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ПРОФЕССОР КУДРЕВЕЦКИЙ ВАСИЛИЙ ВАСИЛЬЕВИЧ — МАЛОИЗВЕСТНЫЕ ФАКТЫ БИОГРАФИИ

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Professor Kudrevetski Vasily Vasilievich — Little Known Biography Facts

Резюме

Кудревецкий Василий Васильевич (1859-1937? гг.) — терапевт, доктор медицины, профессор, действительный статский советник. Профессиональная деятельность ученого была связана с Императорским Варшавским университетом, в котором он заведовал кафедрой факультетской терапевтической клиники (1895 по 1910 гг.), был деканом медицинского факультета и исполнял обязанности ректора (1909-1910 гг.). Профессор Кудревецкий В.В. был учеником выдающегося ученого, академика Павлова И.П. Под его руководством в небольшой лаборатории клиники проф. С.П. Боткина они проводили первые фундаментальные исследования и экспериментальные работы, посвященные физиологии пищеварения. Накопленный опыт по этой теме позволил Кудревецкому в 1890 году защитить докторскую диссертацию, научным консультантом которой выступил сам Иван Петрович.

Результаты фундаментальных работ Кудревецкого В.В. легли в основу научных представлений о физиологии пищеварительной системы и не потеряли своей актуальности сегодня.

Ключевые слова: Кудревецкий Василий Васильевич, Императорский Варшавский университет

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Авторы заявляют, что данная работа, её тема, предмет и содержание не затрагивают конкурирующих интересов

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Abstract

The scientist's professional activities were associated with the Imperial University of Warsaw, where he headed the department of the faculty therapeutic clinic (1895-1910), was the dean of the medical faculty and acting as the rector (1909-1910).

Professor Kudrevetski V.V. was a scholar of an outstanding scientist, academician Pavlov I.P. Under his leadership in a small laboratory of the prof. S.P. Botkin clinic, they carried out the first fundamental research and experimental work on the physiology of digestion. The accumulated experience on this topic allowed Kudrevetski to defend his doctoral dissertation in 1890, the scientific consultant of which was Ivan Petrovich himself.

The results of fundamental works of V.V. Kudrevetski formed the basis of scientific ideas about the physiology of the digestive system and have not lost their relevance today.

Key words: Kudrevetski Vasily Vasilievich, Imperial University of Warsaw

Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests

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Vasily Vasilievich Kudrevetsky, the son of a priest, was born on January 21, 1859, in the village of Pochep, Chernihiv Region [2]. His path towards medicine turned out to be «tortuous and thorny». He got his secondary education at the Chernihiv Theological Seminary.



Figure 1. Prof. Kudrevetski V.V. (1897)

Having shown high learning abilities, after 4th grade, in 1878, he enrolled at the Imperial Novorossiysk University in Odessa, where he graduated from the Natural Sciences Department of the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics as a Candidate of Science in 1882 [3]. Then for two years, he attended lectures at the Mathematics Department of the same faculty. In his 2nd year, he moved to the Imperial Military Medical Academy (St. Petersburg). It was only in January 1885 that he enrolled as a 3rd-year student.

From that point, the search for his calling was complete. Student Vasily had chosen medicine. Despite his young age, at the age of 26, he had a broad outlook. He was an outstanding personality and had oratory skills. In 1887, Kudrevetsky graduated with a physician's degree with honors. After winning a competition, he was honored to remain at the Academy to undergo three-year advanced training [4]. To this end, he was assigned to the service as a physician at the Clinical Military Hospital and the resident physician at the therapeutic («Botkin») clinic, which was then headed by prof. L. V. Popov [5]. Without putting his clinical work on hold, Vasily Vasilievich worked on his dissertation titled «Materials

on the Physiology of the Pancreas», which he submitted for defense on November 10, 1890. This work was written under the guidance of future Nobel Prize winner, world-famous scientist, Academician I. P. Pavlov. In the concluding remarks, Kudrevetsky noted: «This study was carried out by me at the suggestion and under the guidance of the highly respected Professor Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, whom I sincerely thank for all his work and the warm attention that he paid me in carrying out this work» [6].

Vasily Vasilievich was the first to quantify «fat and starch enzymes» in pancreatic juice, studied the effect of solar plexus extirpation on the secretory function of the pancreas, proved (using a degeneration method) the presence of secretory fibers in the sympathetic nerve, and suggested the presence of fibers that delay pancreatic secretion. Kudrevetsky's experimental work revealed that direct nerve irritation during vivisection caused the secretion of pancreatic juice, which was significantly rich in solid substances and enzymes compared with juice obtained in dogs with a constant fistula of the pancreatic duct in a chronic experiment. He also noted that protein enzyme can be contained in the active form in the «nerve» juice [7]. These experimental data laid the



Figure 2. A copy of the cover of V.V. Kudrevetski's dissertation (1890)

groundwork for future research in this area and formed the basis of modern scientific ideas about the physiology of the digestive system.

Vasily Vasilievich always spoke warmly of his teacher. To this day, the records of his work with Academician I. P. Pavlov at the S. P. Botkin Clinic have been kept, which were published on the 150th anniversary of his birth.

«I remember Ivan Petrovich, like all his many students, with a feeling of deep admiration and gratitude. I was lucky to work under the guidance of Pavlov in the initial period of his research on the physiology of digestion. This was almost 50 years ago, when Ivan Petrovich worked in the modest laboratory of the Prof. Botkin Clinic. It was a small two-roomed wooden house that was located in a separate part of the clinic's garden. Both the house itself and the whole atmosphere were extremely modest. For example, a «thermostat» designed by Ivan Petrovich himself was made of a sardine tin box attached to an iron rack and heated by a small kerosene lamp. Many of his works on the physiology of digestion were conducted in this laboratory. This laboratory was intended for the experimental development of clinical, mainly pharmacological, topics proposed by S. P. Botkin to his residents, which allowed Ivan Petrovich to carry out such work. The resident who received the task turned for help and guidance to the actual chief of the laboratory — Ivan Petrovich, who usually did not refuse such requests. Not only that, if he became interested in the subject, he would work on it with his enormous enthusiasm, devoting a lot of effort and time to such work. Sometimes, he would even develop a special new technique for a particular case. All this resulted in substantial research papers published as dissertations for the Doctor of Medicine degree. Thanks to this confluence of circumstances, Pavlov, the physiologist, acquired the reputation of an outstanding experimenting pharmacologist. When there was a vacancy at the Department of Pharmacology at the Military Medical Academy, he was offered the position. He remained in this department for five years before moving to the Department of Physiology» [9].

Prof. Kudrevetsky noted that in some of these dissertations — when they appeared in print — it was not sufficiently emphasized that Ivan Petrovich was their main inspirer and leader. «It turned out to be the expropriation of his merits in some way as we, his students, told him with indignation. But Ivan Petrovich answered with warmth, «This is all not important, the main thing is that the truth be found». And he showed such unworldly self-forgetfulness in his further scientific work. He was the same with respect to all kinds of worldly benefits.

«Although many years have passed since then, I vividly recall both the general picture and small episodes of the work that was taking place in this small laboratory.

In the morning, at a certain hour, we (only three of us regularly worked at that time) are already in our places; each of us has his own task for this day, we are waiting for Ivan Petrovich. But he did not keep us waiting for long. He comes, after a long way with his quick energetic gait (he lived far from the laboratory), cheerful and friendly. Before starting the next work, he tells us his thoughts on the results of recent experiments, and always listens carefully to our opinions; sometimes even a dispute arises over a particular issue. This manner of discussing all the material obtained in the laboratory, with his students as with employees, created a particularly pleasant atmosphere. We had «secular» talks in our minutes of leisure, but it was obvious that he was of little interest in it, although he was sometimes witty, and laughed merrily», recalled Vasily Vasilievich.

Despite being easy to talk to, when it came to work, Academician I. P. Pavlov was strict and demanding of his students, caused them a lot of grief, for example, when asked to repeat each experiment many times. Pavlov taught that we should strive to ensure that the physiological experiment is reproduced with the same constancy and accuracy as any physical experiment and that only then could we validate the conclusion.

«Ivan Petrovich brought great excitement to the work in the laboratory with his particular enthusiasm and even fervor, with which he dealt with the questions he posed. This was especially noticeable when a new fact was outlined in a particular experiment. And in the cycle of his research of many new things, this was a frequent occurrence. If one of his students stayed in the laboratory until late at night to finish studies on a particular digestive juice obtained during another experiment, Ivan Petrovich came to the laboratory at night to find out the final results of the experiment, without waiting until morning» [9].



Figure 3. In the laboratory of Professor S.P. Botkin (1880s). From left to right: Professors Smirnov G.A., Kudrevetsky V.V., Pavlov I.P. and Verkhovsky B.V.



Figure 4. «Laboratory at the Villiers Clinic, 1889th year. E.O. Shumova-Simanovskaya, I. Pavlov, V. Kudrevetski and N. Ketcherg. My first great independent school», — written on the back of the photo by the hand of Ivan Petrovich [8]

Ivan Petrovich demonstrated such enthusiasm for work by willingly sharing his laboratory experience with anyone, even if the person was not from his laboratory. One little-known story can serve as an example of his enthusiasm for work and an intense desire to interest others with something that was interesting to him. Once Ivan Petrovich organized a competition for the best prediction of the results of an experiment on how the

infusion of alkaline solution into a dog's stomach would affect the separation of hydrochloric acid. To do this, he sent a sheet to all laboratories of the Institute of Experimental Medicine, and each participant also contributed 20 kopecks. Vasily Vasilievich wrote that «it turned out to be an extremely interesting and fun contest, with all chiefs of all laboratories and their students as participants». He also recalled how everyone who visited the laboratory had tea at break time. «Tea was brewed in a glass flask and served to guests in large beakers, and glass rods that were used in chemical experiments were used for stirring» [9].

Such a working and simultaneously friendly environment created by Academician I. P. Pavlov in his laboratories had a beneficial effect on the young scientists, who were making their first steps in research.

After defending his dissertation, Vasily Vasilievich worked as an intern in the same therapeutic clinic. For special success in his training, in 1891, he was sent for an internship abroad «for scientific purposes». At that time, it was a mandatory condition of the Conference of the Imperial Military Medical Academy for a professorship presentation. Visiting the laboratories of famous European medical scientists of that time, Kudrevetsky acquired state-of-the-art knowledge, added to his scientific and clinical experience, and established new professional contacts [10].



Figure 5. Group of the first residents of the Institute of Experimental Medicine. Top row 2nd from the left A.N. Mokeev; middle row: in the center of acad. I.P. Pavlov, 2nd from left — G.S. Shubenko, 1st from the right — Kudrevetski V.V., 3rd from the right — Shumova-Simanovskaya E.O.; bottom row — in the center — Dolinsky I.L. (1893)



Figure 6. Photo collage dedicated to the activities of the Russian Medical Society at the University of Warsaw. Above — a photo of the next meeting of the society, below — a photo of the chairman of the society — prof. Kudrevetski V.V., as well as works published by members of the society (1913)

In those years, issues of diagnosis and management of infectious diseases and vaccinations were especially relevant, which we can see from his research papers. After the internship, he published «Über Tuberkulose des Pankreas» (translated from German: «On Pancreatic Tuberculosis», 1892), «Zur Lehre von der durch Wirbelsäulentumoren bedingten Compressionserkrankung des Rückenmarkes» (translated from German: «On the theory of spinal cord compression disease caused by spinal tumors», 1892), «Recherches experimentales sur l'immunization contre la diphthérie» (translated from French: «Experimental studies on immunization against diphtheria», 1893), etc.

However, success in his homeland did not keep him waiting for long, and he was soon awarded the title of privat-docent at the Military Medical Academy of Internal Medicine, and then that of professor. By the Highest Order for the Civil Department (April 21, 1895), he was appointed, first, an extraordinary professor, and then (December 4, 1899) an ordinary professor at the Imperial University of Warsaw at the Department of Therapeutic Clinic [11, 12].

He highly appreciated the trust of the medical faculty and set to work with great enthusiasm. In those years, the department received new equipment that allowed to conduct not only clinical but also research work and experiments. The department was located at the Holy Spirit Hospital in Warsaw. In a report on the faculty clinic for the year 1900, the professor reported giving lectures to students, conducting practical classes, 2841 outpatients and 844 inpatients treated on 50 beds by the department staff [13].

The educational process at the department was inextricably linked with clinical work and was built on «patient-book-patient» principle. Each student in the clinic monitored his patient (from 3 to 5 during the year). He had to examine the patient daily and monitor the course of the disease, treatment prescribed, keep medical history and then report about it. This monitoring was conducted under the guidance and control of resident physicians and professors. Once a week, the professor himself with the students of the whole clinic did a round; each student reported his observations for the week, and the students discussed the most interesting clinical

cases. Students were also divided into groups, and in the evening, arranged rounds in the clinic with resident physicians. This approach, along with clinical lectures, allowed students to monitor everything that happened in the hospital throughout the year and contributed to the formation of clinical thinking, and gradually accustomed them to independent practice [14]. In the clinical laboratory, students conducted various chemical, microscopic and bacteriological studies required for the diagnosis of diseases of patients monitored by each student. During their training, they got acquainted with all the methods of clinical research and put these skills to practice when learning the subject. Students were actively involved in the study of outpatients and practiced collecting medical history and complaints, examination and physical examination under the supervision of resident physicians, and once a week — of the professor. They also attended clinical autopsies, where they compared the pathological findings they found with the intravital symptoms and manifestations of diseases they had previously observed in the hospital [15].

During the summer vacation period from 1900 to 1908, Vasily Vasilievich annually traveled abroad «for scientific purposes», where he spent a lot of time in clinics and laboratories, expanding his scientific horizons and speaking at scientific forums. He continued to develop topics on immunization against diphtheria, smallpox. He studied the management of tuberculosis and implemented the results of his work and observations into hospital practice.

While conducting his primary job, Vasily Vasilievich was also involved in social work. In 1896, he was elected by the Warsaw City Council as a member of the commission to conduct competitive tests for the position of resident physician at the Jesus Child Hospital. According to the University Council election, in 1902, he was approved as a judge of the professorial disciplinary court by the Trustee of the Warsaw School District. From 1905, he served as the dean of the Faculty of Medicine for five years. And from 1906, he actively participated in the work of the Russian Medical Society at the university, first as a fellow chairman and then chairman [16]. Vasily Vasilievich was heavily involved in drawing up the agenda of the meetings. He argued that the topics discussed should match urgent issues facing medical science of that time. Thanks to his work, the Russian Medical Society united physicians of various specialties, shared current knowledge in internal medicine, and also developed measures for the management and prevention of diseases.

The authority of Prof. Kudrevetsky was unquestioned. He spoke convincingly and in a well-argued manner. He had good erudition and experience, a unique scientific and clinical mind. He was an excellent organizer.

From 1894 to 1910, Vasily Vasilievich was promoted to the civil rank, starting with a college assessor and ending with an active state councilor. The ranking table introduced by Peter the Great in 1722 defined only 14 classes of civil servants, where the position of the active state councilor corresponded to the civil rank of class 4. Employees of this level were to be addressed as «Your Excellency!» At the same time, this title gave an important advantage — the right to hereditary nobility. Active state councilors could have senior management positions, which enabled Prof. Kudrevetsky to head a large structural unit, for example, a university.

In pre-revolutionary Russia, all job transfers were recorded in a special document — an official list that was the prototype of the modern-day employment record book. The professor's list indicated that on January 10, 1909, he was approved by the Minister of Public Education as «Acting Rector of the University of Warsaw» [4]. Such an appointment was recognition of his merits and a sign of high confidence from colleagues and the Ministry.

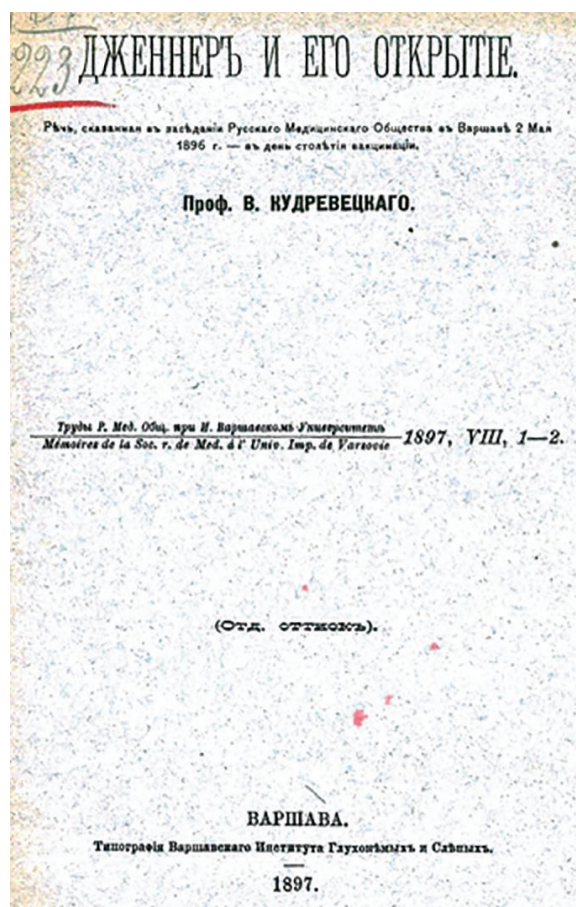


Figure 7. Speech by prof. Kudrevetski V.V., dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the use of the first vaccine against smallpox, developed by the English physician Edward Jenner (meeting of the Russian Medical Society in Warsaw, 1896)

However, this fact did not become critical in the future life of the scientist. In 1909, Prof. Kudrevetsky was 50 years old, which allowed him to resign from service and retire. And, «according to his petition dated December 31, 1910, by the Highest Order for the Civil Department, he was dismissed and had the right to wear the uniform of an ordinary professor» [17]. This was the last official entry in the document on his working activity that summarized his professional career.

He handed over the reins of the university to the dean of the Law Department, Professor Ivan Nikolayevich Trepitsyn. His department was then headed by Professor Alexander Iosifovich Ignatovsky, a young but serious scientist who had already achieved significant success in research [18]. Due to the outbreak of the First World War, A. I. Ignatovsky had to organize the evacuation of the department from Warsaw to Rostov-on-Don and its subsequent establishment at the Nikolayev City Hospital [19, 20]. But this is another story.

Prof. Kudrevetsky remained chairman of the Russian Medical Society in Warsaw for several years. We do not know the reason for his early retirement, whether it is poor health, political motives, or, maybe, other plans. It remains a mystery. In the book by D. G. Kvasov (1967), it appears that before the occupation of Warsaw by German troops in 1915, Prof. Kudrevetsky had no time to leave with the university. And after the revolution, he lived in Zagreb (Yugoslavia), from where he wrote letters to Russia, to his teacher, Academician I. P. Pavlov [7]. Then he continued his career as a senior physician and teacher in the Don Cadet Corps, which was evacuated from Novorossiysk to Egypt at the end of 1921 [21]. Unfortunately, we could not find any other information regarding his life and professional activity after that.

For his impeccable civil service and personal contribution to the development of the Russian Empire in 1896, Vasily Vasilyevich was awarded the Highest Decree «silver medal for wearing on his chest on the Alexander ribbon» in memory of the reign of Emperor Alexander III. He was also the Knight of the Order of St. Anne grade 3 (1900), St. Stanislaw grade 3. (1904), St. Anne grade 2. (1907).

The exact date of his death is not known. However, his last hand-written letters date back to 1936 [4].

Professor Kudrevetsky was single and had no children. He devoted all his time to his department, students and the university. His energy, bright mind, and keen intellect brought together talented scientists and brilliant clinicians.

V. V. Kudrevetsky's achievements in the study of the physiology of digestion cannot be overstated. His work with I. P. Pavlov at the end of the century before the last became fundamental in understanding the functioning of the gastrointestinal tract.



Figure 8. Silver medal worn on the chest on the Alexander ribbon in memory of the reign of Emperor Alexander III

This article contains a large amount of information about the life and work of Prof. V. V. Kudrevetsky. It was gathered from the archives, libraries and museums of our country. The authors hope that the professor's life will not only serve as a striking example for the young generation of physicians but will also shed light on unknown pages of the history of Russian medicine.

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