

Leonid N. Stolovich

ON THE FATE  
OF KANT COLLECTION  
AT TARTU UNIVERSITY

*The essay is dedicated to the fate of the valuable Kant-related collections and manuscripts from the library of Tartu University, which, in 1895, were transported to the Prussian Academy of Sciences in Berlin for the publication of Kant's complete works and did not return to Tartu and escaped the notice of researchers for a long time.*

**Key words:** Tartu Kant collection, Kant's letters, Kant's death mask, Tartu manuscript.

For a long time, the research library of Tartu University has housed four letters and a note by Immanuel Kant from different archive collections:

1) A letter to Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) of May 9, 1768 from a collection of letters compiled by K. Morgenstern.

2) A letter to Theodor Gottlieb Hippel (1741–1796) of March 15, 1764 from a collection of autographs of the archivist of Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences, Friedrich Ludwig Schardius (1795–1855) presented to Tartu University in 1852.

3) A letter to Johann Schulz (1739–1805) of August 16, 1790, presented to the university in 1862 by state councillor Averin.

4) A letter to Karl Morgenstern of August 14, 1795, in which Kant expresses his gratitude to the addressee for Morgenstern's thesis entitled *De Platonis republica commentationes tres*. However, according to the head of the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Mare Rand, this letter disappeared in the early 1990s [22] = [10, S. 96].

5) A note of September 2, 1792 from Schardius's collection.

All these letters were published in the Complete Works of Kant (*Kants gesammelte Schriften*, herausgegeben von der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Bde. 10–12. Berlin, 1900–1902), while the note appeared in *Кант И. Трактаты и письма*. М., 1980. С. 635, 674–675<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> The information about these manuscripts has been published several times. See. [2, p. 76–79].

As I started to work at Tartu University in 1953 and got acquainted with its library, I found out that once it had contained a part of Kant's archive.

Among the valuable books and manuscripts available at the library of Tartu University, there were 461 letters addressed to the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant, as well as two books from his personal library: *Baumgarten A. G. Metaphysica*. Halle, 1757 and *Meyer G. F. Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre*. Halle, 1752. The pages of the books were covered with the notes of the Königsberg thinker (the publication of these notes required three volumes of Kant's collected works). This collection was brought to Tartu by Kant's apprentice, whom Kant entrusted with the publication of his *Logic* and the lectures on metaphysics, Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche (1762–1842) (he was invited to Dorpat (Tartu) University as a professor of philosophy). Jäsche published Kant's *Logic* in 1800, but he did not manage to publish the lectures on metaphysics<sup>2</sup>. Jäsche presented his part of Kant's archive to his friend – the founder of the library of Tartu University, Karl Morgenstern, who bequeathed it to the library.

Karl Morgenstern described the present of his friend under entry No CCXCI as follows: "Kant collection. Letters to Kant. Written by their authors. In quatro. 772 pages. Name index on three unnumbered pages. Binding ordered by me. The collection was entrusted to me more than 35 years ago by my late friend Jäsche. Moreover, I collected, classified and bound those kept in an old box with a moth-eaten leather cover, in 1843, finally, they were preliminary divided into five packages, in March 1844, letters to Kant were bound in alphabetical order (1088 pages). Some of them are signed by Kant himself"<sup>3</sup>.

The famous specialist in history of philosophy, Kuno Fischer, wrote in the preface to the fourth edition of the sixth volume of the *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie* on August 28, 1897 that Kant's pupil and publisher Jäsche had presented the letter to Kant he had possessed to his friend librarian Morgenstern in Yuryev, who had bequeathed it to the Yuryev University library that kept 461 letters in two volumes in quatro, only 60 of which had been published before [9, p. 143].

However, this part of Kant's archive – the Tartu Kant collection listed in catalogues – was missing due to reasons unknown. Where did it vanish to? I started archive research and here is what I found.

The Kant collection had been kept in the university library until September 11 (23), 1895, i. e. until it was transferred to the Prussian Academy of Sciences in Berlin for the preparation of publication of Kant's complete works (*Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*). The permission to transfer the materials for temporary use was given by the Russian government. The *Rizhsky Vestnik* newspaper of November 2, 1895 wrote that the Ministry of Public Education had solicited the royal assent to transfer Kant's manuscripts that belonged to Yuryev University temporarily to the Berlin Academy of Sciences.

---

<sup>2</sup> Kant handed another part of his archive over to the orientalist and theologian Friedrich Theodor Rink (1770–1811), who attended Kant's lectures in 1786–1789 and later studied philology in Leiden under the supervision of Prof. David Ruhnken, a school friend of Immanuel Kant. In 1795, upon his return to Königsberg, Rink became friends with Kant. Kant entrusted him with the publication of *Physical geography* and *On pedagogy*. See [23] and [19].

<sup>3</sup> The Department of manuscripts and rare documents of the Tartu University Library, catalogue.

The research library of Tartu University boasts the letters from the Prussian Academy of Sciences written by such eminent German philosophers as Hermann Diels, Wilhelm Dilthey, and Benno Erdmann; these letters help trace the movements of the Tartu Kant collection in Germany. An article by Prof. Arseny Gulyga, an employee of the Tartu University research library, Hain Tankler, and the author of the present paper entitled *On Kant's manuscript heritage at Tartu University* [3] traces the movements of the Tartu Kant collection in Germany on the materials of surviving documents and focuses on its publication in the academic collection of Kant's works, the 18<sup>th</sup> volume of which – the last one that contains the Tartu materials – appeared in 1928. Despite numerous reminders, pleas and demands to return Kant's works to Tartu (in 1930s, the director of the library, Friedrich Puksoo, insisted that the Kant collection be returned), it remained in Germany...

What happened to the Kant collection later? Did it survive or was it claimed by World War II? At the same time, after the war, the research library of Tartu University received letters regarding the location of the Kant collection even from German professors. Prof. A Gulyga made an inquiry about the Kant collection to colleagues from East and West Germany and West Berlin. The only fact that was established was that there was a photocopy of the collection in West Berlin. Thus, the saddest conclusion was made, and the article *On Kant's manuscript heritage at Tartu University* ends with the following phrase: "As to the originals, they apparently perished during the war".

However, I did not want to believe that. I continued asking people who had ever had something to do with the manuscript collections of the university or had ample knowledge of the Tartu valuable materials. I encouraged myself with the recollection of a recent success. In the early 1960s, I got interested in the fate of the books that belonged to the great German enlightener, *Johann Gottfried von Herder*. It was known that a part of Herder's library was purchased by the Tartu University library. But the illiterate bureaucrat, who supervised the library in the postwar years, ordered to put the books from Herder's library "in their right place", thus, they were scattered among the hundreds of thousands of library volumes. So, we had to look for a needle in the haystack! However, M. Liblik, the then employee of the Department of Rare books and Manuscripts, remembered that bibliographer Eduard Vigel dealt with Herder's library. M. Liblik managed to find in the papers of the late E. Vigel an article entitled *On the history of J.G. Herder's library*, as well as a list of the books from the personal library of the great thinker. I published these materials in the sixth volume of the *Works on philosophy* [8] and a part of Herder's library was found...

Once, in an old lecture theatre of the main building of Tartu University, which served as a gathering place for teachers during breaks, I told Leo Leesment, a professor of law, everything I knew about the Tartu Kant collection. "Wait", he says, "I vaguely recollect a talk with a German, I think, in 1963, who saw those materials. I should look for the entry in my notes".

To tell the truth, I did not believe then that my interlocutor spoke of the Tartu Kant collection. That is why I did not hurry Leo Leesment. However, several months later, we ran into each other in Town Hall square and he handed me a piece of paper with the address of the archive of the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic, where Leo Leesment's acquaintance saw the two volumes of letters to Kant.

Maybe, it was just photocopies? It was hard to believe that the materials sought for by many specialists had been in full view of everybody – in the Central archive of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR.

And, in late August of 1979, I happened to be in Berlin at the invitation of painter Kurt Magritz.

Of course, one of the first things to do is to visit the archive. So, here I am, in quite Otto-Nuschke-Strasse, at the building of the Academy of Science. I enter the Central archive and introduce myself. I ask, "Have you got the letters to Kant from Karl Morgenstern's collection? I'm also interested in the books by Baumgarten and Meyer with Kant's notes". I complete all the necessary archive formalities. The archivist asks me about my research interests that brought me there and asks to come back in three days without promising anything.

With a sinking heart, I enter the archive on the due date. I am taken to the working room and given two volumes in ancient bindings. I open them and see the familiar label of Karl Morgenstern.

The first volume contains 724 numbered pages of manuscripts, the second 1088. 461 letters in total. No. 163 and 164 are letters from Friedrich Schiller. There are nine letters from Fichte and a letter from Wieland. A special note mentions everyone who has worked on the documents – three people in total. The last person on the list is the acquaintance of Leo Leesment who inquired after Wieland's letter on January 31, 1957.

I was also given G.F. Meyer's book covered with Kant's notes. It sported a new leather binding. As the corresponding note stated, the book was restored in Dresden in 1974. Baumgarten's book was not found. What did happen to it?<sup>4</sup>

The Tartu Kant collection is published in Kant's academic complete works. However, it does not diminish the historical value of the original. Scholars will have to address these documents in the future when publishing Kant's materials.

\* \* \*

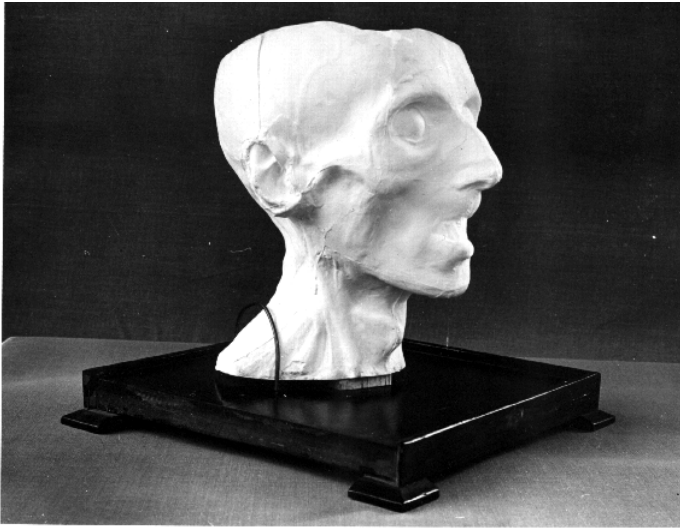
As I was writing this article, another relic immediately related to Immanuel Kant was found at Tartu University.

At the time, my daughter Inna studied at the Department of Psychology of Tartu University. She attended anatomy classes with her groupmates. Once she came back from a class and told me: "Dad, do you know there is a mask of your beloved Kant in the anatomicum?" I did not know that. At once, I went to the anatomicum and entered the office through a room where bodies were kept.

It turned out that, in the dissecting room of Tartu State University, on a shelf, next to different preparations, there was... the death mask of the great philosopher. The staff of the Department of Anatomy knew, of course, that the Anatomical museum had Kant's death mask. But for them, it was just an image of death. Maybe, for the old professors, Kant's name bore some significance, but younger medics did not pay much attention to some idealist philosopher. The fact that the great Kant's death mask was found in Tartu escaped even such specialists in the university's heritage who had worked there for many decades as Dr. Leo Leesment, Associate Professor Aleksander Elango, Villem Ernits, who seemed to know everything. The explanation is quite simple: what humanist will go voluntary to the dissection room literally making their way over corpses?

---

<sup>4</sup> Later, I came across the information that Baumgarten's *Metaphysics* with Kant's notes was in Göttingen (see [18, H. 4, S. 483]).



Kant's death mask, Museum of Classical Antiquities, Tartu

How did Kant's death mask end up at the university? One can only guess. The registration book of the university's Museum of Classical Antiquities, where the mask should be registered has not been found yet (it might have been sent off in the course of evacuation during World War I). The most plausible version is that the mask was brought for Prof. Jäsche, who venerated everything related to his teacher. But, of course, it is only a version.

As to the mask itself, we can name the artist who cast the mask. It was Prof. Knorre from the Königsberg Art School (see [24, S. 334]).

K. H. Glasen [14] mentions that the mould made by Prof. Knorre was used to cast three bust-like masks. One of them ended up in the Berlin Anatomical Museum, another one in the Prussian Society of Antiquities (this copy was damaged and restored later), and the third one in the state archive in Königsberg (see [14, S. 27]). Maybe, the mask from Tartu University was the fourth copy? A wider audience does not know anything about it.

The face of the great philosopher was disfigured by death. The mask bears the traces of its "critique" of the declined reason. Thus, despite the then tradition to keep death masks of eminent people (for instance, there are several masks of Beethoven), Kant's mask was hardly cast repeatedly. To date, we know little about the three copies of Kant's mask that remained in Germany. Did they survive World War II? All that makes the copy from Tartu University even more valuable.

I wrote the lines above in 1998. Later, *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, Heft 4/99, published an article by Heinrich Lange entitled *Totenmaske Kants in Berlin wiederentdeckt*. It says that a copy of Kant's death mask was found in the anatomic collection of the Institute of Anatomy of the Berlin *Charité* medical school. The photos provided in the article conform to the Tartu copy. The author provides well-known information about the creation of the mask. He demonstrates knowledge of the fact that Leonid Stolovich wrote about the discovery of Kant's death mask (Heinrich Lange read about it in the German edition of Kant's biography by A. Gulyga published in 1985).

However, the author of the article *Totenmaske Kants in Berlin wiederentdeckt* makes a fanciful suggestion that the Tartu copy might have been transferred from Königsberg to Tartu after World War II. The German archives and valuables, seized by the Soviet Army, were never transferred to Estonia, moreover, there is information that Kant's mask, although consigned to obscurity, was known to somebody.

In his article entitled *Kantiana in Dorpat (Tartu)*, the eminent expert on Kant, Rudolf Malter expresses his gratitude to Mrs. Anke from Albert-Akademie Königstein for her report that, during her study in Tartu in the 30s, she saw Kant's death mask in the Anatomical Museum [18, S. 486].

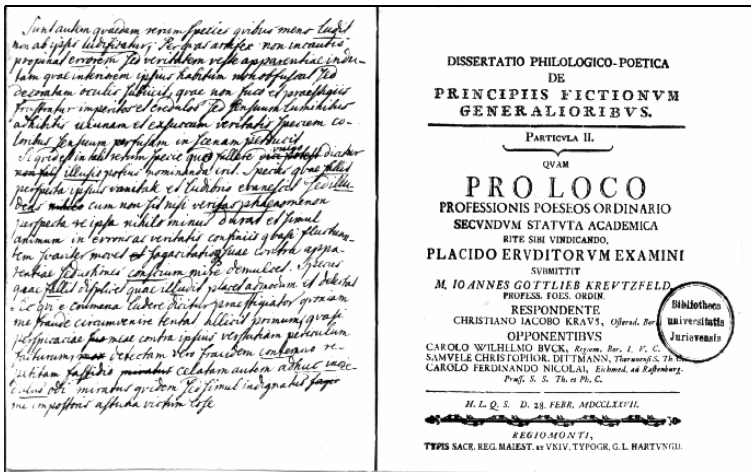
As to the so-called death mask of Kant (also mentioned by Heinrich Lange) that is exhibited in Kant museum of today's Kaliningrad, its story is as following. As the discovery of Kant's mask at Tartu University was reported, a young man, a student of an art college, came to Tartu from Kaliningrad. He asked for permission to copy Kant's death mask using the contact method, i. e. through applying wax and casting a plaster copy with the use of such mould. Permission was not granted. Then he made a visual copy of the mask, he drew and sculptured it looking at the original. The copy turned out to be quite crude, in my opinion. It is the copy exhibited in Kant museum in Kaliningrad. New museum staff did not know about the origins of the copy and turned to me for the explanation.

When I was writing this article, I did not know that Tartu University kept another relic related to Kant. In March 2001, the Tartu University museum organised an unusual exhibition of death masks, which also featured Kant's mask. However, a great surprise was another exhibit – the *plaster copy of Kant's skull* placed under the picture of the original in profile. It poses two questions: how was it possible to make a copy of the philosopher's skull and how did this copy get to Tartu?

The point is that, in 1880, a chapel was built in Königsberg Cathedral, where the philosopher was buried, thus it was necessary to reinter him. There is a picture depicting this process: Kant's skull is being taken out of the opened grave. Thus, it became available for scholars as early as the 1880s. In my library, there is a reprint of an article (it was found at a second hand bookseller's by Prof. Peeter Tulviste, who presented it to me) from the German *Das Morphologische Jahrbuch* yearbook of 1906 by the eminent anatomist and anthropologist, August Rauber (1841–1907), who became a professor of Derpt University in 1886. This article has a very unusual title *Der Schädel von Immanuel Kant und jener vom Neandertal (Kant's skull and that of the Neanderthal man)* – Leipzig, 1906. There are reasons to agree with the exhibition's organiser, Ken Kalling, that it was August Rauber who brought the copy of Kant's skull and another exhibit – Beethoven's skull – to Tartu.

\* \* \*

The Tartu Kant collection had another valuable relic that was in obscurity for a long time. I mean Kreutzfeld's thesis (*Philological and poetical thesis on the general principles of fiction*) in the Latin language, on the blank pages of which Kant wrote his opponent speech. It was reported as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the catalogue of books and manuscripts by the library's founder, Karl Morgenstern [11, p. IX, MCCLXXX]. It also mentions that the thesis had been purchased from Jäsche's inheritance in 1843. On the thesis itself, above Morgenstern's ex libris there is a note: "Olim Jäschii [once Jäsche's] Ex libr. Morgenstern. 1843".



The title page of Kreutzfeld's thesis with a fragment of Kant's *Tartu manuscript*

Why did Kant's manuscript on Kreutzfeld's thesis stay in Tartu, while the other part of the Kant collection was transferred to Germany? Initially, I thought that the *Tartu manuscript* had not been sent off at all, since Kant's opponent's speech was written in clear handwriting (apparently, so that it can be easily read) and it could be copied right there. Indeed, Kant's manuscript was copied in Tartu and first published in the *Altpreussische Monatsschrift* magazine by Artur Warda [13, Bd. XLVIII, H. 4, S. 662–670]. The research library of Tartu University keeps a reprint of this publication that was apparently sent by the author. In 1991, *Kant-Studien* published the German translation of the *Tartu manuscript* with a short translator's afterword. In 1913, this manuscript was reproduced in the 15<sup>th</sup> volume of Kant's complete works [17, S. 903–935].

First, I thought that the publication of the *Tartu manuscript* in the complete works had also been based on the copy. However, after the international scientific circles had learned the location of the manuscript through mass media, I was addressed by a representative of the Kant archive at Marburg University, Werner Stark. In his letter of March 1, 1985, he wrote that he could not imagine that Prof. Erich Adickes, who deciphered Kant's manuscripts for the complete works could have based the publication on a copy and not the original. Moreover, W. Stark informed me that, among the materials of the Kant commission of the Berlin Academy of Sciences from the Central Archive of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR, he saw documents proving that Kreutzfeld's thesis with Kant's manuscript had been in Germany and had been returned to Tartu before 1914.

In the research library of Tartu State University, I found correspondence regarding the sending of Kreutzfeld's thesis to Prof. Erich Adickes for temporary use: on September 21, 1991, the library director V.E. Grabar (the brother of the famous painter and art critic Igor Grabar) approached the university administration with a proposal to meet the request of Prof. Adickes to send him Kreutzfeld's thesis. On October 4, the university administration sent a written notice to the library stating that they supported the request of the Prussian Academy of Sciences. On October 13, 1911, it was sent through the Ministry of

foreign affairs. In a letter of April 22, 1913, the university administration notified the library director that Kreutzfeld's thesis sent off to a professor of the University of Tübingen, Erich Adickes, had been returned on April 9, 1913 (see [1]). Therefore, after the preparation of the 15<sup>th</sup> volume of the complete works, where the *Tartu manuscript* was published according to the original, had been finished it was returned at the threshold of World War I, unlike the rest of the Tartu Kant collection.

However, this was unknown to scientific community. The manuscript was believed to have remained in Germany. It was sought for in vain, while it remained in the research library of Tartu University. It was never claimed. When working of the article entitled *Kantiana in Dorpat (Tartu)*, the eminent West German expert on Kant, Rudolf Malter, after futile search for Kant's manuscript in Germany, addressed me in a letter of November 11, 1983, asking to check whether it could remain miraculously in Tartu. And a miracle did happen.

The analysis of the original leaves no doubt that it is Kant's manuscript, though it is not signed and he is not mentioned as an opponent on the title page of either the first or the second parts of the thesis. As to the signature, it is missing, since Kant wrote the speech for himself. Was Kant an official opponent for Kreutzfeld's thesis?

Kreutzfeld taught at Königsberg Old Town School (altstädtische Schule), but, since the position of a professor of poetics was vacant, two theses should be defended at the university (one for the admission as a member of the Faculty of Philosophy and the other for the position of a professor of poetics). The two theses were two parts of the work entitled *Dissertatio philologico-poetica de principiis fictionum generalioribus*. The discussion of the first one took place on February 25, 1777, of the second on February 28. The respondent, i.e. the participant of the dispute, who, unlike the opponent, supported the candidate, was *Christian Jacob Kraus*, Kant's student, who became his colleague. The opponents, as was tradition, were three students. It is worth noting that one of Kreutzfeld's opponents for the first thesis was *Ehregott Andreas Christoph Wasianski*, Kant's student and, later, housekeeper, who witnessed the death of the great philosopher. By the way, there was a copy of Kreutzfeld's thesis at Königsberg University, which was bound the same way as that in Tartu, with the speech of one of student opponents.

However, alongside three student opponents, at least two professors from the faculty the candidate belonged to, had to participate in the discussion. Immanuel Kant also took part in the discussion of the second thesis on February 28, 1777. A positive prove that the opponent was none other than Kant was that the conclusion of the opponent's speech contains an address to the respondent Kraus: "Long ago, I started to count you as one of my best students". It could be said only by Kant. The handwriting corresponds to Kant's manuscripts in the Latin language kept in the research library of Tartu University<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, Jäsche and Morgenstern could hardly make a mistake about who authored the text.

Although the manuscript was already published, its cultural, historical and scientific value is not diminished. At the same time, the discovery of Kant's manuscript, its translation into the Russian language and the study relating to its publication showed that the *Tartu manuscript* is of great interest for the under-

---

<sup>5</sup> The publication of this manuscript by A.V. Gulyga, L.N. Stolovich, and H.L. Tankler see in [4, p. 635, 674–675].



standing of development of philosophical and aesthetic ideas of the eminent philosopher. It was written in 1777, while Kant was working on his major work — the *Critique of pure reason* and is situated, thus, at the border between the pre-critique and critique periods of Kant's philosophy. The philosopher was an opponent for a thesis on poetics, thus, the *Tartu manuscript* is a work focused mainly on the problems of aesthetics.

Written in a relaxed style, figurative and ironic, this manuscript discusses a number of philosophical problems, such as cognitive capacities of senses, the relation between poetry and philosophy. The great enlightener attacked superstitions, astrology, and magic with great irony, and spoke of delusion-mongering and ambitions to deceive the gullible crowd for one's own benefit with contempt.

The complete Russian translation of the *Tartu manuscript*, edited and pre-faced by the author of the article, was published by a teacher of classical philology and, today, a professor of Tartu University, Anne Lill in *Kantovsky sbornik* (Kaliningrad, 1985. Issue. 10. Pp. 120–129), in the book *Immanuel Kant's aesthetics and the present: proceedings of the fifth Kant Conference in Kaliningrad* (Эстетика Иммануила Канта и современность: Сборник статей по материалам V Кантовских чтений. Калининград — Светлогорск, 1990 год. М.: Знание, 1991. С. 53–62) and in my book entitled *Philosophy. Aesthetics. Laughter* («Философия. Эстетика. Смех. СПб., Тарту, 1999. С. 44–56) with a dedication to the German expert on Kant Rudolf Malter. The analytical analysis of this manuscript was conducted in the preface to this publication, as well as in a number of my other articles<sup>6</sup>.

Kant's speech in Latin, although it was published in the complete works in the German language in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, did not become a part of academic routine and was not even mentioned in works focused on Kant's aesthetics. The discovery of its original, in the research library of Tartu University, its publication in the Russian language and its analyses makes it possible to judge the work of the great philosopher on its merits.

\* \* \*

Have all items of the Tartu Kant collection been found? Another discovery indicates that further search can give new results. In spring 1986, during the preparation of an ex libris exhibition in the research library of Tartu University, a book from Kant's personal library was found. It is a book by Leonhard Creuzer presented to Kant by the author with an inscription: «Dem großen Stifter der kritischen Philosophie Herrn Professor Kant in Koenigsberg als ein geringes Denkmal seiner aufrichtigsten Verehrung gewidmet von dem Verfasser» ("To the great founder of critique philosophy Herr Professor Kant in Koenigsberg as a modest sign of his sincere respect from the author"). The book is entitled *Skeptische Betrachtungen über die Freyheit des Willes mit Hinsicht auf die neuesten Theorien über dieselbe von Leonhard Creuzer*. Giessen, 1793. The inscription was made not on the title page but before it. The bottom of the title page bears the sign of K. Morgenstern and No 3453. At this number, the book can be found in K. Morgenstern's catalogue of books and manuscripts on page 200; however, there is no mentioning that the book had been presented to Kant. The analysis of the book itself shows that there is underlining on pages 42–44, 47, 49–54, 56, 60–64.

<sup>6</sup> See.: [6; 5, p. 143–146]. The last article also appeared in [7, p. 34–43].

Text on pages 134–135 is set off by braces. On page 135, there are several additional lines, apparently, in the author's handwriting. One can hardly speculate who was responsible for underlining. Maybe, it was Kant, maybe, Jäsche. In his book about Kant, Karl Vorländer mentions Creutzer among the Königsberg followers of Kant in the 1970s [24, Bd. 2, S. 239].

Anyway, a book that belonged to the great Kant was found. We will hope that it was not the last discovery in our search for the Tartu Kant collection. And our expectations, as you will see below, were fulfilled in 2005.

### Happy end

After I happened to find the Tartu Kant collection in Berlin, I told about it the then rector of Tartu University, Arnold Koop, and even made an official announcement. However, A. Koop, having learnt that the Tartu Kant collection was in the GDR, did not reply to the announcement. Due to the same reason, all attempts to publish the discovery of the Tartu Kant collection in the major USSR mass media – the *Pravda* newspaper set up an article but did not publish it, as it was explained, due to ensuing complications, i. e. problems in the USSR-GDR relations – yielded no result.

Nevertheless, despite the evident reluctance of the USSR leadership to complicate relations with the GDR, the author of the article managed to publish several works on the fate of the Tartu section of Kant's archive, as well as Kant's death mask (see *Столлович Л. О судьбе тартуской Кантианы // Тартуский государственный университет (ТГУ). 1980 – in Russian; «Sirp ja vasar» 1984 – in Estonian*). These publications were noticed in the GDR and sparked off certain reaction, as well as corresponding studies of eminent German experts on Kant (see [18]).

The *Vestnik* of the Novosti press agency published my material entitled *The works of Estonian researchers on Kant's oeuvre*. This material and a similar news story by the TASS information agency found a broad response (I am familiar with more than 30 cases) in newspapers and magazines of the FRG, the GDR, Portugal, Kuwait, Cuba, Finland, Russia, and other countries. In connection with my discovery of the only returned part of the Tartu Kant collection in the research library of Tartu University in 1984 – the manuscript of opponent's speech for Kreutzfeld's thesis, the so called *Tartu manuscript* – information about the new development in the story of the Tartu Kant collection started to appear in central and local press (for instance, the *Literaturnaya gazeta newspaper*, the *Filosofskie nauki* magazine, *Kantovsky sbornik* published in Kaliningrad and others). Judging by the responses of specialists, including those from Germany, a wider audience was informed about the tragic fate of the Tartu Kant collection.

The history of movements of the Tartu section of Kant's archive and the documents from Estonian State Historical Archive in Tartu<sup>7</sup>, leave no doubt that

---

<sup>7</sup> See the *Tartu University 1802–1918* archive, which, in particular, contains a letter from the Ministry of public enlightenment of the Russian Empire addressed to the rector of Yuryev (Tartu) university notifying of the supreme order of the Emperor of August 18, 1895 to send off the manuscripts of philosopher Kant in possession of the library of Imperial Yuryev University for temporary use to the Berlin Academy of Sciences (Archive 402. Inventory 5. Case 595. P. 218–224). The author expresses his gratitude to the archive employee Tatyana Schor for her help in finding the materials relating to the sending of the Tartu Kant collection to Germany.

the Tartu Kant collection belongs to Tartu University. However, since it concerns one of the most valuable items among the documents of German culture, one can understand the desire to keep them in Germany. At the same time legal inconsistency of retaining the property of Tartu University is obvious. There was no surprise that the employees of the archive of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR tried to keep the location of the Tartu Kant collection in secret (for instance, the director of the Institute of Philosophy of the GDR, Manfred Buhr, gave a negative response to the request regarding the Kant collection, at the same time, the Institute of Philosophy was situated in the same building as the Central archive of the Academy of Science of the GDR, where the collection was found). Moreover, the archive employees did not show me everything: I never saw the volume with Kant's notes and drafts described by K. Morgenstern in the catalogue ("I collected, classified and bound those kept in an old box with a moth-eaten leather cover").

The ambiguous status of the Tartu Kant collection was an obstacle to the study of Kant's manuscript heritage. One of the solutions was suggested by the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, i.e. to legalise the Tartu Kant collection through presenting it to the GDR on behalf of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR neglecting the rights of Tartu University. My archive contains a copy of the letter of the then director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, B.S. Ukraintsev, to the vice president of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, P.N. Fedoseev, that suggests that the materials of the Tartu Kant collection be presented to the Academy of Sciences of the GDR on the basis that such an act of goodwill is appropriate from both research and political points of view. It is a great achievement to conduct acts of good will at somebody else's expense!

On the other hand, German specialists (in particular, the eminent expert of Kant's manuscripts, Werner Stark) emphasised that, regardless of the legal status of Kant's manuscripts, they should be available to scholars from any country. In 1993, W. Stark published a comprehensive monograph on the study of Kant's letters and manuscripts, dedicated to the history of the compilation of the Tartu Kant collection and the search for it [23, S. 19, 206, 208, 280, 343, 359].

In 1995, Tartu University made a request to Germany regarding the return of the Tartu Kant collection to Tartu. And on November 22, 1995, at 11.00 a.m., a truly historic event took place – the Berlin-Brandenburg Scientific Academy and the Scientific Academy in Göttingen returned a part of Immanuel Kant's archive, which left Tartu 100 years ago, to Tartu University. At the same time, the return of the archive took place without any red tape, despite the fact that it concerned genuine relics of German culture. I suppose that it is unambiguous evidence of the democratic nature and legal order of today's German state. Could we even think of it under the fascist or socialist rule in Germany?! However, this historic event was possible also due to the trust of German community in the Tartu University of today, which is capable of ensuring the safety of the invaluable documents of German and universal culture, as well as their availability to scholars from throughout the world.

I was, of course, extremely glad about such result of my 15 year search for and research on the Tartu Kant collection. The booklet published by the research library on the occasion of collection return mentioned my role in its discovery and listed my works (one of them was co-authored by A. Gulyga and H. Tankler), as well as the article by Rudolf Malter *Kantiana in Dopart (Tartu)* published

in *Kant Studien* [18], which focused on my search for the Tartu Kant collection, among the publications on the topic. An article by Serafim Shartashsky (pen name of journalist Ilya Nikiforov) entitled *Immanuel Kant's remigration* appeared in the *Estonia* newspaper of December 12, 1995. It gave credit for my efforts in search for the Tartu Kant collection, which ended in remarkable success. I was also "awarded" by the university with... my monthly salary.

### P. S.

There are many stones dating back to the ice age on the fields of Estonia. Every time, they are thoroughly removed, but, after tillage, they come to surface again and again. This situation resembles archive search.

The Tartu Kant collection seems to have been studied backward and forward, however new, earlier unknown documents related to the great Kant appear every now and then. One of such occasions was the discovery of a leaflet that was a fragment of Kant's draft letter to his classmate from the Königsberg Friedrichskollegium, *David Ruhnken* (1723–1798), who became one of the greatest philologists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in the archive of the research library of Tartu University in 2005.

The discovery was reported in Estonian newspapers: *Tartu Ülikooli raamatukogust leiti filosoof Kanti kiri* [Kant's manuscript found in the library of Tartu University] in the *Postimees* of December 12, 2005 [20]; and *Tähtsast leiust Tartu Ülikooli raamatukogus* [An important discovery in the library of Tartu University] by the head of the Department of manuscripts and rare books of Tartu University, Mare Rand, in the *Eesti Päevaleht* of December 28, 2005. In 2006, Mare Rand published an article entitled *Rara rarissima im Bibliotheksbestand: Die Tartuer / Dorpater Kantiana* in the German language [19] = [9, S. 93–109], in 2007, her work *Karl Morgenstern and the Tartu Kant collection*<sup>8</sup> that describes in detail the discovery of Kant's manuscript, provides its photo, its text in the Latin language and a translation into Estonian was published in the *Yearbook 2004 – 2005*.

According to Mare Rand, the manuscript found in Morgenstern's papers is a draft of a reply to a Latin letter of David Ruhnken to Kant of March 10, 1771<sup>9</sup>. In this letter, David Ruhnken recalls his school friend, with whom he had associated 30 years ago and whose intellectual abilities, quite evident even at school, developed over his lifetime. Ruhnken writes about his life, his professorship and emphasises his continuing interest in Plato. He asks about the other school friends showing great promise, Georg David Kypke and Johann Lewin Porsche. Ruhnken's letter to Kant was first published in 1801 by Friedrich Theodor Rink<sup>10</sup>, who was a student of Prof. Ruhnken in Leiden and, having returned to Königsberg in 1795, joined Kant's circle of friends (it was he whom – alongside Jäsche – Kant entrusted with the publication of his works and handed over a part of his archive).

Mare Rand's article offers the Latin text of the draft of Kant's reply to Ruhnken, as well as its translation into the Estonian language [21, lk. 173–175]. The hardly readable text was deciphered by Mari Murdvee.

---

<sup>8</sup> See [21, lk. 194–195].

<sup>9</sup> David Ruhnken's letter was also published in the Laint language in [16, S. 91–93].

<sup>10</sup> Ruhnken's letter to Kant was published in an appendix to F.T. Rinks' book dedicated to Ruhnken: *Tiberius Hemsterhuys und David Ruhnken: Biografischer Abriss ihres Leben*. Königsberg, 1801.

The draft of reply to Ruhnken is not dated, but it was apparently written after the famous Ruhnken's letter to Kant of March 10, 1771.

Mare Rand's study based on the university library's archive materials traces the condition of the Tartu Kant collection and research on the subject, as well as its partial publication by the founder of the library of Derpt-Tartu University, Karl Morgenstern. Morgenstern also expressed great interest in Ruhnken's work, published two of his letters and, according to the copy of Ruhnken's letter to Kant of March 10, 1771, was going to republish it. Apparently, he put aside the draft of Kant's letter separating it from other Kant's manuscripts that he received from Jäsche. It was the draft that Mare Rand found in Morgenstern's archive only in 2005.

Even F.T. Rink made efforts to find the reply to his letter to Kant in Ruhnken's archive in Leiden. However, his request did not bring the expected results. This letter has never been found. Mare Rand suggests that Ruhnken might have not received a reply to his letter at all. However, it is not likely that Kant ignored a letter of his eminent group mate, whom, according to the draft reply, he still regarded as a friend, although, as researchers claim, Kant was not a diligent correspondent, despite the fact that the founder of critical philosophy went down in history for his punctuality. Kant's reply to Ruhnken, if it was written and still exists, should be further searched for.

What other gems of the Kant collection will be found during the next research 'tillage'?

1987 – 2007

### Bibliography

1. *Архив научной библиотеки Тартуского университета*. Ф. 4. Оп. 1. Ед. хр. 982.
2. *Блюм В. Р., Танклер Х. Л.* Автографы философов в научной библиотеке Тартуского университета // *Вопросы философии*. 1982. №8.
3. *Вопросы теоретического наследия Иммануила Канта*. Вып. 4. Калининград, 1979.
4. *Кант И.* Трактаты и письма. М., 1980.
5. *Столвич Л. Н.* Место «Тартуской рукописи» Канта в его эстетическом учении // *Философские науки*. 1986. №1.
6. *Столвич Л.* Рукопись, найденная в Тарту: Из эстетического наследия Иммануила Канта // *Литературная газета*. 1984. 8 авг.
7. *Столвич Л.* Философия. Эстетика. Смех. СПб.; Тарту, 1999.
8. *Ученые записки Тартуского государственного университета*. Вып. 124. Тарту, 1962.
9. *Фишер К.* Истории новой философии. Т. 4. СПб., 1910.
10. *Bücher und Bibliotheken im Ostseeraum vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* / ed. by Lea Kõiv, Tiit Reimo. Tallinn, 2006.
11. *Catalogus mss. et bibliothecae Carol Morgenstern*. Dorpati, 1868.
12. *Eesti Päevaleht* (28.12.2005). URL: <http://www.epl.ee/artikkel.php?ID=308263>
13. *Eine lateinische Rede Imm. Kants als außerordentlichen Opponenten gegenüber Johann Gottlieb Kreuzfeld*. Mitgeteilt von A. Warda // *Altpreussische Monatsschrift*. 1911.
14. *Glaser K. H.* Kant-Bildnisse. Königsberg, 1924.
15. *Hemsterhuys T., Ruhnken D.* Biografischer Abriss ihres Leben. Königsberg, 1801.
16. *Kant I.* Briefwechsel. Hamburg, 1972. №39 [65].
17. *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*. Dritte Abteilung. Handschriftlicher Nachlaß. Zweiter Band, Erste Hälfte. Berlin, 1913.

18. *Malter R.* Kantiana in Dorpat (Tartu) // Kant-Studien. 1983. H. 4.
19. *Parhomenko E.* Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche Immanuel Kanti loengute väljaandjana, *Studia Philosophica*. I (37). Tartu, 1993.
20. *Postimees* (28.12.2005). URL: <http://www.postimees.ee/301205/otsing.php>
21. *Rand M.* Karl Morgenstern ja Tartu Kantiana // Tartu Ülikooli Raamatukogu. AASTARAAMAT 2004–2005. Tartu, 2007.
22. *Rand M.* Rara rarissima im Bibliotheksbestand: Die Tartuer / Dorpater Kantiana // Books and libraries in the Baltic Sea Region from the 16th to the 18th century: [papers of the academic conference: April 4–5, 2002, Tallinn].
23. *Stark W.* Nachforschungen zu Briefen und Handschriften Immanuel Kants. Berlin, 1993.
24. *Vorländer K.* Immanuel Kant: Der Mann und das Werk. Hamburg, 1977.

#### About author

*Prof. Leonid N. Stolovich*, University of Tartu, e-mail: [stol@ut.ee](mailto:stol@ut.ee)