpetuse algus Tartu Ülikoolis', *200 aastat kunstiharidusest Eestis Tartu Ülikooli joonistuskool 1803–1893*, comp. by Inge Kukk, Epp Preem (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2002), 6–7.

20 Heinrich Dilly, *Kunstgeschichte als Institution. Studien zur Geschichte einer Disziplin* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979), 175–176.

21 Horst Bredekamp, Adam S. Labuda, 'Kunstgeschichte, Universität, Museum und die Mitte Berlins 1810–1873', *In der Mitte Berlins. 200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität*, hrsg. von Horst Bredekamp, Adam S. Labuda (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2010), 26–30.

22 *Ibid.*, 37–48; Dilly, *Kunstgeschichte als Institution*, 190–198.

Springer (1825–1890) from 1860 at the University of Bonn (Kingdom of Prussia).²³ Another important centre of the study of art history besides Berlin was the Vienna school of art history which was established in 1847 by Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg (1817–1885), who became a full professor of the University of Vienna in 1864.²⁴

CONSTITUENTS OF SCHOLARLY ART HISTORY

The gradual formation of narrower academic disciplines during the 19th century can be observed first in the natural sciences and later, following its example, in the human sciences. Renate Prange suggests that art history as a scholarly discipline (*Wissenschaft*) was rooted in German tradition, greatly influenced by G. W. Fr. Hegel, and can be traced back to the writings of J. D. Fiorillo and Carl Friedrich von Rumohr (1785–1843).²⁵ To some extent, *Kunstwissenschaft* methods also subscribe to the norms of positivist scholarship that were firmly established by the mid- to late nineteenth century in the leading academic institutions of England, France and German-speaking countries.²⁶ For example one of the most influential art historians of the late 19th century – the Austrian scholar Alois Riegl (1858–1905) – in his aspiration to make art history more scholarly and thus an independent academic discipline, borrowed techniques from the natural sciences to demonstrate how much could be learned from an art object through careful observation and comparison.²⁷ Probably the most famous art historian of the 20th century – the Swiss scholar Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945) – understood this well when formulating his comparative theory for his 1915 *Principles of*

23 Dilly, *Kunstgeschichte als Institution*, 238; Kathryn Brush, *The Shaping of Art History. Wilhelm Vöge, Adolph Goldschmidt, and the Study of Medieval Art* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1996), 25.

24 Matthew Rampley, *The Vienna School of Art History: Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013).

25 Renate Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte: Philosophische Ästhetik und empirische Wissenschaft* (Köln: Deubner Verlag für Kunst, Theorie und Praxis, 2004), 107–114. See also Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982).

26 Mitchell B. Frank and Daniel Adler, 'Introduction', *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism*, ed. by Mitchell B. Frank and Daniel Adler (Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 2.

27 Diana Reynolds Cordileone, *Alois Riegl in Vienna 1875–1905. An Institutional Biography* (Farnham, Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 1.



FIG. 2. SKIOPTIKON. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; HOLGER ELLGAARD (2008).

Art History, which became extremely popular globally.²⁸ Already in his dissertation he had expressed his admiration for the verifiability that mechanics give to physics and hoped that art history would also achieve an empirical foundation.²⁹ Photography, an invention already announced to the public in 1839 by the French artist L. J. M. Daguerre (1787–1851), was an indispensable tool to enable this.³⁰ Photographs could be used both for comparative research and teaching art history. When Wölfflin himself started to lecture as professor of art history at the University of Berlin in 1901, he already had an enormous collection of slides from his predecessor Herman Grimm, a pioneer

28 Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe: das Problem der Stilentwicklung in der neueren Kunst* (München, F. Bruckmann, 1915). See: Evonne Levy, 'Introduction', *The Global Reception of Heinrich Wölfflin's Principles of Art History*, ed. by Evonne Levy and Tristan Weddigen (Washington: National Gallery of Art, New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2020), 1–14.

29 Horst Bredekamp, 'Wölfflin in Berlin', *The Global Reception of Heinrich Wölfflin's Principles of Art History* (Washington: National Gallery of Art; New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2020), 20.

30 Dorothea Peters, 'Zur Etablierung der Fotografie als Instrument der Kunstgeschichte: Der Kunstverlag Gustav Schauer und die Berliner Museen 1860', *Die Etablierung und Entwicklung des Faches Kunstgeschichte in Deutschland, Polen und Mitteleuropa (anlässlich des 125-jähriges Gründungsjubiläums des ersten Lehrstuhls für Kunstgeschichte in Polen)* (Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2010), 87.

of slide-projection and their use in teaching.³¹ In keeping with his theory, Wölfflin made good use of the new technique of double projection to compare artworks to one-another simultaneously, but the vast majority of art history lecturers were probably satisfied with the 'cyclopean' *skioptikon* (slide projector).

Wölfflin later coined his catchphrase 'art history without names' to encapsulate his understanding of art history as a general history of style which was determined by the immanent laws of the image forms (*Bildformen*) of seeing.³² Wölfflin has been referred to as one of the protagonists of the formalist method around 1900 together with the exponents of the empirical and positivist Vienna School of art history. However, Viennese art historians were reticent in their reception of Wölfflin's writings.³³ One of his opponents was Strzygowski, who after the First World War started to distance himself from other Viennese scholars by obsessively propagating his project of antihumanist world art history transcending the boundaries of Europe, that had to be written anew from an Aryan northern standpoint. Strzygowski criticised Wölfflin's *art history without names*, reduction of art to the laws of form, and a disregard for elementary factors such as soil (*Boden*), the people (*Volk*) or the ingenious creator (*genialer Schöpfer*), which Strzygowski considered the sole vehicles of a vibrant artistic development that was usurped and swallowed up by European power art (*Machtkunst*).³⁴ No matter how inappropriate this view may seem to us today, in the 1920s his theories seemed compelling to many art historians especially in the newly established states in Central and Eastern Europe, but also in Scandinavia.³⁵ In this respect it is not surprising that the Swedish art historian Johnny Roosval (1879–1965) borrowed from him, and that apart from the Swedish-

31 Bredekamp, 'Wölfflin in Berlin', 20.

32 Peter Betthausen, 'Wölfflin, Heinrich', *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon. Zweihundert Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 1999), 483–486.

33 Hans Aurenhammer, 'Formalist Dissent: Why Did the Vienna School ignore Wölfflin's Principles?', *The Global Reception of Heinrich Wölfflin's Principles of Art History*, ed. by Evonne Levy, Tristan Weddigen (Washington: National Gallery of Art; New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2020), 49.

34 *Ibid.*, 56.

35 Peter H. Feist, 'Strzygowski, Josef', *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon. Zweihundert Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 1999), 400–403.

speaking Finnish university in Turku, the University of Tartu also invited Strzygowski to be their first professor of art history.³⁶

ART HISTORY AS A NATIONAL AND MODERN INSTITUTION

Art history emerged as a modern discipline at the same time as the rise of theories of race, which became quickly intertwined with Romantic notions of national art and literature.³⁷ In connection with the rise of nationalism in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars and the formation of nation-states, art was increasingly classified into regional, national and ethnic schools.³⁸ The approaches that connect art with a specific place and the people living there were also developed. The geographer Hugo Hassinger (1877–1952), who introduced the term *art geography* in 1910, played an important role in conceptually combining geography and art history.³⁹ The first systematic presentation of art geography by an art historian was by a German student of Wölfflin, Kurt Gerstenberg (1886–1968), who explored the interrelationships of landscape, nation and art in his doctoral dissertation ‘German Special Gothic’.⁴⁰ Roosval became the leader of art-geographic research in the Nordic countries with his concept of the so-called Nordic-Baltic art region, which he presented in 1921.⁴¹ Roosval’s student Kjellin began to apply these ideas to medieval heritage on the territory of the Estonian Republic.⁴²

36 Lars Berggren, ‘Josef Strzygowski – en främmande fågel i Finland’, *The Shaping of Art History in Finland. Kunsthistoriska studier 36*, ed. by Renja Suominen-Kokkonen (Helsinki: Taidehistorian Seura, 2007), 84–98.

37 Matthew Rampley, ‘The Construction of National Art Histories and the “New” Europe’, *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, ed. by Matthew Rampley, Thierry Lenain, Hubert Locher, et al. (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 232.

38 Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 46.

39 Hugo Hassinger, ‘Über Aufgaben der Städtekunde’, *Dr. A. Petermanns Mitteilungen aus Justus Perthes Geographischer Anstalt*, 56 (1910), 289–294.

40 Kurt Gerstenberg, *Deutsche Sondergotik: eine Untersuchung über das Wesen der deutschen Baukunst im späten Mittelalter* (München: Delphin-Verlag, 1913).

41 Johnny Roosval, *Den Baltiska Nordens kyrkor* (Uppsala: J. A. Lindblad, 1924), 102–104. See also Krista Kodres, ‘Our own Estonian art history: Changing geographies of art-historical narrative’, *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi*, 3-4 (19) (2010), 11–25.

42 Kersti Markus, ‘Kultuurieregiooni probleem eesti vanema kunsti uurimisel. Rootsi ja Saksa kunstiajaloolaste seisukohtade erinevusest 1920.–1940. aastatel’, *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Humanitaar- ja Sotsiaalteadused*, 42 (3) (1993), 301–303.

Nationalist art histories were aligned with the interests of the state, and were promoted as part of official cultural policy and supported with lavish government resources. This underpinned the foundation not only of institutions of higher education but also of the larger apparatus of art-historical research, including the funding of scholarly publishing and of art galleries and museums.⁴³ The professionalisation of art history also occurred simultaneously with the great impulse for public collections and display in the 19th century.⁴⁴ Tony Bennet has described the new state-sponsored nexus of institutions for collection, scholarship and display as the ‘exhibitionary complex’, a phenomenon of new disciplinary mechanisms of the modernising state.⁴⁵

As I have demonstrated, art historians had a far more important role in shaping society during the decades around 1900 than they ever had before or after. They were the agents of the state in researching and constructing the heritage, art history and identity of a nation, in fact they were educating and convincing the general public that their *invented* heritage and art history had *already* belonged to them from centuries ago. The development itself shows the signs of the changing imagination, values and habits of a community.⁴⁶

Elisabeth Mansfield argues that the ascendance of the bourgeoisie (or middle class) in the West must also be reckoned among the impulses behind art history’s claim to the status of profession.⁴⁷ Urbanisation brought forth the growth of the middle-class, who sought positions where special knowledge rather than physical effort could be exchanged for salary. Bourgeois access to careers in art history expanded in the early twentieth century as universities began to offer degree programs, especially graduate programs, in the field. Art history became a profession enabling social mobility and the elevation of one’s social status. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the tendency of the bourgeoisie to emulate the aristocracy rendered art history a particularly appealing profession because art history

43 Rampley, ‘The Construction of National Art Histories and the “New” Europe’, 233.

44 Cordileone, *Alois Riegl in Vienna 1875–1905*, 9.

45 Tony Bennett, ‘The Exhibitionary Complex’, *New Formations*, 4 (Spring 1988), 73–102.

46 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, New York: Verso, 2006).

47 Elisabeth Mansfield, ‘Introduction’, *Making Art History a Profession. A Changing Discipline and Its Institutions*, ed. by Elizabeth C. Mansfield (New York, London: Routledge, 2007), 4.

offers material confirmation of social advancement. Although art historians may not literally possess the art, they do hold knowledge that endows them with authority over these objects.⁴⁸

Academic careers were an attractive 'commodity' for the bourgeoisie, although for a long time this commodity was only available to men. The paradox is that art history was in fact a very popular subject among women, most of whom could not become professional art historians until after the Second World War. In the 19th century the view that women belonged only within the male-controlled spheres of home and church and their main responsibility was to take care of children prevailed, but was gradually put to the test. Initially only a few public occupations were considered appropriate for women, for example teachers, midwives, nurses or pharmacists.⁴⁹ The public occupations usually needed special qualification which could be acquired in vocational schools or universities. In the middle of the 19th century women could already study in German universities, but they were not allowed to take exams until the beginning of the 20th century.⁵⁰ In the 19th century, art history, more than other academic subjects, became popular among the educated public outside the university, who could attend so-called open lectures.⁵¹ At least at the beginning of the 20th century women were present at the lectures of Wölfflin in Berlin and Karl Lange at the University of Tübingen.⁵² The first woman to defend her doctoral thesis in Germany was Wölfflin's student Marie Schuette in 1903.⁵³ However, she did not manage to get any significant professional

48 Mansfield, 'Introduction', 5.

49 Lea Leppik, 'Naiste haridusvõimalustest Vene impeeriumis', *Tartu Ülikooli Ajaloo Kõnemusi XXXV* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2006), 37.

50 Sirje Kivimäe, Sirje Tamul, 'Euroopa ülikoolid ja naised', *Vita Academica, vita feminea* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 1999), 56. Anna Dannemann, Yvonne Daseking, 'Die Studenten und das Studium der Kunstgeschichte um 1900. Eine social- und bildungsgeschichtliche Studie', *In der Mitte Berlins. 200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2010), 171.

51 Dan Karlholm, 'Vetenskapens vardag', *8 kapitel om konsthistoriens historia i Sverige* (Stockholm: Raster Förlag, 2000), 95–96.

52 Ibid, 95. *Die Entstehung der Kunsthistorischen Sammlung*, <http://www.institutsgeschichten.khi.uni-tuebingen.de> [accessed 17/12/2022].

53 Katharina Groth, Birgit Müller, 'Kunstgeschichte um 1900 – ein Vergleich beruflicher Werdegänge: Marie Schuette, Walter Stengel, Hans Wendland und August Griesebach', *In der Mitte Berlins. 200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte an der Humboldt-Universität* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2010), 180.

occupation that equally educated men could easily have acquired. Similarly, the first woman in Sweden to receive a doctoral degree, Gerda Boëthius in 1921, could not get a post at a university.⁵⁴ When the University of Tartu was reopened in 1919 during the Republic of Estonia period, women were allowed to study there on equal grounds with men. Most of the students of the faculty of philosophy in Tartu were women, as were most of the approximately one hundred students of professor Kjellin. But only a few of them finished university as art historians. They considered art history a subject for general knowledge and cultivation, a subject worthy to know about whilst they became school teachers. The opportunities for women to become academic workers or professors was still elusive until after the Second World War.⁵⁵

ART HISTORY AND NATIONAL DISCOURSE IN ESTONIA

As I have demonstrated, art history had changed significantly in the course of the long 19th century from a subject of general cultivation for the upper-class male youth to a modern discipline that was finally also made available to women. However, the attempts to shape art history into a scholarly discipline that gained pace in German and Austrian universities from the 1850s and especially after German unification in 1871 seem not to have affected the teaching of art history at the University of Tartu, although these trends were known here. In this respect it should be pointed out that the process of re-establishing the university in Tartu was motivated by fear of tsar Paul I (1754–1801) and ideas that the French revolution would contaminate youth and nobility in Russia. This was the reason why the tsar prohibited study migration to foreign universities and supported the establishment of a local university in the Baltic provinces. The Imperial University of Dorpat was opened under the auspices of his more liberal son Alexander I of Russia (1777–1825), although the university remained in the guarded grip of the following Russian tsars. A nationalistic approach in art history or dealing with the local art historical heritage in the Baltic provinces was significantly hindered by the professors in

54 Hans Pettersson, 'Konsthistoria utanför universitetet', *8 kapitel om konsthistoriens historia i Sverige* (Stockholm: Raster Förlag, 2000), 168–169.

55 The first woman to be elected professor at the University of Tartu was the pharmacist Alma Tomingas in 1940 (Leppik, 'Naiste haridusvõimalustest Vene impeeriumis', 51).

Tartu, especially in the so-called Russification era of Tsars Alexander III (1845–1894) and Nicholas II (1894–1917). As a reflection of similar developments in Central Europe and later as a reaction to Russian chauvinism, the Baltic-Germans became aware and promoted their own cultural identity. This was expressed in the study of local history and heritage which was addressed in Baltic-German learned societies. Finally, the end of the long 19th century with the First World War (1914–1918), the Russian revolutions (1905 and 1917) and the Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920) brought about profound social and cultural upheavals that resulted in the establishment of the Estonian Republic and enabled the reorganisation of the University of Tartu as a national institution. This was a prerequisite for shaping a modern and new art history in Estonia.

On December 1st, 1919, with the Estonian War of Independence still ongoing, the University of Tartu opened as the only institution for higher learning in the Estonian Republic. It was reorganised from the former Imperial University of Tartu that was dominated by Baltic-Germans and ruled by the Russian government.⁵⁶ In an anti-(Baltic)-German spirit the academic structure of the Estonian university was to be shaped according to Scandinavian examples. As a result, several new chairs were created in the faculty of philosophy. Apart from the obvious chairs in national subjects (Estonian language, literature and kindred languages), there were new chairs for the Archaeology of Estonia and neighbouring countries, Estonian and comparative folklore, Estonian and Scandinavian history and Aesthetics and general art history.⁵⁷ The labels of the first three chairs indicate a national subject while the latter shows a subject for general cultivation. Because there were no appropriate candidates to be found for some of the national chairs among Estonians,⁵⁸ Finnish scholars were invited to be the first professors for archaeology (Aarne Michael Tallgren) and history (Arno Rafael Cederberg), and a Baltic-German

56 The University of Tartu was established in 1632 by the Swedish king Gustav II Adolf (1594–1632), but it was closed in 1710. After the French Revolution Paul I of Russia initiated the idea of establishing a university in the Baltic provinces to prevent the transfer of revolutionary ideas through Russian students from abroad. In 1802 the University of Tartu was re-established by Alexander I of Russia (1777–1825).

57 *Eesti Vabariigi Tartu Ülikooli ettelugemiste kava 1921. aasta I poolaastal* (later: Lecture plan 1921 I) (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 1921), 8–12.

58 Eller, 'Tartu Ülikooli osast eesti kunstiteaduses 1920–1930-ndail aastail I', 61.

(Walter Anderson) was found suitable for folklore.⁵⁹ However, art history as a general subject seems not to have been among the first priorities and finding a professor was postponed.

It was not until the summer of 1920, when the Estonian Republic had acquired part of the valuable and internationally renowned art collection of Rudolf Karl von Liphart (1864–1940) and donated it to the University of Tartu with the Raadi manor where the collection was housed,⁶⁰ that the need for a specialist to take care of the collection arose. It was decided that the professor of art history would be best suited for this task and the faculty of philosophy started looking for suitable candidates.⁶¹ In July 1920 the faculty contacted professors Adolph Goldschmidt (University of Berlin), Heinrich Wölfflin (University of Munich), Osvald Sirén (Stockholm University College), Ewert Wrangel (Lund University) and Johan Jacob Tikkanen (University of Helsinki) in the hope of arranging an election in August 1920, so that lecturing in art history could be started in January 1921.⁶² However, it took several months to get answers from abroad, after which it was possible to contact the proposed candidates and begin persuading them to participate in the competition.

Tikkanen put forward only one Finnish art history doctor, Onni Okkonen (1886–1962), who had written his dissertation on Renaissance art⁶³ and was already occupied both at the University of Helsinki and the Technical University of Helsinki.⁶⁴ As a Finn it would have been easy for him to study the Estonian language. From Germany Goldschmidt had a much wider choice from among the dozens of doctoral students he had supervised.⁶⁵ He proposed a *Privatdozent*⁶⁶

59 *Lecture plan 1921 I*, 8–12.

60 Õie Utter, 'R. v. Lipharti annetatud kunstiesemete üleandmine Tartu Ülikoolile', *Tartu Ülikooli ajaloo küsimusi VII* (Tartu: Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, 1979), 128.

61 National Archives of Estonia, Tartu University Archive [Rahvusarhiiv, RA], EAA.2100.5.959, 11.

62 *Ibid.*

63 Onni Okkonen, *Melozzo da Forlì und seine Schule* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Kirjapainon Osakeyhtiö, 1910).

64 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 40.

65 Brush, *The Shaping of Art History*, 98.

66 *Privatdozent* was a term used for lecturers with a doctor's degree who were not on the payroll of the university. They were private (self-paid) researchers whose lecturing pay depended on the number of participants in their lectures or seminars.

of the University of Halle, the above-mentioned Gerstenberg, and a *Privatdozent* of the University of Hamburg, Erwin Panofsky (1892–1968).⁶⁷ Goldschmidt surmised that it would be easier for the unmarried Gerstenberg to emigrate to Estonia, while Panofsky was married and had two children. Gerstenberg was also proposed by Wölfflin. Secondly Wölfflin put forward the first professor of art history at the University of Würzburg, Fritz Knapp (1870–1938) and finally the full professor at the University of Münster, Martin Wackernagel (1881–1962).⁶⁸ From Lund, Wrangel proposed his student and docent in his chair, Kjellin, who had also studied at Uppsala University with then-docent Johnny Roosval.⁶⁹

The motivation of those candidates who were not yet professors in their home countries to participate would be obvious. However, it appears that when Panofsky was swift to decline,⁷⁰ Wackernagel made an effort with a longer correspondence. He revealed that although he had recently been elected a full professor, it was difficult for him to support his family, wife and children. Indeed, the economic situation in Germany had significantly deteriorated after the First World War, the national currency had plummeted and almost totally lost its purchasing power.⁷¹ This gravely affected the wage earners, university lecturers among them. The prestige and lifestyle previously associated with a professorship became impossible and gave a severe blow to the scholars' self-esteem. Among other things, the opportunities to travel and study art works abroad disappeared and German research institutes had to reduce their activities to a minimum in order to survive. In that respect Wackernagel's interest in finding out more about the available facilities, special library or collections in Tartu is not surprising. He wanted to know if art history had been taught before at the university or if there were finances to build everything up from scratch. Finally, he wondered if there were any other German professors with whom he could socialise in Tartu.⁷²

67 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 42.

68 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 44.

69 RA, EAA.2100.2.353, 2–22.

70 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 64.

71 Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

72 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 63.

Professor Hans Oldekop from the faculty replied to Wackernagel in December 1920 to assure him that the university's Baltic-German as well as Swedish, Finnish and German lecturers were satisfied with local conditions.⁷³ English language professor Heinrich Mutschmann, from Leipzig, was already in Tartu, and professor of philosophy Walther Schmied-Kowarzik was to arrive from Vienna in January of the following year. Oldekop informed him that it would remain for the elected professor to decide how to create the collections of the new chair of art history, because previously the subject had been taught within the framework of classical philology. The teaching facilities for 'newer' art history were available, however, Oldekop did not specify what he meant by that.

It appears that meanwhile the perspective for the chair of art history had become clearer also for the faculty. Already in 1919 the three chairs for classical archaeology of the former Imperial university (Classical philology and archaeology, Classical philology and literary history and Classical philology for Greek and Roman antiquities)⁷⁴ were replaced by two chairs of Latin and Greek languages.⁷⁵ During the First World War the valuable classical art collections of the university had been evacuated to Russia together with academic staff,⁷⁶ however, the Estonian university still hoped to regain them. It was perhaps to this end that Baltic German Oskar Waldhauer,⁷⁷ Director of the Hermitage Antique Department in Petrograd (St Petersburg), had been approached in the summer of 1920 with the proposal to participate in the competition for professor of art history.⁷⁸ During the course of correspondence with him, however, Waldhauer made clear that he would not lecture in post-antique or 'newer' art history, with which the faculty could not agree, so he had to decline their offer.⁷⁹ It could be said that after that

73 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 66.

74 Toomas Hiio, 'Teaduskonnad', *Univesitas Tartuensis 1632–2007*, ed. by Toomas Hiio, Helmut Piirimäe (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli, 2007), 146–147.

75 *Lecture plan 1921 I*, 9.

76 Helmut Piirimäe, 'Tartu Ülikooli avamine Eesti rahvusülikoolina', *Univesitas Tartuensis 1632–2007*, ed. by Toomas Hiio, Helmut Piirimäe (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli, 2007), 301–304. *Dorpat-Jurjev-Tartu ja Voronež. Ülikooli kollektiooni saatus. Kataloog. I*, comp. by Anu Hindikainen, Inge Kukk, Jelena Psenitsõna, Anatoli Vilkov (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2006), 375.

77 On Waldhauer see the monograph by the Russian scholar Mavlejev (Евгений Васильевич Мавлеев, *Вальдгауер* [Санкт-Петербург: Издательство Государственного Эрмитажа, 2005]).

78 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 53.

79 *Ibid.*, 54.

the faculty was free to dismiss the traditions of teaching art history within classical archaeology and open up possibilities for the new art history at the University of Tartu. Certainly, it was not clear what this would entail for nationalist aspirations.

The correspondence with Gerstenberg and Knapp has not been preserved in the archive, but it is known that Knapp replied.⁸⁰ Kjellin also showed his interest in taking part in the competition.⁸¹ These three candidates were approved and in February 1921 the faculty sent letters to professors Yrjö Hirn in Helsinki, Paul Clemen in Bonn and Josef Strzygowski in Vienna to get assessments from them.⁸² In March the Finnish literary historian Hirn quickly answered that he was not competent in the subject. As there was yet no answer from either Clemen or Strzygowski, new letters were sent to Tikkanen and Roosval to get their assessments. Tikkanen did not know any of the candidates.⁸³ However, Roosval replied in April 1921 and gave his opinion. Roosval admitted that Knapp was the most experienced and his research most extensive, although focused on the Italian Renaissance. However, Roosval suggested considering the other two candidates whose previous research was more related to Estonia. Comparing Kurt Gerstenberg's and Helge Kjellin's doctoral theses, Roosval recognised the former's greater scholarly maturity. However, in the case of his student and collaborator from Uppsala Kjellin, Roosval highlighted the practical experience in inventorying churches, especially the art-topographical research that Kjellin had done for the Churches of Sweden programme. Finally, Roosval favoured Kjellin – if not a mature scholar, then still an experienced practical art historian who was committed to the research in the Baltic-Nordic area.⁸⁴

In Tartu, the professor of classical philology and a fellow countryman of Kjellin, Johan Bergman,⁸⁵ was in correspondence with him and provided him with detailed information about Estonia, the

80 RA, EAA 2100.5.959, 17. While Knapp and Gerstenberg were both members of the German Nazi Party (NSDAP), it is possible that correspondence with them was removed and destroyed.

81 Swedish National Archives in Stockholm, Helge Kjellins Baltic archive (later HKB), Volume 4.

82 RA, EAA 2100.5.959, 19.

83 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 82.

84 Ibid., 84–86.

85 Bergman himself had been invited to the chair in 1919 by the curator of the university Peeter Pöld (1878–1930).

city of Tartu, the university, but also gave hints about the ongoing election.⁸⁶ It seems that the faculty was still undecided about their choice among the candidates. Probably there was not enough support for Kjellin. Neither is it clear if Knapp's or Gerstenberg's nationality (or nationalism) or their research orientation was a hindrance. It is clear that the faculty wanted to find the most competent scholar. So far they had been able to do that by inviting the talented Finnish archaeologist Tallgren, but also the above-mentioned Austrian philosopher Walther Schmied-Kowarzik (1885–1958) who stayed in Tartu for several years (1920–1927) and the German philologist Ernst Kieckers (1882–1938), who stayed there until his death (1921–1938). They were all internationally renowned.

Perhaps the dissatisfaction with the candidates already on the list was a reason an effort was made to find another and Tallgren had turned to Strzygowski, whom he knew personally.⁸⁷ Strzygowski agreed to take part in the competition, but for him as the head of a large family, the same issues were important as for other candidates: the inflation of the new Estonian currency, the costs of emigration, the lack of apartments in post-war Tartu, and the university's provision of funds for study materials, books, photos and travels. Strzygowski had higher demands than other candidates, and his maintenance was expensive even for the Turku Academy, where he had worked since 1920.⁸⁸

Finally, the competition took place with the following candidates: Knapp, Gerstenberg, Kjellin, Strzygowski and Waldhauer, while the *Privatdozent* from Bonn University, Wilhelm Worringer (1881–1965), was not included.⁸⁹ The electoral board consisted of 16 professors from the faculty of philosophy, of whom six were Estonian, three Finnish, three Baltic-German, two German, one Swiss and one Swedish. The balloting took place in two rounds. Each professor could cast his vote for any candidate. In the first round Strzygowski got 16 votes, Kjellin 14, Knapp 12, Gerstenberg 5 and Waldhauer 1. The first three

86 HKB, Vol. 84.

87 RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 28.

88 Berggren, 'Josef Strzygowski – en främmande fågel i Finland', 84–98.

89 RA, EAA.2100.2.353, 23. Worringer was added to the list on the recommendation of Paul Clemen, but the faculty did not manage to contact him any more to find out his interest to participate (RA, EAA.2100.5.257, 98).



FIG. 3. PROFESSORS OF THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY IN 1922. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; FINNISH HERITAGE AGENCY, HISTORIAN KUVAKOKOELMA.

were cast again to get the following votes: Strzygowski 15, Kjellin 11 and Knapp 6.⁹⁰

Kjellin was not the first choice of the electoral board. The electors must have doubted his competence, which was certainly not comparable with Strzygowski, but also weaker compared to other candidates. However, the German candidates – Knapp, Gerstenberg and Worringer – received even fewer votes than Kjellin. Strzygowski, as the most famous art historian, won the competition. Apart from his overwhelming reputation, he could even have been regarded as suitable from the nationalist perspective. Strzygowski proceeded from Scandinavian timber architecture to explain the development of medieval art and in so doing also appreciated the folk art of the Slavic peoples in Russia and the Balkans and gained respect from colleagues in these countries.⁹¹

90 RA, EAA.2100.2.353, 23.

91 Feist, 'Strzygowski, Josef', 401. See also Josef Strzygowski, *Early church art in Northern Europe with special reference to timber construction and decoration* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1928).

Folk art had an important place in Estonian national discourse. In 1909 the Estonian National Museum was established primarily for the collection of national material culture including folk art. In fact, the above-mentioned Liphart collections at Raadi manor had been united with the ethnographic collections of the Estonian National Museum in 1921. The elected professor should also have been as competent as possible in the newest scholarly methodologies of his subject. As foreign professors were paid more than their Estonian colleagues, their employment was temporary until an Estonian scholar could take their place. Strzygowski must have met these high demands, whereas Kjellin had certain shortcomings. On the other hand, Kjellin could have been more suitable as a *non*-German, which was in line with the Scandinavian orientation of the university and appropriate from the nationalist perspective. This was evident when Finnish professors were chosen for the chairs of archaeology and history.

We can conclude that the nationality of the candidates or the national tendency of the research topics of the candidates had some importance. However, it is not clear if art history was seen as anything more than a subject for general cultivation in Tartu at that time. It is significant that the name of the chair was shortened after 1919 to 'art history', deleting the words 'aesthetics' and 'general', however, the 'Estonian' was not added as it had been in the case of archaeology. Nevertheless, the person who was to lay the foundations for the new chair would decide if the subject would remain indifferent, would engage, or contradict national discourse in Estonia. In the end, when Strzygowski declined the offer, the faculty turned to the next in the ballot Kjellin, who was invited to the chair.

SWEDISH ART HISTORIAN IN THE MAKING

Tor Helge Kjellin was born on April 24, 1885 in the small village of Mon in the county of Värmland to the middle-class family of an accountant.⁹² The family had ten children, of whom seven acquired higher education. In 1890 the family moved to Stockholm, were

92 For Kjellin's biography see RA, EAA.2100.2.353; Uppsala University Library, Helge Kjellin's archive; Värmland Museum, Helge Kjellin's archive; Ingemar Liman, 'Helge Kjellin 1885–1984', *Konst i Värmland. Värmland förr och nu 1985* (Karlstad: Stiftelsen Värmlands museum och Värmlands fornminnes- och museiförening, 1985), 8.

Kjellin graduated the Latin school for boys in Norrmalm in 1902.⁹³ This classical gymnasium gave access to higher studies at the Swedish universities. However, Kjellin decided to go to work instead and even joined the army, where he acquired the rank of sub-lieutenant in 1907. Only after that he went to study literary history at Uppsala University. During his studies, he also made his debut as a novelist, although it was short-lived.⁹⁴ In 1911 he married and in 1913 graduated Uppsala University as an art historian.

In fact he had become one of the first to graduate with this specialisation in Sweden. It was not until 1907 that the two Swedish universities were granted the funds to employ associate professors of art history.⁹⁵ This enabled students to take an exams in art history and graduate the university in this specialisation. Students had fought for this opportunity since 1901, but it was not until 1917 and 1919 respectively that the first art history professors August Hahr (1868–1947) and Ewert Wrangel (1863–1940) were appointed to Uppsala and Lund. There had been a chair of art history at Stockholm University College since 1889, although this was first occupied by the Swedish author and poet Viktor Rydberg (1828–1895) and from 1908 by the Finnish-born art historian Osvald Sirén (1879–1966). In addition, another chair was created at the Stockholm University College in 1920 that was occupied by Roosval the same year.

The turn towards an independent academic art history in Sweden was still in the making in the first decades of the 20th century. Roosval, Hahr, as well as Axel Romdahl (1880–1951), the professor of art history at the Göteborg University College from 1920, all of whom had studied for longer or shorter periods with Wölfflin and Goldschmidt at Berlin University, were the leaders in making art history a scholarly discipline in Sweden. In 1913 Roosval and Romdahl edited 'Swedish Art History'

93 Art historian Johnny Roosval also graduated the same school in 1897 so they could have known each other already from school (Johnny Roosval, *Forskaren läraren* [Visby: Visum förlag, 1982], 15).

94 He published two novels (*Han måste: en hvardagsroman ur Stockholmslifvet af Tore Moon* [Stockholm: Silén, 1908,] 2nd edition 1910; *Margit Milde. En bok om två lyckliga unga* [Stockholm: Silén, 1910], 2nd and 3rd editions in 1912) and a fairytale that became famous for its illustrations by John Bauer ('The Fairy Tale of Skutt the Elk and Princess Tuvstarr', 'Sagan om älgdjuren Skutt och lilla prinsessan Tuvstarr', 1913, several editions in different languages).

95 Hans Pettersson, 'Konsthistoria som universtitetsdisciplin', *8 kapitel om konsthistoriens historia i Sverige* (Stockholm: Raster Förlag, 2000), 63–91.

with all the leading Swedish art historians of that time as authors.⁹⁶ In the preface of the book, the editors summarised the goals of the 'new' art history in Sweden. The first was the study of the Swedish 'taste and sense of beauty' from all periods, which was a reference to aesthetics. The precondition for this, however, was to determine in a scholarly manner the origin and age of art monuments, their external influences and local characteristics. This referred to the principles of comparative art history and perhaps even art geography. Roosval and Romdahl also pointed out that so far Swedish art had been studied with the eye of a connoisseur or a museologist, while from then on it should be regarded from the perspective of style history. From this it is evident that they envisioned a turn towards modern methods of art history. However, they concluded, that before any further analysis could be performed on the objects of Swedish art history, it was inevitable to make an inventory of the surviving monuments and artefacts in Sweden.

These scholarly ideals were of course influenced by the latest developments in German art history. And similarly to Germany, the new methods of art history were legitimising its academic independence at the universities. Another step towards that goal was to gain social recognition (or social capital)⁹⁷ for the new discipline. This was also a motivation of the so-called church art exhibitions that were organised from 1910. The first exhibition took place in Strängnäs. The aim of the exhibition was to awaken the public's 'dormant interest' in medieval church art and cultural heritage, show its historical value and aestheticise it. For the exhibition, the churches in Strängnäs and their inventory were recorded and movable objects were restored and prepared for display. The Strängnäs exhibition was a preliminary step towards the grander Churches of Sweden research programme, which Roosval and Sigurd Curman initiated in 1912. The goal was to get an overview of all Swedish churches and their movable inventory and publish the results in separate books on all churches.⁹⁸

96 Axel L. Romdahl, Johnny Roosval, *Svensk konsthistoria* (Stockholm: Aktiebolaget Ljus, 1913). Authors Carl R. af Ugglas, Georg Göthe, August Hahr, Sigurd Curman, Axel Gauffin, Georg Nordensvan, Otto Rydbeck, Nils Sjöberg and Gustaf Upmark.

97 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

98 The work on the ca 3,000 Swedish churches is ongoing: *Sveriges kyrkor: Konst- och kulturhistoriskt inventarium*, <https://raa.libguides.com/c.php?g=679196&p=4844622> [accessed 17/12/2022].

The contribution to the Churches of Sweden programme was a good opportunity for students or recent graduates of art history to gain practical experience in their profession. In turn the programme itself would have been impossible without their contribution. Kjellin also participated in taking stock of hundreds of Swedish churches during his studies both in Uppsala and Lund. After graduation from Uppsala, Kjellin worked at the National Museum of History in Stockholm, contributed to the Hudiksvall and to the Skåne church art exhibitions in 1914. One of the curators of the latter was Wrangel, then professor of literary and art history in Lund.

After cooperation with Wrangel, Kjellin continued his studies at Lund University and finally defended his doctoral thesis there on the oeuvre of the 19th-century Swedish painter Uno Troili.⁹⁹ The opponent in the disputation of the thesis, archaeologist Otto Rydbeck, gave a good evaluation. However, some years later professor Hahr was of the opinion that Kjellin did not manage to demonstrate the methodologies of the *new* art history well enough.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, after disputation Kjellin remained in Lund University as a docent of art history and during this time got an invitation to participate in the competition for the professorship of art history in Tartu. In Lund, Kjellin not only lectured and gave seminars on medieval art history, but also oriented his research on this topic. However, he also acted as a curator and organised exhibitions at the university art museum. His experience of museum work could have been regarded as an advantage by the electors in Tartu, as it was anticipated that the professor was to take care of the art collections of the new museum at the Raadi manor.

PROFESSOR KJELLIN'S DISCOURSE OF NORDIC ART HISTORY

Professor Kjellin arrived in Tartu on January 17th, 1922.¹⁰¹ A week later he appealed to the university rector to allocate rooms for his art history seminar:

99 Helge Kjellin, *Uno Troili 1815–1875*, 1–2 (Stockholm: Sveriges allmänna konstförening, 1917).

100 'Sakkunniges utlåtanden. 1. Professor August Hahrs utlåtande', *Handlingar rörande tillsätandet av lediga professorsämbetet i konsthistoria med konstteori vid universitetet i Lund 1928–1929* (Lund: Carl Bloms Boktryckeri, 1929), 48.

101 Kjellin's calendar for the year 1922. Värmland Museum Archive, Helge Kjellin's archive (later: V-HKA) Volume 305. His arrival was also announced in local newspapers (*Postimees*, 19/01/1922; *Kaja*, 20/01/1922; *Päevaleht*, 22/01/1922).

'After all, art history is a new discipline at this university and the university library is not well enough provided with special literature on art history. Therefore, I have brought with my own library [...], and picture collection (photographs, slides, etc.).'¹⁰²

Professor Kjellin pointed out that the seminar should be provided with drawings and graphic art collections for the students to scrutinise artistic techniques. Among the required furniture he mentioned fifteen chairs for students, which shows an estimate of the number of participants, which he deduced from his seminars in Lund. A week later it turned out that there were about forty students registered for his seminars and about one hundred attending his lectures. Art history turned out to be a popular subject among students in Tartu.

In this respect it is worth looking at the study system of the faculty of philosophy at that time. Since 1919, similarly to the Scandinavian and Finnish universities, there was a subject system.¹⁰³ The students had to choose four subjects from the list of about twenty subjects. In general they had to choose one as their main subject (to be studied in the widest scope known by the Latin name *laudatur*), two subjects in the middle scope (*cum laude*) and one subject in the narrowest scope (*approbatur*). It was also possible to choose two subjects in *laudatur* and two in *cum laude*. An exam in *laudatur* gave three, in *cum laude* two and in *approbatur* one point. At least eight points were needed to graduate the university with the diploma *cum laude* and gain the right to apply for the master of philosophy degree after defending a respective thesis. At least seven points were enough to get the usual university diploma. The seminars were compulsory, but the lectures were not. This meant that although there were many students at art history lectures in the first semester, only forty planned to take art history as their subject and even less as their main subject in the scope of *laudatur*. However, it was possible to decide if the subject or the professor was suitable after attending lectures, and to make the choice this way.

In Estonia art history was still regarded as a general knowledge subject for the educated elite, rather than a scientific study of art (*Kunstwissenschaft*). However, it was just this *new* scientific (or academic) art history that Kjellin wanted to introduce in Tartu. A direct lineage

102 Kjellin's letter to the university government on January 23rd, 1922. RA, EAA.2100.5.361, 1.

103 The following is a summary from Eller, 'Tartu Ülikooli osast eesti kunstiteaduses 1920–1930-ndail aastail I', 62–64.

could be drawn from the Berlin School of art history to Tartu, while Kjellin had studied under the supervision of Roosval, then a docent in Uppsala University. Roosval was a student of Wölfflin and Goldschmidt in Berlin and wanted to shape Swedish art history after the German example. Roosval inspired his students to choose Swedish medieval art as their subject, Kjellin among them. Kjellin concentrated on the study of medieval Swedish churches and in Estonia wanted to discover the medieval influences of the island of Gotland on the churches of the Old Livonian island of Ösel and more generally the western part of present-day Estonia that is nearest to Sweden.

Kjellin's first lecture in the 1922 winter semester was titled 'The medieval ecclesiastical architecture of the north [Scandinavia] and its foreign connections.'¹⁰⁴ Kjellin assumed that knowledge of the Nordic countries would provide a good starting point for the study of Estonian art history. He planned every lecture in two parts: first he presented his prepared text for students to write down and then darkened the room to show illustrations on the wall with the *skioptikon*. In the first lecture Kjellin started with an overview of the relevant literature mainly by Nordic and Finnish art historians. He introduced the Churches of Sweden programme and explained how it was being carried out with the help of students. Following Romdahl and Roosval from their introduction to Swedish art history Kjellin stressed that only after such preliminary systematic inventory work was done would it be possible to take a further step and study general questions. He also talked about the regional exhibitions of older church art in Sweden, which were important to demonstrate the historical value of the ecclesiastical heritage. In short, he prepared the students for his planned expedition to Estonian churches.

In the next lectures Kjellin delved into the topic of the christianisation of the pagan Nordic countries in the Middle Ages starting from the 7th century. This was important because, relying on the Swedish historian Hans Hildebrand, the christianisation enabled the North to join with the great Roman Catholic world (i.e. Western civilisation) and helped to awaken the historical consciousness of the Nordic people:

'In pagan times, people were satisfied with lavishly, often fantastically, decorating those things that were required to meet

104 The lecture notes are preserved in Kjellin's archive at the Uppsala University Library.

the needs of everyday life [...] Fully developed artistic activities are cultivated by baptised Swedish people only in historical times, and this art is basically similar to other societies of the European Middle Ages.'¹⁰⁵

Following Hildebrand, Kjellin considered the first contacts with Christians as the beginning of Nordic art history. With Christianity began the written history of the Nordic countries and the emergence of the historical consciousness of the Nordic peoples was enabled. The beginning of Nordic statehood could also be traced back to the baptised Nordic kings. Historic consciousness was in turn a prerequisite for artistic consciousness and the emergence of the concept of art. While this artistic consciousness was engendered by external influence, it was important to trace how and by whom this transfer was made. Hildebrand acknowledged German, English and French influences in the emergence of Swedish artistic consciousness. However, Kjellin seems to regard the inhabitants of the British Isles as the first mediators of foreign influence. This should be understood in the context of tense art-geographical disputes between Germany and Sweden at that time. In his lectures Kjellin made an effort to specify that it was more probable that the peoples who lived in the territories of contemporary Netherlands and the United Kingdom enabled the awakening of the artistic consciousness of the Swedes. At the same time, he wanted to downplay the later contacts with the peoples in contemporary northern Germany. To support his arguments he used literary sources and the specifics of the architectural (spacial) design of the few surviving churches as comparative evidence.

In the third part of his lectures Kjellin concentrated on Norwegian medieval stave churches. Although only a very small number of these churches were preserved, it did not prevent contemporary art historians from drawing far-reaching conclusions about their genesis, origin and international influences, and from basing complex typologies that had to support the dating of the churches and their stylistic interconnections. According to Kjellin, who based his lectures on the writings of the Norwegian art scholar Lorentz Dietrichson

105 Hans Hildebrand, *Den kyrkliga konsten under Sveriges medeltid. En kortfattad översigt* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner. Kungl. Boktryckare, 1875), 1–3.



FIG. 4. CONSTRUCTION DRAWING OF BORGUND STAVE CHURCH (STAVKIRKE, STAVKYRKA) BY ARCHITECT HÅKON CHRISTIE IN 1974. ILLUSTRATION: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

(1834–1917)¹⁰⁶ and the Swedish art historian Emil Eckhoff (1846–1923),¹⁰⁷ stave churches manifested the local style of their Norwegian builders. This was expressed in the way they had ingeniously adapted the constructions used in stone churches to the possibilities of timber. Kjellin emphasised that the style of stave churches was completely exceptional and occurred only in the North and nowhere else in this particular period. The ideas of the architectural theorist Gottfried Semper about the logic of the development of art are echoed here. According to Semper, three components are important in the creation and development of architecture – building material, structural logic

106 Lorentz Dietrichson, *De norske stavkirker. Studier over deres system, oprindelse og historiske udvikling. Et bidrag til Norges middelalderske bygningskunsts historie* (Kristiania: Alb. Cammermeyers forlag, 1892).

107 Emil Eckhoff, *Svenska stavkyrkor jämte iakttagelser över de norska samt redogörelse för i Danmark och England kända lämningar av stavkonstruktioner* (Stockholm: Cederquist, 1914–1916).



FIG. 5. INTERIOR OF CATHRINE'S AND NICHOLAS'S CHURCH IN KARJA, ISLAND ÖSEL (SAAREMAA) IN 1924 AFTER RESTORATION ORGANIZED BY PROFESSOR KJELLIN. PHOTO: ART HISTORICAL PHOTO COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU.

and artistic idea. Art development takes place with the introduction of new materials, which cause changes in architectural forms, but also enable new forms of expression and symbolisation, resulting in a new style. Even more evident are the theories of Strzygowski mentioned above. Timber was a local material that enabled the indigenous Nordic people to craft a basis for their own style. This style was fertilised with their own pristine artistic consciousness that was going to manifest itself in their national art. Another of Strzygowski's influences on Roosval and Kjellin was the concept of the 'ingenious creator'. When Roosval made strenuous efforts to establish the styles of the anonymous medieval masters of Gotland in his book *The Churches of Gotland*,¹⁰⁸ Kjellin tried to do the same in the Estonian church of Karja and establish a Master of Karja.¹⁰⁹

108 Johnny Roosval, *Die Kirchen Gotlands. Ein Beitrag zur mittelalterlichen Kunstgeschichte Schwedens* (Stockholm: Nordstedt & Söner, 1911).

109 Helge Kjellin, *Die Kirche zu Karja auf Oesel und ihre Beziehungen zu Gotland* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1928).

Kjellin's lectures were aimed at teaching a general framework, a discourse and a method to students for their practice of art history as it related to Estonian monuments. Kjellin managed to engage at least some of his Estonian students to help him with his scholarly pursuits. In fact, the study system of the University of Tartu at that time encouraged students to exercise scientific methods from their first years. At the beginning of the 20th century the seminars had an important role in the teaching of art history. Kjellin gave his students practical exercises, for example they had to describe neoclassical buildings in the Old Town of Tartu and present their observations and analysis in the seminars. Later they would catalogue the graphic collections of the university library. In seminars they would also present papers on subject they chose themselves or were given by the professor. The seminar was arranged as a disputation between the presenter and an appointed opponent among fellow students. During summer vacation some students even had the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice by helping Kjellin to describe churches in Saaremaa (Ösel). Some more able students, who chose art history as their main subject, would even carry out independent research in archives in Tartu, Tallinn and Riga, where they would collect (photo)graphic and descriptive material on historic buildings and art.

AWAKENING THE 'DORMANT' INTEREST IN ALIEN HERITAGE

The French revolution had ignited nationalistic feelings all over Europe and gradually induced smaller ethnic groups to bring about their so-called national awakenings. This also manifested itself in the Russian Empire where it simultaneously brought about tendencies of chauvinistic Russification and favoured conversion to Orthodoxy. In the western-most part of the Empire the Baltic-Germans, who had been loyal subjects of the Russian tsars, reacted by promoting their Lutheran faith, national and local identity, culture and heritage. Their learned societies were established to study local history by collecting historic documents, literature and artefacts. However, initially they took an interest in the local peasant culture of the Estonians and Latvians. The latter, who were freed of slavery only in the 1810s, followed the example of the Baltic-Germans and by the mid-century started to show a growing national awareness. This brought about a strong division between the Baltic and Estonian cultural spheres.

The cultural division had a significant consequence for the formation of national disciplines at the University of Tartu in the beginning of the 1920s. The Baltic-Germans were very interested in medieval history, architecture and art as it had been the period when they established their colonial dominance over the indigenous peoples whom they baptised and united with the Christian Occident. At the same time the Estonian schoolteacher Jaan Jung took an interest in pre-Christian strongholds¹¹⁰, a subject that was raised to the scholarly level by the Finnish professor Tallgren in his Chair of the Archaeology of Estonia and Neighbouring Countries. Kjellin had a much more difficult task. In the 1920s Estonian art was still delimited to the creation of ethnic Estonians from the middle of the 19th century; older art and architectural heritage was termed Baltic art. This meant that Kjellin, who was interested in the medieval churches in the western part of Estonia, had to travel to an 'alien territory'. If Kjellin wanted to justify his research of 'alien' heritage, he had to change the Estonian attitude towards this heritage so that people perceived it as their own.

In April 1923 Kjellin held a lecture at the Estonian Learned Society in Tartu where he introduced the new discipline of art history.¹¹¹ He talked about local ecclesiastical art and architecture and its values, and explained the principles of heritage conservation. Kjellin gave an overview of developments in Germany, where art historians had started a systematic inventory of historical buildings and works of art in the second half of the 19th century. The same happened in Sweden at the beginning of the 20th century, when the Swedish art historians started to study local churches, fortresses, castles, urban dwellings as well as village and farm buildings. Kjellin had to admit that in Estonia the study of local churches had so far been carried out by Baltic-Germans, whose work he wanted to continue. For the systematic study of Estonian churches, the professor had established the art history cabinet at his chair and started training Estonian students as specialists in art history. With his students he had already conducted expeditions to the churches in the Estonian

110 Valter Lang, 'The History of Archaeological Research (up to the late 1980s)' *Archaeological Research in Estonia 1865–2005*, ed. by Valter Lang, Margot Laneman (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2006), 20.

111 Manuscript 'Die Kirchenuntersuchungen in Eesti und deren jetzigen Resultate, 11.04.1923', HKB, Vol. 66.

countryside. He stressed that it was important to acknowledge the value of this heritage, because some damage had already been done.

Kjellin held the same lecture in Tallinn a few months later, and both were covered in the newspapers.¹¹² The newspapers mentioned that since damage had already been done to the churches and the art preserved there, a law for the protection of ancient remains was urgently needed. Fortunately, the Ministry of Education had already proposed such a law to the government and it was soon to be discussed in parliament. The Ancient Monuments Act was supposed to ensure that ‘vandalism does not destroy our ecclesiastical art and ancient memories’. Based on Kjellin’s lecture, the newspapers mentioned primarily churches and their art, but not manor houses or medieval fortresses.¹¹³ Tallgren had started to compile the law in 1921 and soon Kjellin joined him.¹¹⁴ They took examples from Finland and the Nordic countries. Tallgren had already started the registration of Estonian prehistoric sites with his students. Kjellin was to carry out the registration of Estonian historic art and architecture, but this happened only in 1928 when the law had already been passed and Kjellin had left Estonia. The draft law brought long discussions in parliament because it would entail restrictions on private property. The legislators also had a different understanding of the objects of the law. In their opinion the draft focused too much attention on ‘foreign’ heritage, whilst excluding Estonian folk art.¹¹⁵ Tallgren and Kjellin objected, saying that it was impossible to protect every piece of folk art on Estonian farms, the existence and quantity of which could not have been ascertained. In fact, the Estonian National Museum had already done a lot of work to collect folk art from people during the last decades, some of which was already on display at

112 ‘Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aprillikuune koosolek’, *Postimees*, 13/04/1923, *Postimees*, 14/04/1923; ‘Meie kiriklik kunst’, *Päevalehe lisa: piltidega illustatud hinnata kaasanne*, 23/04/1923; ‘Teadusline loeng’, *Päevaleht*, 13/06/1923. ‘Professor Kjellini loen’, *Kaja*, 15/06/1923; ‘Uurimised Eesti kirikute üle’, *Kaja*, 18/06/1923.

113 With the Land Reform Act from 1919, the manors of Baltic-Germans were nationalised and divided into smaller plots for new farms, some of which were granted to men who fought in the Estonian War of Independence. However, with the same law the heart of the manors with their buildings were left to their former owners, although many of these lavish buildings could not be maintained and they were sold to new owners, and sometimes even taken to pieces and sold as building material.

114 Mihkel Truman, *Arno Rafael Cederberg Eesti ajalooteaduse rajajana*. MA Thesis (Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2019), 20.

115 HKB, Vol. 66.

Raadi manor. The older architectural and artistic heritage associated with the supremacy of the Baltic-Germans was considered foreign to Estonians, and the law was only the first step in changing this understanding.¹¹⁶

KJELLIN’S CONTRIBUTION TO ESTONIAN ART HISTORY AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION

In 1922, Kjellin had to start from scratch with the training of art historians. His professional training and experience in Sweden made him pursue modern scholarly ideals. Therefore, he had to reinvent the teaching of art history at the University of Tartu and reshape the discourse of Estonian architecture and art. The ‘new’ art history that was developed in the German-speaking countries was a comparative study based on national ideology. The comprehensive treatment of art history of a country and a nation was a task of distinguishing national identity from the external influences manifested in it. In addition to textual sources, art history used all kinds of image collections, of which photography was undoubtedly the most important. Photographs allowed the accurate reproduction of objects under scrutiny and the identification of their characteristic details. However, they could not replace the first-hand study of works of art and architecture. Therefore, both museums and expeditions were important in teaching and study of art history. The direct examination of works of art meant the description of characteristic details using words, drawings and photographs. The resulting data was used for the cameral research that was facilitated by relevant literature, art reproductions and comparative images. From the middle of the 19th century, such collections were created at art history chairs in German-speaking countries. This was followed by similar developments in Sweden and Estonia, carried out by Kjellin.

Kjellin’s art history cabinet was meant for teaching art history and studying Estonian art and was supposed to become a local research centre where material on Estonian cities and country churches was to be collected. The focus on medieval church architecture and ecclesiastic art was Kjellin’s personal interest, but was also in

116 Kristina Jõekalda, ‘Eesti aja muinsuskaitse rahvuslikkus/rahvalikkus. Muinsuspedagoogika ja “võõras” arhitektuur aastatel 1918–1940’, *Mälu. Muinsuskaitse ja restaureerimise osakonna väljaanded 5* (Tallinn: Eesti Kunstiakadeemia, 2011), 73–136.

compliance with contemporary trends in Swedish and northern German art history. The part of the art history cabinet collections gathered by Kjellin reveal his special interest in the medieval church architecture of the western part of Estonia (Ösen and Wiek). Kjellin hoped to find Swedish influence in that area, i.e. from the island of Gotland in the Middle Ages, which was analysed and discussed in his research. By stressing these influences from Sweden, the professor could make this heritage more acceptable to Estonians, while local medieval architecture and art were still associated with their creators, the Baltic-German ruling elites. Therefore, when promoting his profession, Kjellin appealed to the efforts of the new nation state to resemble the modern so-called cultured nations (like Sweden) who took care of the heritage located in their territories. However, the Estonians were still reluctant to realize the need for local heritage conservation. The Republic of Estonia adopted the first heritage conservation law in 1925, although it proved difficult to implement. The preparatory work of Kjellin and Tallgren was therefore even more important in institutionalising heritage conservation in Estonia.

The rich and methodical image collections of Estonian architecture and art monuments in the art history cabinet compiled by Kjellin have a lasting value for our heritage conservation. They document the condition of the heritage not only before the destruction of the Second World War, but also the extensive reconstructions and demolition carried out in the interwar period. The descriptions and drawings made by the students and preserved in Kjellin's archives in Sweden also provide valuable information about the existence or condition of the objects under study. However, the art history cabinet's slide collections, with reproductions of European art and architecture, have only a historiographical value. The collections of the art history cabinet are still eagerly used in teaching and research by lecturers and researchers.

Kjellin certainly contributed to an awareness of the value of Estonia's historical architecture and art, although it would be difficult to assess the scope of the new awareness. Kjellin's most important contribution is the establishment of permanent art history teaching at the University of Tartu. Although the chair remained vacant for several years, art history was still taught at the university, and when the chair was reopened in 1931, a new professor was invited, again from Sweden. By establishing



FIG. 6. PROFESSOR HELGE KJELLIN WITH HIS STUDENTS IN 1924. FIRST ROW (FROM LEFT): 1. EPP SIIMO, 3. HILDA KAURI, 4. MALL JÜRMA; SECOND ROW: 1. ANNA VANIK, 4. ELSBET PAREK, 5. PROFESSOR KJELLIN, 6. HELMI SAADRE, 7. ELLEN MARKSON; THIRD ROW: 1. LUCIE PEKARSKY, 4. ELSE ASCHKEWITZ, 6. LINDA VILMRE, 7. HILDA JAMES, 8. SELMA LIPP; FOURTH ROW: 2. LYDIA KOOK, 3. VERONIKA KEERDOJA, 4. LINDA ANNIST, 5. HARRY MOORA, 6. WERNER SCHWARZ, 7. EEVA NIINIVAARA; FIFTH ROW: 1. SELMA MUTLI, 2. VOLDEMAR VAGA, 3. GEORG LIEDEMANN, 4. JAAN PERT, 5. FERDINAND LINNUS, 6. EDUARD AHAS, 7. GUSTAV SAAR. PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF TARTU MUSEUM.

the art history cabinet, Kjellin had created excellent conditions for future art historians to study Estonian art history.

At first glance, Kjellin's professorship in Tartu had minor results in training professional art historians. In three years he had over one hundred students, about a third of whom passed their final exam in art history. The best-known of Kjellin's students was Voldemar Vaga (1899–1999), who later became Kjellin's predecessor as professor at the University of Tartu. Jaan Pert (1899–1953) worked as an art critic. His student Harry Moora (1900–1968) became professor of archaeology, and Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1942) the director of the Estonian National Museum. Most of Kjellin's students were female, with many working as school teachers after graduation, although some of them managed to join academic professions after the Second

World War. Elsbet Parek (1902–1985) became an art historian, Epp Siimo (1904–1991) became Director of Tallinn City Archive, Eva Niinivaara (1901–2000) was a lecturer at Helsinki University and Hilda James (1902–1967) was a professor at Ohio State University, the University of Chicago and the University of San Francisco.

CONCLUSION

This article has been a story of art history preceding art historians. The author of the first history of art – Winckelmann – did not see himself as an art historian, and neither did his contemporaries, who would rather have regarded him as an intellectual or a man of letters. Winckelmann was named the father of archaeology, classical philology and art history only afterwards in search of the forefathers to the new professions – archaeologist, philologist and art historian. This would give credence and prestige to these new concepts that gradually took form during the long 19th century. It was a century of modernisation, industrialisation and democratisation, concepts that have been used to understand revolutionary changes in society at large. Out of these many revolutions, art history was influenced by the scientific way of thinking. Intellectuals thinking and writing about art had to find ways to make their discourse more exact and lucid. They found a solution in the more thorough study and description of their research objects. This was greatly facilitated with the new technology of photography, which enabled them to develop the comparative method. However, when defining their research objects, art historians were forced to tackle complex problems in one way or another related to the concept of difference. The differences between one man-made object and another made it possible for the art historian to determine his field of study, and at the same time neglect other objects that did not belong to that field.

The concept of difference was also important for the theories of race, nation and sex. The history of the long 19th century gives us many examples that show the ways in which art and its history were used to national political ends. In Germany and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire art history was used in opposite ways to common ends. In the case of Germany it helped to bring the small German countries together, whereas in the case of the multinational Austria-Hungary it was used to keep the different ethnic groups under the

rule of the Austrian monarchy. Failure to keep differences under control led to the First World War and the Russian revolution and resulted in new independent states across Europe, the Republic of Estonia among them. It was possible to profit from the history of art when in search of national identity. However, in the case of Estonia, this was hindered by the activities of another ethnic group, the Baltic-Germans, who had been the ruling class in the Baltic Provinces of the Russian Empire. The distinction between Baltic and Estonian art meant that a person who chose to study either one could be seen as taking the side of one or other ethnic group.

It is difficult to assess whether the first professor of art history at the Estonian University of Tartu, Helge Kjellin, was successful in bridging the gap between Estonian and Baltic art history. He certainly made an attempt to merge these two concepts and define the territorial concept of Estonian art from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century, which he regarded as a node in the wider northern European network. He certainly defined it as a proper field of study for Estonian art historians. However, in this pursuit his results were not immediately revealed. After his departure, art history was neglected and irrelevant at the Estonian University and in the Estonian Republic. Whether this was due to the fact that there were so few men who studied art history as their main subject at the University of Tartu, is another interesting question.

Science and academic professions were regarded as a masculine field of activity until after the Second World War. Only the lack of men, who had died in the war, enabled women to start seeking a more equal place in the academic world worthy of their intellectual ability. There were many capable female students among those who studied art history with Kjellin in Tartu and helped him carry out research in the churches of western Estonia. However, only one of them worked as an art historian after the war. Although the first Estonian professor of art history, Armin Tuulse (1907–1977), was elected at the University of Tartu in 1942, the first female professor of art history in Estonia, Krista Kodres, was elected to the Estonian Academy of Arts only in 2003.

EERO KANGOR: ART HISTORY AS A NEW DISCIPLINE AT THE ESTONIAN UNIVERSITY IN TARTU AFTER THE LONG 19TH CENTURY

KEYWORDS: ART HISTORIOGRAPHY; NATIONALISM; MODERNISM; HERITAGE; GENDER EQUALITY; HELGE KJELLIN; JOHNNY ROOSVAL

SUMMARY

The article is the first attempt to present the beginnings of Estonian professional art history in the 1920s in a regional and global context. The author strives to situate the University of Tartu (Dorpat) in the pan-European network of universities, where art history had gradually become regarded as a new discipline during and after the long 19th century. Art history is rooted in the Age of Enlightenment, with Johann Joachim Winckelmann retrospectively named the father of art history. But it was about a half century after his death that art history was incorporated into a general subject of aesthetics taught at universities. It took another fifty years for art history to become a separate discipline in the modern universities of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and another half century to receive a separate chair at the Estonian national university in Tartu. The development of art history as a discipline at the University of Tartu is analysed on a very granular level, based on primary sources from Estonian and Swedish archives. During the 19th century art and its history were used to the ends of national politics and in search of national identities. In Estonia, this was hindered by the activities of another ethnic group, the Baltic-Germans, who had been the ruling class in the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire. The first professor of art history at the Estonian University of Tartu, Helge Kjellin, wanted to bridge the gap between Estonian and Baltic art history. He attempted to merge these two concepts and define the territorial concept of Estonian art from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century. He also defined this as a proper field of study for Estonian art historians. However, after his departure from Estonia, art history was neglected and irrelevant for the Estonian University and the Estonian Republic. Science and academic professions were regarded as a masculine field of activity until after the Second World War. Only the lack of men, who had died in the war, enabled women to start seeking a more equal place in the academic world worthy of their intellectual ability. Despite there being many capable female

students among those who studied art history with Kjellin, the first female professor of art history in Estonia, Krista Kodres, was elected to the Estonian Academy of Arts only in 2003.

CV

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