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**Останній декан**  
**(До 160-річчя від дня народження**  
**професора Ю. Р. Пенського)**

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**Анотація.** *Мета статті* полягає в якомога ширшому, всебічному вивченні особи Ю. Пенського через призму медичного краєзнавства. Застосування історичних джерел з архівів, місцевої періодики надає змогу створити цілісний портрет харківського хірурга. *Методи дослідження:* у дослідженні використовувалися загальнонаукові та конкретно-історичні методи наукового дослідження: хронологічний, порівняльно-історичний, ретроспективи

на додачу до суто позитивістської методології, зазвичай вживаної істориками медицини. *Основні результати:* Вивчення постаті Ю. Пенського яскраво демонструє потенціал медичного краєзнавства для історико-медичних досліджень. Зроблено висновок, що він був представником харківських медиків польського походження, мігрантів, які, починаючи з нуля, здобули загальне визнання, включаючи найвище імператорське. Встановлено, що він був талановитим вченим та хірургом-новатором, автором та співавтором оригінальних хірургічних ідей та технологій, винахідником спеціальних голки та шва, які значно посприяли розвиткові хірургії. Ба більше, він був блискучим адміністратором і громадським діячем, одним із засновників Жіночого медичного інституту, директором університетської хірургічної клініки, членом і керівником Харківського медичного товариства, останнім деканом медичного факультету ІХУ, активістом харківської Полонії. *Практичне значення:* у статті введені до обігу архівні документи, які раніше не досліджувалися. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані у виховній роботі серед студентів-медиків, а також музейно-краєзнавчій роботі. *Оригінальність:* стаття написана на оригінальних матеріалах із залученням архівних документів. *Наукова новизна:* вперше визначена роль Пенського в справі Лаговського, акцентована увага на медичних досягненнях – «шві Пенського-Кузнецова» та авторській голці хірурга, виправлено фактографічні помилки попередніх дослідників, створено першу ґрунтовну біографію вченого. *Тип статті:* описова.

**Ключові слова:** Імператорський Харківський Університет, медичний факультет, Харківське медичне товариство, Юліан Пенський.

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**Последний декан**  
**(к 160-летию со дня рождения**  
**профессора Ю. Р. Пенского)**

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**Аннотация.** Цель статьи состоит в широком, всестороннем изучении личности Ю. Пенского через призму медицинского краеведения. Использование исторических источников из архивов, местной периодики дает возможность создать целостный портрет харьковского хирурга. *Методы исследования:* в исследовании использовались общенаучные и конкретно-исторические методы научного исследования: хронологический, сравнительно-исторический, ретроспективы в дополнение к сугубо позитивистской методологии, обычно используемой историками медицины. *Основные результаты:*

Изучение личности Ю. Пенского ярко демонстрирует потенциал медицинского краеведения для историко-медицинских исследований. Сделан вывод, что он был представителем харьковских медиков польского происхождения, мигрантов, которые, начиная с нуля, получили всеобщее признание, включая высшее императорское. Установлено, что он был талантливым ученым и хирургом-новатором, автором и соавтором оригинальных хирургических идей и технологий, изобретателем специальных иглы и шва, значительно поспособствовавших развитию хирургии. Более того, он был блестящим администратором и общественным деятелем, одним из основателей Женского медицинского института, директором университетской хирургической клиники, членом и руководителем Харьковского медицинского общества, последним деканом медицинского факультета ИХУ, активистом харьковской Полонии. *Практическое значение:* в статье введены в научный оборот архивные документы, которые ранее не исследовались. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы в воспитательной работе среди студентов-медиков, а также музейно-краеведческой работе. *Оригинальность:* статья написана на оригинальных материалах с привлечением архивных документов. *Научная новизна:* впервые определена роль Пенского по делу Лаговского, акцентировано внимание на медицинских достижениях – «шве Пенского-Кузнецова» и авторской игле хирурга, исправлены фактографические ошибки предыдущих исследователей, создана первая основательная биография ученого. *Тип статьи:* описательная.

**Ключевые слова:** Императорский Харьковский Университет, медицинский факультет, Харьковское медицинское общество, Юлиан Пенский.

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**The last dean**  
**(celebrating professor**  
**J. R. Pensky's 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary)**

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**Abstract.** *The purpose* of the article is to make a wide-ranging, comprehensive research of J. Pensky's personality through the prism of medical local study. Usage of archival historical sources and local periodicals gives us the opportunity to create a complete portrait of the Kharkovian surgeon. *Research methods:* the study uses general scientific and specifically historical methods of scientific research such as chronological, comparative-historical and retrospective ones in addition to the purely

positivist methodology commonly used by historians of Medicine. *Main results.* The comprehension of J. Pensky's figure clearly demonstrates the potential of medical local history for historical and medical research. It is concluded that he was a representative of Kharkiv physicians of Polish origin, migrants who, from the ground up, achieved general recognition, including the highest imperial. It is established that he was a talented scientist and surgeon-innovator, author and co-author of original surgical ideas and technologies, inventor of special needles and sutures, which significantly contributed to the development of surgery. Moreover, he was a brilliant administrator and public figure, one of the founders of the Women's Medical Institute, director of the University Surgical Clinic, the member and the Head of the Kharkiv Medical Society, the last Dean of IKhU Medical Faculty, activist of the Kharkovian Polonia. *Practical significance.* The article is based on archival documents that have not been known before; data could be used in educational work with students of medical educational institutions as well as in museum work. *Originality:* the article is written basing on original materials with usage of archival documents and it is the first scientifically-grounded paper dedicated to the prominent person. *Scientific novelty:* the role of Pensky in the case of Lagovskoy is defined for the first time; such medical advances as the "suture of Pensky-Kuznetsov" and the needle invented by the surgeon are emphasized, factual errors of previous researchers are corrected, the first thorough biography of the scientist is created. *Article type:* descriptive.

**Keywords:** Imperial Kharkov University, Medical Faculty, Kharkov Medical Society, surgeon, Julian Pensky.

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**Formulation the Problem.** The growing interest in local medicine seems to be reasonable these days. Considering insufficient studies about physicians, the authors seek to explore the life and activities of Julian Pensky – a prominent surgeon, innovator, the last dean of the Medical Faculty at the Imperial Kharkiv University. The research is believed to be relevant because of his 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**The Aim of the Study.** The purpose and tasks of the article are in the widest, detailed research of a solid personality of Julian Pensky through the history of local medicine. Historical sources from the archives and local periodicals help to create a portrait of Julian Pensky, a surgeon from Kharkiv.

**Historiography.** A life of Julian Pensky was not studied enough, as the Ukrainian historiography paid too little attention to doctors, just listing them in encyclopedic and reference literature (Лісовий, В., 2015, с. 84–85; Szarejko, P., 1997, pp. 222–224; Циганенко, А., ред., 2003, с. 71; Жванко, Л., 2018, с. 237–240). He is hardly mentioned in professional literature. The last exploration was done by Zhannetta Pertseva, director of the National Museum at the Kharkiv National Medical University, in the local newspaper with brief information about the said person (Перцева, Ж., 2019, с. 5). Undoubtedly, it worked positively in promoting the professor's role. However, unfortunately, firstly, the paper is merely descriptive, with no archival sources involved, and secondly, it is published under the heading «For the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday» which is wrong.

Valuable information is contained in the Russian Medical List. For the first time Julian Pensky is listed (under this name) as a doctor in 1888; the date of graduation from the Imperial Kharkiv University is 1885 (Российский медицинский список, 1888, с. 336). Also Arthur Pensky is listed there (likely Julian's older brother). The same information is in the list of 1889 (Российский медицинский список, 1889, с. 347). Since 1891, Julian Pensky is listed not only as a doctor but also as an assistant dissector at the Imperial Kharkiv University (Российский медицинский список, 1891, с. 162). According to the Russian Medical List, Pensky occupied this position till 1897, while it could be traced back in the source base (Российский медицинский список, 1891, с. 162; Российский медицинский список, 1892, с. 172; Российский медицинский список, 1893, с. 185; Российский медицинский список, 1894, с. 191; Российский медицинский список, 1896, с. 204; Российский медицинский список, 1897, с. 215).

The following issues of the Russian Medical List contain an unexplained aspect. Pensky is mentioned with a dual name. He appears several times under the name of Julian-Camille Romanovich- Pensky (Российский медицинский список, 1897, с. 215.). Camille is a Catholic

name. A dual name could actually exist. But why only for a few years? Why not from the very beginning of medical activity? Could it be a mistake? We have failed to find it out. At least the professor himself had never used his second name, so do not use it either. In 1906, he was listed as a physician, a surgeon by specialty, and a collegiate advisor by rank (Российский медицинский список, 1906, с. 279.).

Even less information can be found in the publication for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Medical Faculty of the Imperial Kharkiv University, which contains a brief biographical reference. However, it seems to be valuable being composed by Julian Pensky himself (Багалеї, Д., Скворцов, І., 1905–1906, с. 116–117). This publication contains biographical information, as well as his basic scientific works and articles.

While preparing the article, works by Polish authors are used as well. In particular, «Polacy na wschodniej Ukrainie w latach 1832–1921» (Madzik, M., et al., 2014, p. 132). Julian Pensky's participation in the charity was described in this article for the first time; the researchers had not paid attention to this fact before. Brief information is contained in the biographical dictionary «Słownik lekarzy polskich XIX wieku» by Peter Shareyk, a Polish researcher (Szarejko, P., 1997.), which contains information about Julian Pensky's father exiled to Siberia.

**Sources.** Regarding archival data, the State Archives of Kharkiv region has rather limited information about Julian Pensky. The Imperial Kharkiv University library collection could contain more information about Julian Pensky but unfortunately it was lost during World War II. Somehow the surgeon's activity is mentioned in other resources, but they can only be used illustratively with other sources. In particular, this is Stock 3 – Kharkiv Governor's Office (Ф. 3. Оп. 287. Спр. 3295. Харків : Державний архів Харківської області) and Stock 4 – Kharkiv Provincial Board (Ф. 4. Оп. 117. Спр. 918. Харків : Державний архів Харківської області).

Much more information can be found in Kharkiv periodicals. Interesting information about Julian Pensky's activity was found on the pages of the newspaper «Southern Territory», magazines «Kharkiv Medical Journal», «Academic Life» and others.

**The Main Material and Results.** Julian Pensky (in Polish – Julian Peński) was born in 1859 in the small town of Slavuta, Volyn province (Багалеї, Д., Скворцов, І., 1905–1906, с. 116–117). His father had a firm political position and did not stand apart from public life. For his active participation in the Polish January Uprising of 1863, Julian Pensky was sent to Siberia (Szarejko, P., 1997.).

To obtain his secondary education, the young man came to the city of Kharkiv, where in 1872 he

entered a secondary school and studied there till 1876 (Багалей, Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, с. 116–117). Then he graduated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Kharkiv High School (1876–1880). In 1880, he entered the Medical Faculty at the Imperial Kharkiv University. Julian Pensky had a working brain and a curiosity for research and science, so he succeeded in education, and in 1885 he graduated with a degree and became a county doctor. Professors A. Jacobi and V. Krylov noticed a talented young man and invited him to work at their laboratories, where he worked from 1884 to 1885.

In 1886, Julian Pensky chose his future specialty and became a non-staff assistant prosector at the Department of Operative Surgery and Topographic Anatomy. Beginning his work at the department, Julian Pensky was not paid, but Professor O. Dudukalov and the IKhU Medical Faculty submitted a petition to the Ministry of Public Education, and he was allowed to get a salary if the university had available money (Багалей, Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, сс. 116–117).

1887 and 1888 proved to be very fruitful in scientific aspects. Julian Pensky had an opportunity to work at the laboratory of V. P. Krylov and study bacteriology there. The young scientist got interested in malignant tumors, pathoanatomical materials and transplantation of joint tissues.

Since 1890, Julian Pensky combined scientific and organizational activities. He was elected secretary of the medical unit of the research society at the university, where he worked at least for two terms (Багалей, Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, с. 117).

In 1893, Julian Pensky defended his thesis «Grafting (replantation and transplantation) of the articular surfaces of the epiphyses». Julian Pensky was one of the first in the world to conduct a joint transplant surgery experimentally (Лисовий, В., Капустник, В., Дуденко, В. 2014, с. 7–14). However, his thesis was not accepted as after the first reading, professors O. Dudukalov and A. Podrez found it unsatisfactory. The professoriate's authority was undeniable, however famous surgeons V. Grube and I. Zarubin learnt the thesis for objective assessment. They concluded that the thesis had certain mistakes and even more, a confusing style – in some cases the information was unclear due to complex explanations. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, Julian Pensky's dissertation was recommended for defence, after which he obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree.

In 1894, Julian Pensky was elected Privatdozent of the Department of Operative Surgery and Topographic Anatomy, and added to the staff. He read the «Chest and abdomen organs» course. In February 1895, he brilliantly gave an introductory lecture on «Development and importance of anatomy in natural science, in medicine in general, and in surgery in particular» (Багалей,

Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, с. 117). The Dean and representatives of the Medical Faculty highly appreciated the lecturer's talent. And on May 25, 1895, Julian Pensky was elected Professor.

In the same year, a solid work by Julian Pensky, co-authored with M. Kuznetsov, «On Liver Resection» was published (Пенский, Ю., Кузнецов, М. 1895.). Then any surgical manipulations in the liver were rarely performed, and most of them ended fatally. In this regard, Julian Pensky decided to conduct his own animal studies and to reveal not only causes of high mortality, but also to give recommendations for successful liver resection.

Some surgery elements were worked during a post mortem, in particular, tissue incision techniques, proposed by different scientists. Julian Pensky also noted imperfect needles that injured the blood vessels, so he suggested round-tip needles. They penetrate and pass through hepatic tissues without injuring the vessels. Concluding from the experiments, Julian Pensky determined that the liver resection was possible, but the ligature peculiarities should be considered when tightening the sutures (Пенский, Ю., Кузнецов, М. 1895.).

The colleagues noticed his high erudition and knowledge, so since 1896 Pensky became the editor of the editorial board of the «Works» of the Society of Scientific Medicine and Hygiene. And in January 1897, he was elected secretary of the Scientific Medicine and Hygiene Society (Годичное заседание... 1897, 24 янв.). By the way, Julian Pensky remained a constant member of the Kharkiv Medical Society according to historical sources. In January 1903, he was re-elected to the KhMS (Годичное заседание... 1903, 31 янв.).

In 1907, he was elected a deputy chairman of the Scientific Medicine and Hygiene Society of the KhMS (Медицинский факультет... 1907, с. 303). On January 21, 1910, he was re-elected a fellow of the chairman of Scientific Medicine and Hygiene Society (В обществе... 1910, 23 янв.).

With Julian Pensky's participation, the department work had greatly revived. During his work, professor Julian Pensky paid considerable attention to practical issues, intensified students' training at the department. The professor kept up with his colleagues and gave them a worthy example. He even obtained a diploma of a prestigious industrial and artistic exhibition in the city of Nizhny Novgorod «for careful and skilful manufacture» of anatomical specimens he made at the university laboratory (Багалей, Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, с. 118).

In 1893, at Pirogov Congress, Julian Pensky with his colleague M. Kuznetsov presented improvements in the abdominal surgery, which seemed to be interesting. At the Congress, Kharkiv surgeons presented two reports «On liver resection techniques» and «On

artificial bladder made of small intestine loops». These reports were of great value for practical surgery, because they offered innovative ideas now known as Pensky-Kuznetsov needle and Kuznetsov-Pensky suture. The haemostatic suture was performed in a significant liver injury. The organ was sutured with two catgut threads through U-shaped stitches, which helped stop the bleeding.

Julian Pensky's scientific work was described in the *Bulletin of Medicine*, where he published abstracts of original works from French and German medical literature (Багалей, Д., Скворцов, И., 1905–1906, с. 118).

In 1905, Julian Pensky became the head of the operative surgery department, though in 1907 he was transferred to the hospital surgery department (Перцева, Ж., 2019, с. 5.). In March 1910, Julian Pensky, who had previously worked as an extraordinary professor, was appointed a residency professor at the hospital surgery department (Назначение... 1910, 13 марта). The professor involved to work at the clinic talented Boleslaw Sharetskiy, a future hero of the Second World War, a founder and head of the medical service of the Polish Armed Forces (Жванко, Л., 2018, с. 255).

The work at the department proved to be scientifically fruitful, and Julian Pensky also performed administrative duties. On June 03, 1910, he attended the organizing committee for establishment of the Women's Medical Institute at the KhMS (Протокол № 15... 1910, с. 109), and on August 04, – the commission for election of teachers of the WMI (Протокол № 17... 1910, с. 162). In 1911, he worked in the commission on organization of the surgical clinic at the Women's Medical Institute (Харьковское... 1911, с. 184), and on examinations of the WMI in 1916 (Академическая... 1916, с. 152).

The directors of the university clinics, professors Julian Pensky and K.M. Georgiyevsky, initiated the opening of the outpatient clinic at the Olexandrivska hospital. The outpatient clinic began operating on January 25, 1910 and significantly improved medical care for Kharkiv residents, as well as expanded clinical training for graduate students of the Medical Faculty at the University (Амбулатория... 1910, с. 98). Patients were admitted in five rooms free of charge, and free medications were dispensed to poor patients (Новая... 1910, 24 янв.).

In 1910, the so-called «Lagovskoy Case» was widely publicized in Kharkiv. In this complicated case, Julian Pensky consulted.

Volodymyr Lagovskoy, a police officer from Lubny district, was caught fabricating and adding evidences in a criminal case about an attempted murder of a court investigator. The case was considered by

the Kharkiv Judicial Chamber. By the way, Mykola Mikhnovsky acted as a representative of the people falsely accused by Lagovskoy. Lagovskoy claimed that those persons tried to kill him. He was injured indeed. And the Judicial Chamber engaged Professor Julian Pensky for an expert examination of the case. Pensky convincingly proved that Lagovskoy was self-inflicted to confuse the investigation. The results of the expert examination carried out by Kharkiv professors justified the sentencing of Lagovskoy (Судебная... 1910, 23–24 янв.).

On December 04, 1910, it was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the medical activity of Julian Pensky. The KhMS honoured him with a congratulatory letter (Харьковское... 1910, с. 414). In particular, the following was noted «Dear Julian Romanovich, the Kharkiv Medical Society entrusted the Board with an honorable duty to congratulate you on this solemn day upon the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your medical and scientific activity. The Board is well aware of your activities and works for the benefit of the Company. We highly appreciate your participation in scientific meetings of the Company. Your comments on the reports have always illuminated debates and facilitated a proper understanding of complicated issues. We consider your scientific experience to be an irreplaceable reference book in surgical and topographic anatomy» (Протокол №29...1911, с. 260–284.). On that day, the university colleagues and leaders of Kharkiv Medical Society were going to honour him. But Julian Pensky was a very modest person and decided to avoid the festivities. He just hid. He did not go to work, did not attend the meeting of the KhMS. Persistent admirers went to his house in Divocha Street (Список..., арк. 109.). However, he was not there. They waited, but in vain. He did not show up all day. They left greetings and gifts to his wife (Юбилей...1910, 5 дек.; Протокол №29...1911, с. 260.).

The same happened with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the professor's teaching and pedagogical activity in 1914 as well. As the Kharkiv newspaper «Southern Territory» wrote, «the Jubilee hero categorically refused to celebrate it despite all friends' persuasions» (Юбилей...1910, 5 дек.).

In 1911, Julian Pensky became the Dean of the Medical Faculty of Kharkiv Imperial University. He was unanimously elected, apparently, because of his conscientious professional work. He remained in this position until the institution's reorganization. The nineteenth dean witnessed the beginning of great transformations in education in the 1920s. He combined his administrative duties with teaching at the university clinic at Olexandrivska hospital (На отношение..., арк. 106.).

In December 1911, a surgical society was established at the KhMS, and Professor Julian Pensky was elected fellow of the chairman (Университет. 1912, с. 70). And in 1914 he became the head of this society (В обществах. 1914, с. 181.).

It should be noted that even being busy, Julian Pensky always found time for charity. As a Pole, he participated in the activities of the Roman Catholic Charitable Society, founded in Kharkiv in 1894 to assist the Poles living in eastern Ukraine. At the beginning, the Society consists of 213 Poles, but later the number of representatives of the Polish diaspora decreased. In 1913, there were 159 Poles in the society. At this time the charitable society was headed by Theodore (Fedir) Openhovsky, Julian Pensky was a secretary, and Selestin Serednytsky was a treasurer. The society was governed by the council of 9 people. Julian Pensky's work in this society clearly proves that problems of the Poles were in the professor's mind, so he, as a true patriot, tried to improve the Poles' lives in Ukraine. The activity of the Society suffered due to lack of money for many years. However, the charity's activities significantly revived when a large sum was donated in 1909 by music teacher Adam Wojtasevic-Pavlovic in the amount of 37 thousand karbovanetz. This helped to maintain a school for 53 girls and 44 boys, to provide funds for the study of Polish and Russian languages, as well as to support St. Anne's charitable foundation for poor girls (Madzik, M., et al., 2014, p. 132).

In 1912, Professor Julian Pensky, at the Twelfth Russian Congress of Surgeons, made a report on early surgical intervention in acute appendicitis. This, in fact, initiated the first day theory, when timely surgery within the first 24 hours in appendicitis can save a patient's life. Later this idea was developed by Kharkiv surgeons V. Nedohlebov and A. Chugayev.

In 1914, Julian Pensky performed a surgery dissection of a heart sac in a patient with an inflamed pericardium. He also developed techniques for surgery on the digestive system, urinary tract, and vessels. In 1914, the Surgical Society established the annual Julian Pensky Prize in the amount of 100 rubles for a scientific work on surgery (Академическая... 1915, с. 71–72.).

At the beginning of World War I, a hospital called «Infirmery of the University professors» was established in Kharkov. Its name showed who treated wounded and ill people there. «Infirmery» was headed by Professor Julian Pensky. On November 23, 1914, the institution was visited by Emperor Nicholas II during his travel to Kharkiv, and he had a conversation with Julian Pensky (Высочайшие... 1914, с. 374–376). This fact emphasizes Julian Pensky's reputation in

Kharkiv Medical Society: he was chosen to communicate with the tsar.

During World War I enemies started using a new kind of weapons, chemical weapons. The mobilization of scientists was required to counteract the poisonous gases. In 1915, at Kharkiv Imperial University, a commission was set up to «find means against asphyxiating gases». Professor Julian Pensky headed it as the Dean of the Medical Faculty (Академическая... 1915, с. 159.).

The post-revolutionary events brought great changes, particularly, in education. Kharkiv Imperial University was reorganized, which is confirmed by the archived materials. In February 1919, Julian Pensky began preparation of further reforms, as the Bolshevik authorities proposed to hold discussions about the future fate of the higher medical institution. Under this decree, Julian Pensky gathered the IKhU professoriate on February 7 to discuss prospects (Перцева, Ж, 2019, с. 5.). However, Julian Pensky was not affected by these changes, and remained the Dean of the Medical Faculty of Kharkiv University until the last day of his life.

Julian Pensky died on April 20, 1920 in Kharkiv at the age of 60. He was buried at the expense of the university to honour his long fruitful work for the Medical Faculty at the IKhU. And in June of 1920, the directives on the merger of the WMI and the Medical Faculty of the University came into effect. A new day began in the history of medical education in Kharkiv (Декану..., арк. 169; Перцева, Ж. 2019, с. 5.).

**Conclusions.** The study of Julian Pensky's personality clearly demonstrates the potential of history of local medicine for historical and medical researchers. J. Pensky was a representative of Kharkiv medics of Polish origin, migrants who, from the ground up, achieved general recognition, including the highest imperial. He was a talented and innovative scientist and surgeon despite obvious problems in his Doctor Degree thesis defence. However, it is common in surgeons' circles even now because of their practical orientation. So, Pensky is the author and co-author of original surgical ideas and technologies, inventor of a specific needle and suture that contributed surgery a lot. Moreover, he was a brilliant administrator and public figure, one of the founders of the Women's Medical Institute, director of the University Surgical Clinic, the member and the Head of Kharkiv Medical Society, the last Dean of IKhU Medical Faculty, activist of the Kharkovian Polonia. However, his character determined avoiding honours; activity was his end in itself.

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