The first professors of the medical faculty of the University of Dorpat (Tartu), which was re-opened in April 1802, initiated a number of study collections in order to improve the quality of teaching. Below we will explore how the university got its anthropological collection. Daniel Georg Balk (1764–1826), professor of pathology, semiotics, therapy and clinic, had received his education in Königsberg and Berlin. On 1 August 1802 he started to teach medical-philosophical anthropology to medical students four hours a week. Those were the first anthropology lectures in the universities of tsarist Russia. He illustrated his lectures with preparations from his pathoanatomical collection. As the professor of anatomy had not taken office as yet, he taught osteology as well, and demonstrated bone preparations to his students [1]. Thus, we can conclude that Prof. Balk laid the foundation to collections of normal and pathological anatomy, and there is some reason to assume that he contributed to the foundation of the anthropological collection as well. Both collections were entered in the list of ancillary teaching establishments for the first time from the autumn semester of 1805 [2]. The construction of the rotund building of anatomy was completed in September of the same year. The building housed a lecture theatre and special rooms for anatomical work, and there was also space for a number of collections and professors’ studies [3]. The anatomical and pathoanatomical collections were moved to the building as well, and during the following years they were supplemented on a regular basis. After the completion of the second stage of the annex to the Anatomical Theatre, that is the completion of the wings, the institute of pathological anatomy, which had been set up in 1860 (the third of its kind in tsarist Russia), was moved to this building. Resources were found to purchase new furniture. The first director of this institute Prof. Arthur Böttcher (1831–1889), who became known for his studies of the inner ear, made almost full use of the new possibilities to improve the exhibition of the preparations of the pathoanatomical collection. Even the necessary furniture was custom-made locally after the example of the Virchow Institute because some time earlier Böttcher had raised his qualification in Berlin. Many years later, at the end
of the First World War, this collection, as well as the other holdings of the institute of pathological anatomy, were evacuated to Voronezh. The collection was not returned to the University of Tartu and was destroyed in 1942 during a bomb attack. Vyatsheslav Alekseyevich Afanasyev (1859–1942), former long-time professor of general pathology and pathological anatomy, director of the institute of pathological anatomy, honorary doctor of the University of Tartu, who had taken care of the collection in 1894–1918, perished during the same bomb attack.

August Rauber, MD (1841–1917), who had been invited to Dorpat (Tartu) form Germany in February 1886 to take up the position the professor of anatomy, and who became famous for his textbook of anatomy, opened a teaching museum of anatomy at the institute of anatomy in 1890. To this end he had enlarged and systematized the topographical and other preparations of the rich anatomical collection that had accumulated since the reopening of the university. He put to good use the existing furniture, for example, cabinets with glass doors and showcases, that had been left behind by the institute of pathological anatomy. In addition to the institute of pathological anatomy, the New Anatomical Theatre, which was completed in 1888, housed also the institute of physiology. In 1895 Prof. A. Rauber published an article about the organization of this anatomical museum and also provided an overview of its exhibits. Franz Adolphovich Stefantis (1865–1917), professor of anatomy in Kiev, thought that this teaching museum was a model museum of the beginning of the 20th century. Unfortunately, the greater part of this museum was lost during the turmoils of wars.

The anthropological collection was not directly replenished from the anatomical and pathoanatomical collections started by Prof. Balk; nor emerged there a new ancillary teaching establishment of the university.

Despite this, Prof. Rauber tried to promote the development of anthropology as best as he could. He supervised extensive anthropological research at the institute of anatomy. Therefore, many researchers had written about a laboratory of anthropology at the institute of anatomy, which is not mentioned in official documents. It is true that in 1901 he made efforts to open a separate chair for this discipline at the university. In order to improve teaching and research he submitted a project in 1909, which foresaw that after rebuilding the Old Anatomical Theatre would house only the institute of anatomy (in the right wing) and the future institute of anthropology (in the left wing). He suggested that two new buildings should be built for the other chairs and institutes in the close neighbourhood. His application was not approved, and his project did not win support [4].

In the final year when Prof. August Rauber, Director of the Institute of Anatomy at Yuryev (Tartu) University, was in office, more precisely on 6 November 1910, Privatdozent Abram Eber Landau, MD (1878 – 1959), the supernumerary assistant of the prosector of the institute, submitted an application to the medical faculty, where he asked, if possible, to allocate one or two rooms for his anthropological
collection in some university building. In his view, these rooms could be found in the first student dormitory of the university [5] in Hetzel Street near the Old Anatomical Theatre (at present 4, J. Liivi St.), which had been completed in 1904 [3]. He had set up a private collection in order to illustrate the anthropology lectures that he had delivered since the autumn of the previous year. The audience amounted to 40 – 50 students; many of them had taken a deeper interest in anthropology. The above-named collection was housed in two rooms of an apartment, the rent of which he paid from his own pocket. In his view, the anthropological collection was still in its infancy. During teaching he had also used by kind permission of Prof. A. Rauber some instruments and materials from the Institute of Anatomy. As, in the course of time, his small-scale collection had grown into a full-scale anthropological museum, he expected a benevolent attitude and support from the medical faculty. His application ended with a request for funding in the range of 200–300 roubles per year to supplement and arrange the anthropological collection. Right below the signature of Privatdozent A.E. Landau at the end of the application Prof. A.Rauber had written by hand that he supported the application and expected a favourable solution from the faculty. Another plea for funding at the end of Landau’s application gave reason to submit an additional written explanation concerning the problem. The explanatory letter of 15 November 1910 shows that he applied for this sum to pay only the rent of the private apartment, where the anthropological collection was located, in case no space could be found in the university buildings. On the same day he submitted to the medical faculty a list of those students who had acquired the anthropological technique in the course of studies and who were already involved in research. Students H. Niggol, V. Bortkevich and A. Tumm were studying the chest, G. Michelson was studying skeletons, V. Suhhorutškin jawbones and teeth, K. Kühne mongol spots that occurred in some newborns, and A. Noskov and D. Richter were studying dactyloscopic material.

On 15 November 1910 the council of the medical faculty decided (seven votes for and one against) to apply to the university council for the allocation of one or two rooms for Privatdozent Landau’s collection in university buildings, or, should that be impossible, then 200 – 300 roubles per year. The substantiated opinion of the faculty for the university council (on three typewritten pages) had been drafted by N. Saveljev [5], full professor of polyclinic, medical diagnostics and propaedeutics. It was signed by A. Rauber, full professor of anatomy, W.M.Fr.Zoege von Manteuffel, full professor of surgery, A. Yarotski, extraordinary professor of special pathology and clinic, Y. Shepilevski, extraordinary professor of state medicine (in hygiene), D. Lavrov, extraordinary professor of pharmacology, dietetics, and history of medicine, and V. Tshizh, full professor of psychiatry [6]. This document gave a favourable evaluation of A. E. Landau, Privatdozent of anatomy, whose lectures and practical classes had inspired an entire group of students to take an interest in anthropology and some of them even to conduct research. It was also pointed out that without spending any university funds he had obtained the neces-
sary equipment for successful teaching and plaster casts of bone finds of excavated humans. He had bought a set of most recent anthropological instruments in Zurich, the well-known Swiss professor of anthropology R. Martin himself had helped him to choose them. As a zoology professor from another faculty was using the collection, too, it was considered to be a serious drawback that the collection was located in Landau's private apartment near the railway station. Attention was then drawn to the fact that the university had a long tradition of studying general and special problems of anthropology, which was proved by the research papers by anatomy professors and their numerous disciples. The names of K.E. von Baer, L. Stieda, F.Waldhauer, I.Brennsohn, A. Rauber, R. Weinberg, E.Hugo and others were mentioned. As the previous thirty years had witnessed an interest in anthropological knowledge among criminalists and psychiatrists, then most council members thought that this subject was of utmost importance to future doctors, who, by working in different areas, could conduct the necessary research and contribute to the development of this branch of science. At the same time they felt that the teaching of anthropology was hindered because all the teaching aids were located away from the university in Landau's private apartment, which in itself was inconvenient to students and lecturers alike. The council also believed that if efforts to find rooms for the anthropological collection should fail the university might lose its significance as an academic centre in the field of anthropology. Therefore, it was decided that the faculty would apply to the university council for the endorsement of the application by Privatdozent A.E.Landau (either to allocate one or two rooms for the collection in some university building, or if that proves impossible, to allocate 200-300 roubles per year to pay the rent for the private apartment that accommodated the collection in two rooms).

On 20 November 1910 P.Polyakov, full professor of comparative anatomy, embryology, and histology, submitted a different opinion that took up slightly more than one handwritten page. He disagreed with the position of the medical faculty concerning the allocation of space and funds to the private anthropological collection of Landau. Prof. Polyakov thought that there was no need to open a new ancillary teaching institution because the university constitution of 1884 did not foresee it and the existing ancillary teaching institutions were insufficiently provided with the necessary equipment. He also pointed out that at Russian universities the teaching of anthropology and the anthropological museum had always been affiliated to the department of human anatomy. He then asked why the university should allocate space and funding for a private collection. He regarded it as a dangerous precedent – in the future any Privatdozent who for some reason was not satisfied with his department and ancillary teaching institution could apply for his own rooms and funding for its equipment. By way of conclusion Prof. P.Polyakov suggested that the anthropological collection should be affiliated to the Institute of Anatomy, which would result in the extension of its rooms and the allocation of additional funding to the director of the institute but not to the private collection of Dr Landau.
On 30 November 1910 the university council discussed the application of the council of the medical faculty concerning the collection of Landau, and decided that the problem would be solved at a later time. The same application was on the agenda once again on 10 December, and it was decided then that it would be forwarded to the university government, which in its turn on 21 December sent an enquiry to J. Gravit, the director of the student dormitory, about vacant rooms. In his reply of 29 December the director of the dormitory pointed out that no vacant rooms were available – but taking into account the fact that all the university institutions should render assistance in order to improve teaching, the main task of the university, it would be possible to allocate a two-person corner room on the first floor for the anthropological collection. The room would never be empty, but students would use it reluctantly because in winter it was colder than the other rooms. It was located close to the hall and the lecture room of the dormitory therefore it was always nosier than the other dormitory rooms.

On 30 December the university government decided not to create any obstacles for the allocation of this room on condition that the collection had to be donated to the university. The resolution was forwarded to the university council.

On 28 January 1911 the university council decided to endorse the allocation of the room in the dormitory on the same terms, asking Landau to submit a list of the items belonging to the collection and to apply to the curator of the Riga Educational District for the endorsement of this resolution at least on a temporary basis until the completion of some new university building. On 1 February 1911 A.E. Landau submitted a two-page hand-written list of the items that he would hand over for the future anthropological collection.

He had divided his donation into five groups. The first group comprised plaster casts of excavated bone finds. The second group consisted of two skeletons, the third one consisted of instruments and equipment, the fourth group included charts and photos, and the fifth group consisted of a small library. Landau also promised to supplement the collection in the future in accordance with his possibilities.

In his letter of 17 February 1911 the curator of the educational district informed the Rector of the University that the university council’s resolution concerning the allocation of the rooms for Landau’s anthropological collection would be endorsed on condition that the owner of the collection would transfer it completely to the ownership of the university.

After receiving the list of the anthropological collection on 25 February 1911 the university council thanked Landau for his donation and asked him to act as the director of the anthropological collection [5]. Thus, in February 1911 the university created a new ancillary teaching institution – No. 36. The previous list of such institutions included the university library, three museums, two observatories, the botanical garden, the drawing school, two collections, seven institutes, ten studies, six clinics, a polyclinic, and an outpatient clinic [7]. A few days before (as of 22 February 1911) A. Rauber, the distinguished professor of anatomy, whose
favourable attitude had contributed to the successful teaching and research in anthropology, had retired. His position was taken up by Hermann Ernst Adolphi MD (1863–1919), who had worked 20 years at the same institute as a prosector [4].

On 31 January 1912 A.E.Landau, the director of the anthropological collection, reported on the first year of its activity. The report shows that the collection included 12 plaster items in 41 copies, 15 units of anthropological instruments and devices, two skeletons, 13 charts and maps, 19 titles of books in 20 volumes and two cabinets. Added is a handwritten note that all the above-named items were purchased for his personal funds [8]. As of 20 June 1912 A.E.Landau was appointed as director of the anthropological museum. The university government, in coordination with the curator of the Riga Educational Department doubled the available space in the student dormitory; another room was added to the existing two-person room [5].

The museum report of 30 January 1913 by Landau indicates that during the previous year the museum had acquired one chart, three models, two museum tables, nine models of representatives of various races and an atlas of photos of Estonian brains. To this report, too, the director had added a remark that all the above-named items had been purchased by his personal funds [9]. Landau had already written this report after leaving the university (as of 12 January 1913) for Berne, where he became an extraordinary professor of anatomy [10]. The abandoned anthropological museum soon became inactive and stopped its existence at the end of the First World War although H.E.Adolphi, extraordinary professor of anatomy, had been appointed as acting director.

At present it is impossible to say what happened to the holdings of the anthropological museum, but this issue calls for a future investigation.

References

Tiiu Kasmel, Jaan Kasmel
Centre for Physical Anthropology
University of Tartu
Lossi 36, Tartu 51003, Estonia
E-mail: tiiu.kasmel@mail.ee