

PROSOPOGRAPHY OF KHARKIV MEDICAL INSTITUTE IN 1945–1991

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Abstract

The article aims to determine and consider the typical features of the key healthcare organizers in the post-war Soviet Kharkiv. The author created the collective portrait of 15 prominent physicians, scholars and administrators who got education or made a career at Kharkiv Medical Institute. In particular the origin, work path, professional achievements and civic activity were taken into account. As a result the author came to such conclusions: pre-war repressions and the WWII caused the gap of generations in the medical community despite preservation of the certain scientific schools; the relative separation of duties on public-administrative and scientific was noticeable among the healthcare organizers; engagement of women to the healthcare management became widespread; formation of the post-war generation of healthcare administrators was influenced by war outcomes, isolation of a medical science and education, ideological pressure, formal mandatory public activity and importance of informal party and professional ties for the career advancement. The preliminary set of personal qualities typical for the post-war generation of medical administrators was distinguished in comparison with qualities of their teachers – representatives of the last pre-Soviet generation. The prospects of the further studies were outlined such as study of informal vertical and horizontal relations at Kharkiv Medical Institute.

Keywords: *Kharkiv Medical Institute, post-war era, prosopography, Soviet healthcare.*

The main pillar of the Soviet regime throughout the entire period of its existence was the state and party bureaucracy, the *nomenklatura*. The intellectual and ideological degradation of the party elite became one of the factors for almost peaceful collapse of the USSR. Thus it's important to disclose cadre policies of Soviet times including a closed professional medical environment.

There is a reason to use prosopography for study of social institutions. The article's goal is to trace evolution of professional and personal characteristics of the post-war physicians with the change of generations, character of connections within the community, understand place of the outstanding healthcare organizers in the context of historical period. Creation of the collective portrait of the organizer of Kharkiv healthcare will allow determining typical features

of the post-war generation of medical workers and factors of their formation.

Such research should start in a certain organization taking into account the specificity of labor relations in a collective. The study involved assessment of biographies of 15 scientific and medical workers of Kharkiv Medical Institute.

The research focused on bright personalities of healthcare, heads of Kharkiv Medical Institute departments who built their career after the World War II: Yevhen Dubenko, Volodymyr Chernenko, Olena Hrechanina, Valentyn Hryshenko, Mykola Koreniev, Oleksiy Korzh, Lyubov Mala, Mykola Pylypenko, Oleksandr Shalimov, Volodymyr Shapoval, Yuri Shul'ha, Vadym Topuzov, Anatoly Tsyhanenko, Volodymyr Zajtsev, Boris Zadorozhnyj. Born before the World War II, mostly in 1920s, they came from families of peasants (4), officials (4), intelligentsia (3), workers (1). 10 of them were Ukrainians by nationality. 10 became Doctors of Sciences and professors in age 35–43. 12 studied at Kharkiv Medical Institute after the World War II and were students of physicians who graduated

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during the tsarist times: pathophysiologist Danylo Al'pern, pediatrician Volodymyr Belousov, forensic expert Mykola Bokarius, obstetrician and gynecologist Ivan Hryshenko, microbiologist Vasyl Derkach, orthopedist and traumatologist Mykola Novachenko, anatomist Rafail Synel'nykov, epidemiologist Mykhailo Solovjov, biochemist Aron Utevs'kyj [1, p. 214, 222, 258]. All of them were pioneers of new treatment methods (reanimation, vascular surgery and combustiology, nephrology, transplantation of bones and joints, stage treatment of cardiovascular diseases, in vitro fertilization) and founders of clinics and research institutes of the new type (Laboratory of clinical genetics, Institutes of urgent surgery, cryobiology and cryomedicine, therapy, the largest in the USSR urological center). All those personalities were heads of scientific societies and were editors of scientific journals, all were awarded the high state awards.

Continuity of scientific schools during the considered period partly was saved: in a traumatology and orthopedics that is the line Mykhailo Sytenko (1885–1940)–Mykola Novachenko (1898–1966)–Oleksiy Korzh (1924–2010); in a therapy – Petro Shatilov (1869–1921) – Viktor Kohan-Yasniy (1889–1958) – Yuri Shul'ha (1920–2002); in a microbiology – Damian Hryn'ov (1880–1934) – Vasyl Derkach (1894–1973) – Anatoly Tsyhanenko (1929–2012) [2, p. 171].

After the World War II the bright group of the pre-Soviet generation of doctors had continued to work: pathophysiologist Danylo Al'pern (1891–1968), founder of Kharkiv Clinical Infectious Disease Hospital Ilya Braude (1890–1958), founder of the Ukrainian psychoneurological institute Oleksandr Hejmanovych (1882–1958), the inventor of insulin in the USSR Viktor Kohan-Yasniy (1889–1958), anthropologist Lev Nikolaiev (1898–1954), the author of original way of pain relief during a childbirth Kostiantyn Platonov (1877–1969), the founder of pathophysiological school in the Soviet psychiatry Viktor Protopopov (1880–1957), the author of first Soviet "Atlas of human anatomy" Rafail Synel'nykov (1896–1981), the founder of Ukrainian stomatology Mojsej Fabrykant (1864–1951) and many other first-rate specialists. Those people trained youth in 1940–1960s. Except professional ties the generations continuity at Kharkiv Medical Institute was provided with the help of creative evenings which were organized by students for their teachers [1, p. 246].

Nevertheless, we can assume that due to social and political transformations in the first half

of the 20th century the gap between generations of pre-revolutionary and Soviet intelligentsia occurred. That was noticed by the prominent cardiologist Mykola Amosov (1913–2002), older peer of Oleksandr Shalimov and Lyubov Mala, who was a student of the world-class surgeon Sergei Sergeevich Yudin (1891–1954). M. Amosov recalled: "Surgeons of my youth were not very intelligent anymore, aristocrats - those I did not find... Not like Yudin. English, French, music, theater, paintings" [3, p. 266]. Students of Mykola Bokarius characterized him in that way: "... he made an impression of the man from another time"; "...radiated intelligence and generosity" [1, p. 233, 236]. The student of Viktor Kohan-Yasniy (1889–1958) noticed: "... he was a profound and versatile educated person, marked by the real intelligence. He knew the classic literature brilliantly, wasn't stranger to literature creativity... Since gymnasium years he was passionate about theater... for several years he was a member of the artistic council of the Russian drama theater in Kharkiv... co-director-producer of the outstanding play "People in white coats" [ibid., p. 250]. One of the closest disciples of the prominent pediatrician Volodymyr Belousov (1895–1971) left such precise characteristic of him: "That was a man that first of all *served the Science, not himself*, because he was infinitely decent before the Science, the same as was descent before the people. "Everything what I have done in pediatrics, in science, in pedagogy – just a result of my desire to be a good physician" [4, p. 44].

Factors that influenced the formation of the post-war generations of healthcare managers were their social origin; difficult post-war years when most of them studied at the institute; specificity of the stuff recruiting when the preference was given to Komsomol activists and party members; spread of protectionism and "blat" (informal favors) [1, p. 269; 3, p. 258; 5].

The education interrupted by the war, poverty and ideological campaigns of the late-Stalinist period, isolation and politicization of medical science and education in the late 1940s – early 1950s required from that generation a great devotion, self-discipline but at the same time caused formation of a certain tough character and attitude to subordinates [1, p. 276; 6, p. 16]. The role of the official ideology in medical education is clarified by memoirs of the director of the Institute for medical radiology Mykola Pylypenko who wrote that obtaining mark "4" ("good") for exam in the History of CPSS led to

his not inclusion to the list of those who were appointed for scientific work [1, p. 258].

Unlike the graduates of the imperial universities, representatives of the post-war generation didn't have an opportunity to continue studying and doctor's practice abroad. In conditions of the technological backwardness of the Soviet healthcare that fact had a negative impact on formation of young physicians and restricted their culture and worldview in general. Only reliable doctors who made a solid career, earned reputation, occupied responsible offices and were allowed by party committees had access to trips abroad for professional development [5].

The Soviet surgeon and writer Vladimir Golyakhovsky who emigrated to the USA in the late 1970s noticed that "In fact the party itself had expanded the boundaries of protectionism – people started to be accepted to work and advanced only through the party affiliation, not by other criteria" [ibid.]. However, not all Kharkiv doctors agree with such statement, that's why it requires further consideration with a subsequent proof or refute. V. Golyakhovsky asserts that mentioned situation negatively impacted the qualitative composition of healthcare administrators. Also he paid attention that party provided line to prevent Jews from occupation of high administrative offices or getting scientific degrees. Indeed among the lead scientific and administrative workers of Kharkiv Medical Institute of the post-war generation almost there were no Jews [1, p. 275].

The separation of duties between party activists and offspring of the old professors' families can be illustrated by the biographies of two peers – Mykola Mykolayovych Bokarius (1899–1966) and Illarion Pylypovych Kononenko (1900–1972). The son of founder of the Ukrainian forensic medicine Mykola M. Bokarius started his scientific activity immediately after the graduation of the Kharkiv Medical Institute. In 1931 in age of 32 he became a professor of the Department of Forensic Examination KhMI being its head for the next 35 years [ibid., p. 27]. But the peak of his administrative career was the post of Institute's vice-rector. Born in a peasant family Illarion Kononenko during the studying actively participated in a public life of the Institute which he graduated 11 years later than M. Bokarius. Unlike him I. Kononenko headed Poltava and later Vinnitsa healthcare (1935–1938). He worked as a director of several medical institutes and in 1944–1946 even became the Soviet Ukraine narkom (minister) of healthcare [ibid., p. 96].

Herewith I. Kononenko managed to become the candidate of medical sciences only in 1946. Thus we can assume that healthcare management was primarily in hands of the Komsomol and party activists from below while for those who did not want to make an administrative career and wished to continue the family traditions were allocated a scientific sphere. Although it did not make them free from necessity to enter the Communist Party. Such mandatory formal practice became as destructive for science as for the party itself.

The new positive feature of the post-war era was wide entrance of women to the highest management of the medical institutions: the head of the laboratory of clinical genetics Olena Hrechanina, the director of the Therapy Institute Lyubov Mala, dean of the pediatric faculty and vice-director of the KhMI Vera Matveeva, the head of city ophthalmologic clinical hospital Tamara Kovalenko, the director of the Scientific Research Institute for Children and Adolescents Health Care Oleksandra Kornilova, head of the department of psychiatry of the KhMI Nina Tatarenko, the head of Kharkiv Clinical Infectious Disease Hospital Tetiana Shaposhnykova [7, p. 203–204; 8, p. 54, 154, 156, 167, 169–170].

The activity of healthcare organizers on a creation of contemporary research and medical institutions in Kharkiv in 1970s–1980s fit into the global context of the in-depth specialization in health. That fact could be used as a background for research to reveal the mechanisms and limits of the individual initiative of administrators in the post-Stalinist USSR where the terrorist methods of influence had not acted or could not be applied at the same scale as in 1930s–1940s anymore. The problem question for the next studies could be formulated in this way - what had become a new incentive for creative activity of managers in healthcare and other spheres of life after J. Stalin and before M. Gorbachev when the Communist Party maintained its absolute power but had to provide more flexible politics?

The suggestions about set of personal qualities typical for the pre-Soviet and post-war generations of medical administrators requires the further confirmation. If first ones were characterized by delicacy, modesty, self-devotion, attention to the people, universal culture that went beyond the professional interests, self-demanding, voluntary civic activity, composure, so for representatives of the post-war generation were common strong will, authoritarian style of management, severity, diligence, persistence, formalized civic activity [1,

p. 273; 6, p. 13, 24]. Memoirs of colleagues and disciples about the pioneer in anesthesiology and intensive care medicine, surgeon Oleksandr Shalimov reveal such details: "Being the greatest master of surgical technique, the professor was intolerant to the slightest awkwardness of assistants not sparing strong words for their missteps" [9, p. 172].

The remark about famous academician and founder of the Therapy Institute Lyubov Mala made by one of her successful disciples looks crucial for the understanding post-war generation: "What was Lyubov Trofymovna guided by in her purposeful vigorous activity? I don't think that anyone knows for sure because she didn't like to expatiate on this delicate topic. I guess she was far from indifference about a career of the

outstanding scholar, healthcare organizer, recognition that was well deserved... But the peculiarity is that personal interests of Lyubov Trofymovna always coincided with the public ones. Finally everything that she achieved by her diverse activities was done for the people and left to them. Including the Therapy Institute that she created and which is no wonder named after her" [6, p. 25–26].

The separate question worth of studying is a behavior style and patterns of the Soviet healthcare administrators and the extent to which those patterns encouraged subordinates to work effectively. The potentially useful would be a study of network of horizontal and vertical relations among workers of Kharkiv Medical Institute.

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