

A study of St.Petersburg medical toponyms

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For the first time, the toponymy of St. Petersburg is being examined as a historico-medical source and given a classification of medical toponyms of St. Petersburg. We underline five categories of names: given in honor of the medical profession as a whole, given in honor of eminent scientists and other important figures in medical field or those who had influence on the development of medicine, given in honor of physicians outside the context of their professional activities, given in honor of the medical institutions, given in honor of the medico-social, charitable institutions. In total, the study identified and reviewed 291 medical toponyms relating to 176 objects, some of which still exist, and some that have been since lost. Presently, there are still 93 medical toponyms remain in St. Petersburg.

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Toponymy is the study of geographical names, their origin, their meaning, development, current status, spelling and pronunciation. It is an integrated discipline using data from three areas of expertise: geography, history and linguistics. A toponym is the term used to describe a name in the study of toponymy.

The first official St. Petersburg toponyms were approved by the St. Petersburg Construction Commission on April 20, 1738, although some names are even older than the city itself. From the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century, many names appeared relating to industrial and commercial enterprises, various institutions, the names of the owners of factories, buildings, land, and landscape features. In the middle of the 19th century, the proper names for Petersburg's buildings and places were designated by senate decrees or city council ordinances. After 1917, a new phase of the city's toponymy began, characterized by an ideological approach. In recent years, some of the Soviet-era toponyms have been replaced by historical names. [1]

In the history of Russian medicine, St. Petersburg occupies a special place. The formation of the military and civilian health care system, health education and medical science in Russia commenced at the same time – with the creation of Petersburg – and is closely connected

with the identity of Peter the Great. [2, 3] Medicine (doctors, nurses, hospitals, pharmacies, institutes and academies) had considerable influence in shaping Petersburg. They became an integral part of the urban environment, and therefore medical toponymy is an integral part of the semiotic space of the city.

Walking through the city's squares and avenues, we frequently stumble upon vestiges of medical history: street names, names of institutions, plaques, monuments ... But are the city's professional historical experts, let alone everyday Petersburgers, always able to recognize these vestiges? As a recently published guide to St. Petersburg noted, many "places bear names that do not venerate buildings' owners," giving the example of Leshtukov Bridge [4]. And the name refers to Count Lestok, the Elizabethan archiater (minister of health), and one of the main political heavyweights of her reign.

There are many urban place names associated with the 300-year history of medicine and health care in St. Petersburg. These toponyms are of considerable interest for the history of medicine, but we could not find any scientific papers on medical toponymy for the city as a whole. The aim of our study was the summation and classification of Petersburg toponymic data (names of thoroughfares, squares, bridges, etc.) related to medicine and health care. As concerns medical toponyms, we understand these to be names of city or geographical objects that are somehow related to medicine and health care. In other

words, those names associated with any medical or medico-social institution, a physician's name or the name of any other person who contributed to the history of medicine, as well as the medical profession in general.

The search for medical toponyms was limited to the modern city limits. As expected, they were found in all 18 urban and suburban city regions. Furthermore, both both existing (eg. Aptekarsky or "Apothecary" Avenue) and former (eg. Ospenny or "Pox" Lane) names have been taken into account. Directly (Medics Avenue) and indirectly associated (eg. Nadezhdinskaya or "Hope" Street) names related to our chosen topic have been included. Although we set ourselves the task of gathering as much information as possible, with such an abundance of places there were inevitable gaps, especially with regard to the areas surrounding St. Petersburg. It was not always possible to accurately determine the origins of the appearance of a medical toponym. Toponyms were considered medical in nature if they were associated with the names of people who had completed a medical education or worked in medicine. For example, names given in honor of Y. M. Sverdlov (who studied for a year as a student pharmacist) or V. V. Kuibyshev (who studied for a year at the Military Medical Academy) were not taken into account. Unfortunately, it was not always possible to establish a clear link between the numerous Mariinskiye, Olginskiye Ksenevskiye and other streets with the charitable medical or medico-social institutions in their neighborhoods, although there is reason to assume such links exist. We included such names in the list only if there was concrete information confirming a link.

Sometimes a toponym's connection with medicine may not have been direct but indirect. For example, Zheleznovodskaya Street is named after Zheleznovodsk – a name associated with the healing mineral springs of Zheleznaya Mountain – so this is indirectly a Petersburg medical toponym. Laboratorniye or "Laboratory" highway, street and lane sound medical, but the street and alley got their names from an artillery laboratory, and not a medical one, and therefore they have no relationship to medicine.

Our main information sources for existing and former Petersburg toponyms were the reference book by K. S. Gorbachevich and E. P. Khablo [5],

the reference book by S. V. Alekseeva and co-authors [6], the reference book by T. I. Elokina. [7] The internet resources Petersburg Toponymy [8] and Encyclopedia of St. Petersburg were also used. [9] Particularly valuable was the Toponymica Encyclopaedia of St. Petersburg, edited by A. G. Vladimirovich [1] and the directory Petersburg Street Names by A. G. Vladimirovich and A. D. Erofeev. [10] In addition, a modern digital city map was used. Unfortunately, contradictions, inaccuracies and omissions were sometimes found in these publications. Cross checking these sources helped to identify them.

We found it useful to divide the medical toponyms that we identified into five groups:

1) the names given in honor of the medical profession in general (eg., Medikov or "Medics" Avenue, Sestrinskaya or "Nurse's" Street, Lechebnaya or "Healing" Street). Total: eight objects, nine toponyms;

2) the names given in honor of eminent scientists and other participants in the field of medicine or people who influenced the development of medicine (eg, Pavlov Street, Avenue Mechnikov). Total: 29 objects, 75 toponyms;

3) the names given in honor of physicians outside the context of their professional activities (eg, Chekhov Street, Avenue Shchorsa, Golodai Island). Total: 32 items, 43 toponyms;

4) the names given in honor of medical institutions (for example, there are a lot of examples of Aptekarskiye or "Apothecary", Gospitalniye and Bolnichniye or "Hospital" streets, avenues, squares, embankments, bridges, canals and even cottages). Total: 100 objects, 149 of toponyms;

5) the names given in honor of the social-medical and charitable institutions (eg. Invalidny or "Invalid" Lane, Emanuilovskaya or "Emmanuel" Street). Total: 11 items, 15 toponyms.

Naming city objects in honor of professions is a long-established toponymic trend, both in Europe and Russia. However, as a rule, this concerns the handicraft professions, representatives of which settled in groups. Representatives of the liberal professions, which includes the medical profession, did not congregate together as such, so Kuznechniye ("Blacksmith") and Pryadilniye ("Spinning") streets are much more common than Vrachebniye ("Doctor") or Khudozhestvenniye ("Art") streets.

For example, the Avenue Medikov, built in the 1960s from Embankment Karpovki to Aptekarskaya, received its present name in 1970. It runs through the territory of Aptekarsky Island, and many educational and research institutions with medical specializations are located on or near the avenue. Equally well-known is Voennikh Medikov ("Military Medics") Square, which in 1996 saw a memorial constructed "to perpetuate the memory of military medics who died on the battlefield. However, few now remember Dokhturov Lane, running between modern avenues Irinovskiy and Udarnikov in the 1920s-1970s.

The second section includes toponyms associated with the names of prominent physicians, as well as prominent scholars and public figures who, while not being medical professionals by education, nevertheless had a significant impact on the development of medicine and medical-social care. Sometimes the places referred to were directly related to the life and work of the person honored (eg. Street Akademika Pavlova ["Academic Pavlov"], Botkinskaya ["Botkin"] Street, Pirogovskaya ["Pirogov"] Embankment, and sometimes they are only related indirectly, via existing institutions located there (eg. Street Rentgena ["Roentgen"], Avenue Mechnikova ["Menchikov"], etc.) .

There are two Akademika Pavlova streets – one in the Petrograd neighborhood and one in the Krasnoselskoye neighborhood. On the first of them is located the Institute of Experimental Medicine, which I. P. Pavlov took an active role in creating, before running the department of physiology. Russia has only two medical Nobel Prize winners – Pavlov and I. I. Mechnikov. An avenue is named after Mechnikov in the Piskaryovka neighborhood.

In 1898, in honor of centenary of the Military Medical Academy, it was decided to memorialize its two most prominent doctors – Samarskaya Street was renamed Botkin and part of the Arsenalnaya Embankment was renamed Pirogovskaya. In the square there is a monument to S. P. Botkin: the famous therapist has his back to the city, while he faces the building where he worked for 15 years. In the building on Pirogovskaya Embankment the great surgeon supervised a clinic. A lane extending from Voznesensky Avenue is also named after Pirogov.

A small street in the Nevsky district is named after neurologist and psychiatrist V. M. Bekhterev, where he organized the Neuropsychiatric Institute. The city once even had a Bekhterev Embankment.

Special emphasis should be given to toponyms associated with the names of saints Panteleimon and Sampson, known during their lifetimes, first and foremost, for their voluntary medical activities. In the place of the contemporary cathedral, Peter the Great founded a wooden church in the name of Sampson the Hospitable, as on this saint's day Russian troops were victorious in the Battle of Poltava. Bolshoi and Maly Sampsonievskiy ("Large and Small Sampson") avenues were named after the cathedral, as well as three bridges, a garden and a cemetery. Similarly, in 1718, for workers of the Partikulyarnaya Wharf a chapel was built, named after St. Panteleimon, on whose feast day the Russian fleet won a victory at Gangute and Gremgam Island. A street (now called Pestelya), a lane (now Solyanaya) and a bridge have been named after the Pantelimonovskaya Church.

Although W. C. Roentgen was a physicist, the value of his discoveries to medicine was huge and as such Rentgena Street on the Petrograd side – where X-ray-Radiology and Radium institutes were built – should be included for consideration. Also immortalized in St. Petersburg are the names of Dr. N. S. Korotkov, who discovered a method for measuring blood pressure; Botkin Hospital head Professor G. A. Ivashentsov; K. K. Grot, who organized a system of schools for the blind in Russia; local regional doctor V. V. Tsimbalin; and physiologists L. A. Orbeli and M. N. Shaternikov, among others.

Medical professionals have always been very active in social and cultural spheres, as a result a lot of toponyms are associated with their activities outside their profession: medic-authors, medic-politicians, medic-revolutionaries, state figures, military leaders ... Because the profession provided well for a good doctor, the names of land- and home-owning doctors appeared on the map of St. Petersburg.

Among Russian doctor-authors the most famous is, of course, A. P. Chekhov. In 1923, Ertelev alley received his name. In addition, there is a Chekhov Street in the Strelna neighborhood,

and there previously existed a Chekhov Street in the Moscow and Kirov regions of the city. From Pesochnaya Embankment to Karpovki Embankment passes the small Dalya or "Dal" Street. This University of Dorpathe medical faculty graduate's contribution of to the knowledge and formation of the Russian language is difficult to overestimate. A street named after a doctor, one of the leaders of the French Revolution – J. P. Marat – runs off Nevsky Prospect. Marat streets can also be found in Pavlovsk, Volodarsky and Petro-Slavyanka. Many existing and former place names appeared in honor of revolutionist V. K. Slutsкая, a dentist by training. Vera Slutsкой ("Vera Slutsкая") Street still exists, passing through the entire of Kolpino from north to south, as well as Slutsкая Street in Pavlovsk, but until 1944 it bore the name of 15-th Line of Vasilevsky Island. The entire city of Pavlovsk was once Slutskiy.

S. L. Perovskaya was a Russian revolutionist, one of the leaders of Narodnaya Volya, educated as a paramedic, and hanged for the murder of Alexander II. Maly Konushennaya Street regained its original name, but Sofi Perovskoi ("Sofia Perovskaya") Street still exists in Pavlovsk. Not everyone knows that the Red commanders N. A. Shchors and A. S. Rakov were military paramedics in World War I. Until 1991, Maly Avenue in the Petrograd neighborhood and Italiyanskaya Street bore their names, respectively. The future Commissar of Heavy Industry G. K. Ordzhonikidze graduated from the Tiflis Paramedical School. Vladimirsky Avenue bore the name of S. M. Nakhimov who was a military doctor.

The historical name of the Dekabristov Island – Golodai – was the people's take on the name of English landowner and physician T. Holliday, who practiced in St. Petersburg in the 18th century. Golodaevskiy street, lane and drive could all be found on the island. Among the landowning doctors, the following people should be noted: the aforementioned archiater I.-G. Lestok (commemorated with a lane and a bridge), Povivalny Institute Professor A. I. Zamshin (a street in Polyustrov), the owner of the fashionable medical spas V.I. Afanasyev (a street in Ozerki), physician A. K. Reimer (a now non-existent avenue in Kushelevka), chairman of the city sanitary commission A. M. Oppengeym

(a lane in Ozerki) and physician and industrialist T. V. Belozersky.

The names given in honor of medical institutions are the largest group of toponyms in our study. First of all, we should note the presence in the city of two branches of "pharmaceutical" names. The first were formed around Peter the Great's Aptekarsky or "Apothecary" Garden (the present-day Botanical Garden): Aptekarsky Island, Aptekarskaya Embankment, Aptekarsky Avenue, Aptekarsky Bridge, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Aptekarskiye streets. The second branch of toponyms is centered around the Main Pharmacy (Medical Board): Aptekarsky Lane, Aptekarskaya Square.

Bolnichnaya Gorka or "Hospital Hill" is the name that was given to the hill where Peter the Great's wooden palace Strelinsky stood, due to the fact that a military hospital was situated there from 1786. The previously existing Bolnichniye or "Hospital" streets and alleys were incorporated into the modern-day Knipovich Street and Zeleznodorozhny Avenue in the Nevsky neighborhood, Chekistov Street in the Krasnoselsky neighborhood and Santyago-De-Kuba Street in the Vyborg neighborhood. It is clear that their names relate to nearby or planned hospitals. In 1960, a Bolnichny canal was even planned, to be named after the nearby Vsekh Skorbyashchikh Psychiatric Hospital on Stachek Avenue. In the same vein, we can include Barachevsky Street, which runs parallel to Rybatsky Avenue, which was associated with the location of the barracks (infectious diseases) hospital. From the Zemsky Infirmary came the name for Zemsky Lane (now Oskalenko Street, Primorsky neighborhood), the Marii Magdaliny Hospital – Magdalene Lane (Vasileostrovsky neighborhood). Named after the famous Maximilianovskaya Ambulatory Hospital, which was founded in 1850, was Maximilianovskaya Lane (now Pirogov) and the Semenovskiy Polk Infirmary had the Lazaretny lane named after it (both of these are to be found in the Admiralty neighborhood). Voenno-Sukhoputny ("Military-Ground Forces") Hospital lends its name to Voenno-Sukhoputny Lane (in the Central District).

Petropavlovskaya Street and a bridge on the Petrograd neighborhood are named after the

nearby Petropavlovsky Hospital, built back in 1830 (now the current-day Pavlov First Medical University). Sanitorniye or "Sanatorium" alley, street and two lanes can be found on Kamenny Island, in Ushkovo, in Levashovo and in Aleksandrovskaya.

Sometimes there are such exotic toponyms as *Proyezdki Profilaktoriya* or "Preventorium Passage" and *Myortvaya* or "Dead" Alley. Toponyms with links with the medical establishment are often not obvious and can only be revealed with detailed investigation. For example, *Morskaya* or "Sea" Street (current-day *Akademika Lebedeva*) and *Ofiterskaya* or "Officer" Street (current-day *Botkinskaya*) are both named after hospitals. *Maksim Gorkogo* Street in *Strelna* (named after the hospital bearing the writer's name) is another example, among others.

The *Pervy Admiralteisky* or "First Admiralty" Hospital was founded by Peter the Great in the *Vyborg* neighborhood in 1715. Two years later, the *Sukhoputny Voenny* or "Ground Forces Military" Hospital was opened, which together with the *Admiralteisky* formed a unified *Trezzini* ensemble. Later, hospital schools were opened in them, subsequently being reformed into the *Medical-Surgical – Military Medical Academy*. The long history of these military-medical and medical-educational institutions explains the high concentration of medical place names in this part of the *Vyborg* neighborhood (1st, 2nd and 3rd *Gospitalniye* streets – current-day *Saratovskaya*, *Astrakhanskaya*, *Orenburgskaya*; *Gospitalnaya* Square, *Botkinskaya* Street, *Pirogovskaya* Embankment, *Myortvaya* Alley, *Morskaya* Street, *Ofiterskaya* Street, *Klinicheskaya* or "Clinic" Street, and *Voennikh Medikov* Square, among others).

St. Petersburg has always been a "military capital", it has housed many military guard units, and as such it has been constantly expanding its network of hospitals. These hospitals were of considerable note to local inhabitants, which led to the appearance of *Gospitalnikh*, *Sukhoputnikh*, *Lazaretnikh* ("Infirmary") and other similar streets and lanes in the areas surrounding the hospitals. A large number of these toponyms are to be found in areas housing the *Semenovsky*, *Izmailovosky* and *Preobrazhensky* regiments. Modern-day *Bronnitskaya* Street,

Mitavsky Lane, *Doynikov* Lane, *Vilensky* Lane and *Radyshcheva* Street were previously *Gospitalniye* streets. *Gospitalniye* bridges crossed *Ligovsky* Channel and *Bolshaya Nevka* and across the *River Volkovka* ran *Kholerny* or "Cholera" Bridge. Currently, *Gospitalniye* streets and alleys exist in the *Central District* as well as in *Lomonosov*, *Pavlovsk*, *Pushkin*, *Kronstadt* colony and *Zelenogorsk*.

Of particular note are a number of hospitals established on the foundations of nurses' societies, and the toponyms related to them. These are *Pokrovskaya* or "Intercession" (*Knyagininskaya* or *Sestrinskaya*), and the present-day *Detskaya* or "Children's" Street, *Evgenevskaya* or "Evgenia" Street, *Elizavetinskaya* or "Elizabeth" Street (now non-existent). There are a lot of medical toponyms associated with the *Polustrov* mineral water springs, the healing properties of which were discovered by Peter the Great's personal physician *L. Blumentrost*. There is the district of *Polyustrovo* itself (from the Latin word *paluster* – "marshy"), *Polustrovskiye* embankment, avenue, park and garden, as well as *Mineralnaya*, *Klyuchevaya* ("Mineral Spring") and *Kurortnaya* ("Resort") streets, *Teplovodsky* ("Warm Water") Avenue.

Bolshaya and *Malaya Monetiye* streets at the beginning of the last century were called *Ospennaya* ("Pox"), as *Ospoprivatelny* ("Pox Vaccination") House was located in a building that was to later become the home of the *Aleksandrovsky Lyceum*. It is curious that *Nadezhdinskaya* or "Hope" Street (now *Mayakovskogo* Street) received its name in connection with hope for the patients' recovery at *Alexandrinskaya Women's Hospital* for those suffering from consumption. *Instrumentalnaya* or "Instrument" Street is located on *Aptekarsky* Island and received its name because a state surgical instruments factory (the present-day *Krasnogvardeets* association) was located on it.

We were hesitant to decide whether toponyms associated with the brothers *I. and N. Zhdanov* (the *River Zhdanovka*, *Zhdanovskiye* street, embankment and bridges) should be considered medical toponyms. Of course, they cannot be considered doctors, but in this neighborhood they built a chemical-pharmaceutical plant, which manufactured both chemicals and drugs, including

the famous "zhdanovskaya fluid" disinfectant, and also created a medicinal plants garden. Based on this, we decided to include them in this section.

In the last section we have included place names associated with medical and social institutions, rather than those of a purely medical or purely social nature (ie. designed to assist people suffering from some kind of illnesses or who have physical disabilities). For example, Bogadelnaya or "Almshouse" Street is one of the old names for Proletarskoi Diktatory Street. The name was derived from the almshouse located at No. 3. Invalidny Lane is now Letnyaya Alley on Kamenny Island. Invalid housing for sailors was built there in the 18th century. On

Akkuratova Street in Kolomyagi was located the Mariinsky shelter belonging to the Charity Society for Cripples and Underage Idiots Under the Patronage of the Empress Maria Feodorovna II, which is why the street was called Mariinskaya. It is interesting that this building is now a school for troubled teens. St. Emmanuel Evangelicheskoy Shelter for child-idiots and epileptics (current-day Orphanage No. 53) gave its name to Emanuilovskaya Street running from Engelsa Avenue to Yaroslavsky Avenue.

In total, the study identified and reviewed 291 medical toponyms referring to 176 present-day or former objects. Currently in St. Petersburg there are 93 medical toponyms.

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