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Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov — outstanding Russian ophthalmologist-pathologist

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ABSTRACT. The article is devoted to the life and creative path of the outstanding Russian ophthalmologist-pathologist, scientist, educator, organizer and founder of the national histology and pathological anatomy of the organ of vision, Doctor of Medicine, Professor Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov, who was born in 1836 in Kursk and came from the bourgeoisie of the Tauride province. In 1859, he graduated from the Medical Faculty of the Imperial Moscow University. During his studies, he was diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis, which accompanied him throughout his life, despite the fact that he repeatedly traveled to France for treatment. From 1859 to 1867, A.V. Ivanov was fortunate to work in various laboratories of famous professors in Würzburg, Heidelberg, Wiesbaden, Vienna and Berlin, where he improved his knowledge in ophthalmology. Over these years of hard work, he became an excellent pathologist widely known in Europe. In 1867, at the St. Petersburg Medical and Surgical Academy, with the support of Professor E.A. Yunge, A.V. Ivanov successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic “Materials on the normal and pathological anatomy of the lens”. From 1869 to 1876, the scientist worked at the Department of Ophthalmology as an extraordinary and ordinary professor at the Kiev University of St. Vladimir and at the same time became the first head of the eye department at the Kiev Military University. Professor Ivanov’s scientific interests during his short but bright life focused mainly on the normal and pathological anatomy of the eye, and he made significant achievements in this area. In 1876, due to an exacerbation of the tuberculosis process in the lungs, the scientist went to France for treatment. A.V. Ivanov died on October 27, 1880 in Menton (France) at the age of 44 from pulmonary tuberculosis complicated by pulmonary hemorrhage. He was buried in the Russian Orthodox cemetery “Old Castle” in Menton.

Keywords: Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov, ophthalmologist-pathologist, educator, organizer, founder of the national histology and pathological anatomy of the organ of vision, Professor, scientist, Doctor of Medicine

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РЕЗЮМЕ. Статья посвящена жизненному и творческому пути выдающегося российского офтальмолога-патолога, ученого, педагога, организатора и основоположника отечественной гистологии и патологической анатомии органа зрения, доктора медицины, профессора Александра Владимировича Иванова, родившегося в 1836 году в Курске и происходившего из мещанской семьи Таврической губернии. В 1859 году он окончил медицинский факультет Императорского Московского университета. Во время учебы у него был диагностирован туберкулез легких, который сопровождал его на протяжении всей жизни, несмотря на то что он неоднократно ездил на лечение во Францию. С 1859 по 1867 годы А.В. Иванову повезло работать в различных лабораториях известных профессоров в Вюрцбурге, Гейдельберге, Висбадене, Вене и Берлине, где он совершенствовал свои знания в области офтальмологии. За эти годы напряженной работы он стал отличным патологоанатомом, широко известным в Европе. В 1867 году в Санкт-Петербургской Медико-хирургической академии при поддержке профессора Е.А. Юнге А.В. Иванов успешно защитил докторскую диссертацию на тему «Материалы по нормальной и патологической анатомии хрусталика». С 1869 по 1876 годы ученый работал на кафедре офтальмологии в качестве экстраординарного и ординарного профессора Киевского университета Святого Владимира и одновременно стал первым заведующим офтальмологической кафедрой Киевского военного университета. Научные интересы профессора Иванова в течение его короткой, но яркой жизни были сосредоточены в основном на нормальной и патологической анатомии глаза, и он добился значительных успехов в этой области. В 1876 году в связи с обострением туберкулезного процесса в легких ученый отправился на лечение во Францию. А.В. Иванов скончался 27 октября 1880 года в Ментоне (Франция) в возрасте 44 лет от туберкулеза легких, осложненного легочным кровотечением. Он был похоронен на русском православном кладбище «Старый Замок» в Ментоне.

Ключевые слова: Александр Владимирович Иванов, офтальмолог-патолог, педагог, организатор, основоположник национальной гистологии и патологической анатомии органа зрения, профессор, ученый, доктор медицины.

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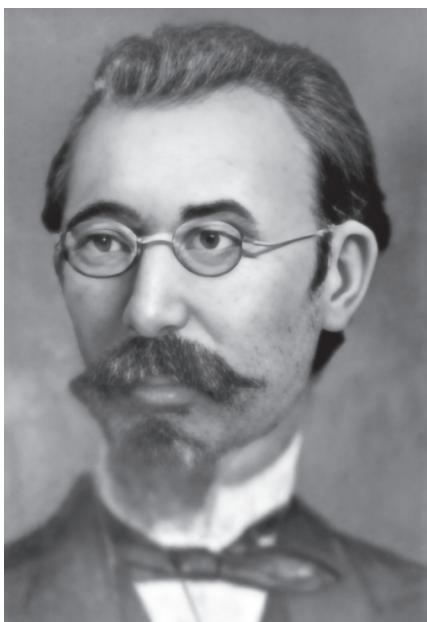


Fig. 1. Ivanov Alexander Vladimirovich (14.09.1836–27.10.1880)

October 27, 2025 marks the 145th anniversary of the death of the outstanding Russian ophthalmologist-pathologist, scientist, educator and organizer, Doctor of Medicine, Professor Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov, a student of the German anatomist Heinrich Müller (Fig. 1) [1].

A.V. Ivanov was born on September 14 (new style), 1836 in the city of Kursk, who came from the bourgeoisie of the Taurida province. He graduated from the Kursk Gymnasium and in 1859 from the Medical Faculty of the Imperial Moscow University (Fig. 2)¹ [2].

In connection with the diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis during his student years, he decided to go abroad for treatment to the city of Montpellier with its Mediterranean climate, which is known to have a beneficial effect on the respiratory and cardiovascular systems, and at the same time continued to practice ophthalmology there².

In Montpellier, Alexander Vladimirovich met Friedrich Alexander Hermann Pagenstecher, a prominent ophthalmologist, eye surgeon, medical writer and founder of the ophthalmological clinic in Wiesbaden, who had a serious influence on his choice of specialty [3]. In fact, from 1859 to 1867, this was his first trip abroad, during which A.V. Ivanov improved in ophthalmology, namely: he studied the normal and pathological anatomy of the

eye in the laboratory of Heinrich Müller in Würzburg, whom he considered his teacher, worked in the clinics of such famous professors as Jacob Hermann Knapp (Heidelberg), Friedrich Alexander Hermann Pagenstecher (Wiesbaden), Carl Ferdinand von Arlt (Vienna), Albrecht Friedrich Wilhelm Ernst von Gräfe (Berlin), where he practiced ophthalmology³. Over the years of his work in these prestigious laboratories, A.V. Ivanov has become an excellent pathomorphologist, widely known in Europe.

In 1867, after returning to Russia, A.V. Ivanov arrived at the Ophthalmology Department of the St. Petersburg Medical and Surgical Academy, headed by Eduard Andreevich Junge (Fig. 3). Professor Junge provided the necessary assistance in a short period of time, and with his support, A.V. Ivanov successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic of "Materials for the normal and pathological anatomy of the lens" and was awarded the academic degree of Doctor of Medicine in the same year [4, 5].

Immediately after defending his dissertation, A.V. Ivanov was sent on a second foreign mission, where for two years he continued to improve his knowledge of the pathological anatomy of the eye and, as a result of his persistent work, gained worldwide fame.

After completing of his second trip abroad, on September 15, 1869, A.V. Ivanov was elected an extraordinary, and in 1875 — ordinary professor at the Ophthalmology Department of the Kiev University of St. Vladimir and at the same time became the head of the Eye Department of the Kiev Military University (Fig. 4). While working at Kiev University, Professor A.V. Ivanov, as the first head of the Eye Diseases Department, established himself as a brilliant lecturer, ophthalmic surgeon and follower of the traditions of the E.A. Junge scientific school. At that time, eye diseases were taught in the 3rd and 4th courses, lectures on ophthalmology were given for 3 hours a week in a specially adapted room.

The clinic had an outpatient clinic and a 10-bed inpatient department. Despite the rather difficult conditions, the treatment work was carried out in a well-coordinated manner. So, during the years of Professor A.V. Ivanov's tenure as head, 20,120 patients were admitted to the outpatient clinic (an average of 2,560 patients per year), and 1,259 patients passed through the hospital, 90% of whom were operated on.

Professor Ivanov's scientific interests throughout his relatively short but vibrant life have focused mainly on the normal and pathological anatomy of the eye, and his scientific and practical activities have been marked by the following achievements [6]: his unique pathoanatomical studies concern all membranes and tissues of the eye

¹ Ivanov Alexander Vladimirovich (ophthalmologist). Wikipedia. Available at: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Иванов,_Александр_Владимирович_\(офтальмолог\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Иванов,_Александр_Владимирович_(офтальмолог)) (accessed 07/19/2025).

² Ivanov Alexander Vladimirovich. Wikisource. Available at: https://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/РБС/ВТ/Иванов,_Александр_Владимирович (accessed 07/21/2025).

³ Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov. People's History. Available at: <https://biografie.narod.ru/medicine/ophthalmologist/ivanov/index.htm> (accessed 07/19/2025).



Fig. 2. Medical Faculty of the Imperial Moscow University. A.V. Ivanov's education from 1854 to 1859



Fig. 3. Naval and Land Clinical Hospital of the St. Petersburg Medical and Surgical Academy (1867)

(conjunctiva, cornea, iris, ciliary body, lens, choroid, optic nerve, retina, vitreous body); the pathological anatomy of trachoma and the pathohistological structure of phlyctenae developing on the mucous membrane of the eye and cornea in tuberculous-allergic keratoconjunctivitis have been thoroughly studied, and it has been proven that the main element characteristic of this disease is a nodule

consisting of a round-cell lymphocytic infiltrate with an admixture of epithelioid and plasma-type cells, while a structure similar to a tuberculous tubercle is detected, but without caseous decay and the presence of the pathogen; the anatomical picture of the iris, the angle of the anterior chamber in humans, birds and a number of animals was studied in detail in the historical aspect; the



Fig. 4. Kiev University of St. Vladimir. A.V. Ivanov worked there from 1869 to 1876

structural features of the ciliary muscle ("Ivanov's muscle") were described depending on its function with different refraction of the eye, cystic changes in the retina in the area of the serratus muscle on the extreme periphery of the fundus, which is currently of great importance for explaining the pathogenesis of the development of retinal detachment in people suffering from myopia, the network of nerve plexuses with nodes of nerve cells in the choroid, which are still important for explaining neurohumoral disorders and the pathogenesis of glaucoma, a case of glioma endophitum, etc. [7].

Otto Becker, a well-known eye pathologist and Professor at Heidelberg University, once highly praised the work of A.V. Ivanov and noted in his lectures that A.V. Ivanov alone had done more for the pathological anatomy of the eye than all other researchers combined. The high authority of A.V. Ivanov among German ophthalmologists is also evidenced by the fact that the famous German ophthalmologist Duke Karl-Theodor in Bavaria worked under his leadership [8].

The scientist was distinguished by his love for his specialty, rare diligence, a brilliant expert in the pathological anatomy of the eye, an experienced teacher and an excellent practical physician [9].

A.V. Ivanov is the author of 24 scientific works published mainly in the foreign press in German, including three manuals "Practical Ophthalmology" (1879), "Manual of Ophthalmology" (1880) and "Course of eye operations" (1881), written and published with the participation of A.V. Khodi¹.

In 1876, due to the exacerbation of the pulmonary tuberculosis process, the scientist went to France for treatment.

Four years later, Alexander Vladimirovich Ivanov, the founder of the national histology and pathological anatomy of the vision organ, died on October 27, 1880 in Menton (France) at the age of 44 from pulmonary tuberculosis complicated by pulmonary hemorrhage. He was buried at the Russian Orthodox cemetery "Old Castle" in Menton.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The author read and approved the final version before publication.

Competing interests. The author declares the absence of obvious and potential conflicts of interest related to the publication of this article.

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Автор прочитал и одобрил финальную версию перед публикацией.

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