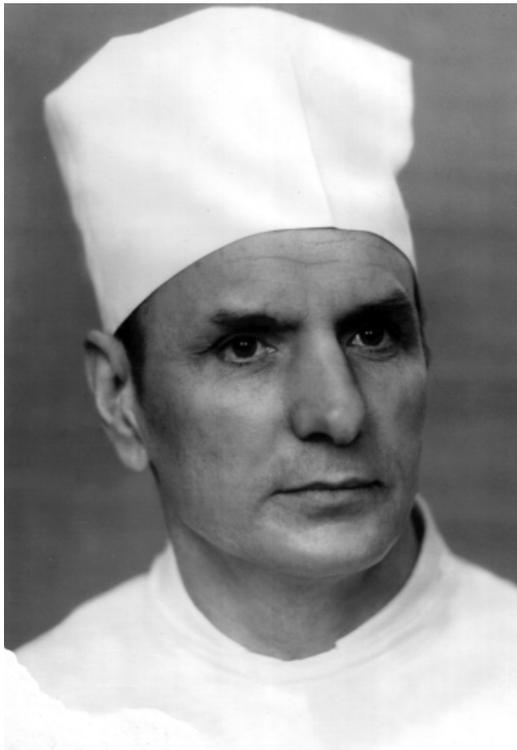


Cherenko Makar Petrovych

To the 100th anniversary of his birth

The biographical essay is dedicated to the outstanding Ukrainian surgeon, one of the founders of thyroid surgery in Ukraine, Honored Worker of Science and Technology, laureate of the State Prize of Ukraine in Science and Technology, Professor Makar Petrovych Cherenko – whose life and work became a model of devotion, humanism, and exceptional professional mastery. The essay presents the key milestones of his biography, scientific achievements, pedagogical and public activity, as well as his contribution to the formation of the Ukrainian surgical school.



Professor Makar Cherenko stands out as one of the most versatile and devoted Ukrainian surgeons of the twentieth century. His enduring legacy is defined by masterful surgical expertise, steadfast humanistic principles, and an unwavering sense of responsibility shaped by the hardships of war. The professional path of Makar Cherenko – a graduate of Bogomolets National Medical University – embodies the development of postwar Ukrainian surgery.

Cherenko Makar Petrovych was born on August 26, 1925, into a large family in the picturesque village of Dniprovske, Chernihiv region, situated on the banks of the old Dnipro riverbed. His father, Petro Makarovych, headed the local meteorological service of the village. During the First World War, he was awarded the St. George's Cross – a distinction given «for fearless bravery». His mother, Fedora

Mytrofanivna, was a peasant woman. At the age of 18, Sergeant Cherenko had already served at the front as a commander of a 45 mm artillery crew. He was awarded the Order of Glory for destroying two German Tiger tanks (one by direct fire). In September 1944, during the liberation of Belarus, he was wounded in the leg but soon returned to the front. Later, near Königsberg in East Prussia, he suffered a severe multiple shrapnel chest injury that required several surgeries over a year. The final fragment was removed at a military hospital in Chernihiv. The long treatment and rehabilitation lasted over two years, but he never fully recovered. He continued life as a Group II disabled veteran. He received the Order of Glory (III class), Orders of the Patriotic War (I and II class), and numerous medals for his bravery. The hardships he endured during treatment and his almost miraculous recovery – thanks to the surgeons' skills – determined his future path in life.

In the famine year of 1946, he entered the Kyiv Medical Institute, which was named after academicians O. O. Bogomolets that same year. The faculty then included surgical luminaries such as Professors A. P. Krymov, I. N. Ishchenko, M. I. Kolomiichenko, D. M. Horodynskiy, and A. H. Yeletskiy. Soon, M. M. Amosov joined their ranks. After graduating with honors in 1952, his mentor became Professor Oleksandr Kyrylovych Horchakov (1900–1960), a talented endocrine surgeon who perfected the subtotal strumectomy technique and inspired Cherenko's lifelong devotion to endocrine surgery. As a young researcher, Cherenko personally treated patients with thyrotoxicosis using radioactive iodine-131. Underestimating radiation hazards, he handled and dispensed the isotope himself (more than 1,200 patients in five years). Predictably, he developed almost fatal radiation sickness with leukopenia down to 1,200 cells/mL. Yet again, his strong body



prevailed. The results were published as A. K. Horchakov, M. P. Cherenko «Experience in treating patients with hyperthyroid goiter using radioactive iodine isotope», VD, 1955, No8. This work – a rare achievement in Soviet medical science – appeared only nine years after the American pioneers (Hertz & Roberts and Chapman & Evans, JAMA, 1946) but presented ten times as many clinical cases.

Fate granted Makar Petrovych a happy family life: in 1955, he married Lina Serhiivna Roienko, a charming final-year student of the Faculty of Dentistry. Her role in the creative and social life of her war-scarred husband – and of the entire family – defies any measure or description.

Makar Petrovych gained his professional experience going through a multifaceted school of surgery – one that is almost impossible to imagine today. Over the years he performed operations on the heart and great vessels (commissurotomies, suturing of stab and gunshot wounds of the heart), on the lungs and mediastinal organs (lung resections, removal of the thymus and its tumors, intrathoracic goiter), on the brain in cases of head trauma, as well as on the vessels of the limbs and the sympathetic nerve ganglia.

His greatest expertise lay in abdominal surgery. He also never neglected ambulatory and minor surgery, assisting villagers and acquaintances alike – true to the spirit of a real surgeon. His manuals, «Polyclinic Surgeon's Handbook» and «Abdominal Hernias», remain relevant today. His favorite field was endocrine surgery, so he focused mainly on the thyroid gland at that time. His mastery as a thyroid

surgeon was exemplary: zero mortality, minimal bleeding and laryngeal nerve injury, and an almost complete absence of postoperative hypoparathyroidism – achievements that brought him fame throughout Ukraine. He presented his insights in his brilliant monographs «Complications of Thyroid Surgery» and «Diseases and Injuries of the Neck», which trained hundreds of students and followers. In 1968, he defended his doctoral dissertation, «The reactivity of the central nervous system and cardiovascular system in patients with diffuse toxic goiter before and after surgical treatment».

From the pen of a scholar who treated every written line with perfectionist care came not only about 200 scientific articles but also several major monographs: «Diseases of the Thyroid Gland and Their Surgical Treatment» (1989); «Polyclinic Surgeon's Handbook» (1990); «Abdominal Hernias» (1995); and the textbook «General Surgery» (1999) – the first of its kind written in the Ukrainian language. He developed and patented several original surgical techniques for endocrine and purulent diseases.

The fruitful scientific and publishing activity of Professor Cherenko was combined with his tireless work in the clinic. Throughout his professional career, Makar Petrovych performed about 12,000 operations on nearly all organs of the human body. Summarizing many years of his scientific and practical experience in thyroid surgery, as well as his work at several institutions across Ukraine for more than two decades, Makar Petrovych undertook the main responsibility for preparing the materials for nomination for the State Prize of Ukraine in Science and Technology in 1988. Makar Petrovych donated his monetary award to the restoration of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Pyrohoshcha.

At 46 (in 1971), he became a professor of surgery at the Faculty of Dentistry under Professor Vasyl Bratus. Between 1980 and 1993, he headed the Departments of General Surgery, Pediatric Faculty Surgery, and Dental Faculty Surgery. He supervised one doctoral and ten PhD theses, teaching generations of surgeons and endocrinologists. He also founded a family dynasty of physicians that presently includes two professors (Doctors of Science) and two PhDs.

Cherenko was a remarkable teacher, shaping several generations of physicians, an active public figure, a member of the Presidium of the Ukrainian Society of Surgeons, the Kyiv Surgical Society Board, and the chair of the NMU surgical dissertation review council.

Remembering Makar Petrovych, one cannot help but mention his kind and intelligent sense of humor. He could sincerely laugh at good jokes, and it was never burdensome or uncomfortable to be in his presence.

Makar Petrovych could find a common language with anyone, from the uneducated to academicians. His decisions were always guided by an inner moral code that drew its roots from the deep cultural traditions of the Ukrainian people.

At the same time, despite such a rare combination of qualities, abilities, and professional achievements, Makar Petrovych remained an exceptionally modest man – entirely devoid of arrogance or vanity.

His erudition was also striking – it extended far beyond medicine, grounded in his natural curiosity, constant striving for self-improvement, and remarkable memory.

Makar Petrovych did not live to see our fortunate age of open information exchange – a time when his achievements could be compared with the finest examples in the world. The «Iron Curtain» did not let him travel even to Bulgaria, and his visits to the United States and Canada in the final years of his life only deepened the sorrow of the irretrievably lost opportunities for international exchange of surgical experience.

It is heartening to know that Makar Petrovych's legacy continues – carried forward by his children and grandchildren, by the hundreds of students and disciples who follow in his footsteps.

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Макар Петрович Черенько До 100-річчя від дня народження

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Біографічний нарис присвячено видатному українському хірургу, одному з фундаторів хірургії щито-подібної залози в Україні, Заслуженому діячу науки і техніки, лауреату Державної премії України в галузі науки і техніки, професору Макару Петровичу Череньку, чие життя і діяльність стали взірцем самовідданості, гуманізму та високої професійної майстерності. У нарисі подано основні віхи його біографії, наукові досягнення, педагогічну та громадську діяльність, а також внесок у становлення української хірургічної школи.