

THE IMAGE OF MATVEY YAKOVLEVICH MUDROV IN HISTORICAL AND MEDICAL LITERATURE (HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW)

Eregina NT ✉, Eregin SYa

Yaroslavl State Medical University, Yaroslavl, Russia

The article analyzes the historical and medical literature devoted to the life and work of Matvey Yakovlevich Mudrov (1776–1831). The first stage in the historiography of this issue was the pre-revolutionary interpretation of Mudrov's personality and his contribution to the development of clinical medicine. The main attention was paid to biographical facts, assessments of Mudrov's professional activity by the medical community, and a general description of his role in Russian medicine. In the middle of the 20th century, a canon emerged that consistently described the main milestones of his biography. This narrative formed the basis of educational, reference, and popular science publications. Since the mid-1990s, the interest of practitioners in Mudrov's legacy has come to the fore launching reassessment of his personality. In recent decades, the research has shifted to examining his impact as a reformer of medical education, organizer of clinical teaching, and creator of ethical medical standards. The implementation of research tasks contributed to the introduction of new archival data into scientific circulation, clarifying previously existing estimates and conclusions. The conducted historiographical review comprehensively covers the multifaceted activities of Mudrov MY and outlines possible prospects for further study.

Keywords: M. Y. Mudrov, history of medicine in Russia, historiography of M. Y. Mudrov, medical faculty of Moscow University, medical ethics

Author contribution: Eregina NT, Eregin SYa — text preparation.

✉ **Correspondence should be addressed:** Natalia T Eregina
Revolutsionnaya St., 5, Yaroslavl, 150000, Russia; ereginant@mail.ru

Received: 23.02.2026 **Accepted:** 10.03.2026 **Published online:** 30.03.2026

DOI: 10.24075/medet.2026.007

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МАТВЕЙ ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ МУДРОВ В ИСТОРИКО-МЕДИЦИНСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ (ИСТОРИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ ОБЗОР)

Н. Т. Ерегина ✉, С. Я. Ерегин

Ярославский государственный медицинский университет, Ярославль, Россия

В статье предпринят анализ историко-медицинской литературы, посвященной жизни и деятельности Матвея Яковлевича Мудрова (1776–1831). Первым этапом историографии данного вопроса стало дореволюционное осмысление личности М. Я. Мудрова и его вклада в развитие клинической медицины. Основное внимание уделялось биографическим фактам, оценкам М. Я. Мудрова со стороны врачебного сообщества, общей характеристике его роли в отечественной медицине. В середине XX в. утвердился канон изложения, в котором последовательно воспроизводились основные вехи его биографии. Этот нарратив лег в основу учебных, справочных и научно-популярных изданий. С середины 1990-х гг. на первый план вышел интерес практических врачей к наследию М. Я. Мудрова, что способствовало переоценке масштаба его личности. В последние десятилетия исследовательский акцент сместился в сторону его изучения как реформатора медицинского образования, организатора клинического преподавания, создателя фундамента основ врачебной этики. Реализация исследовательских задач способствовала введению в научный оборот новых архивных данных, уточнению существовавших ранее оценок и выводов. Проведенный историографический обзор свидетельствует о всестороннем освещении многогранной деятельности М. Я. Мудрова, намечает возможные перспективы для дальнейшего изучения.

Ключевые слова: М. Я. Мудров, история медицины России, историография М. Я. Мудрова, медицинский факультет Московского университета, врачебная этика

Вклад автора: Н. Т. Ерегина, С. Я. Ерегин — подготовка текста.

✉ **Для корреспонденции:** Наталья Тимофеевна Ерегина
ул. Революционная, д. 5, г. Ярославль, 150000, Россия; ereginant@mail.ru

Статья поступила: 23.02.2026 **Статья принята к печати:** 10.03.2026 **Опубликована онлайн:** 30.03.2026

DOI: 10.24075/medet.2026.007

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The 250th anniversary of Matvey Yakovlevich Mudrov (1776–1831), a remarkable Russian physician, scientist, and reformer of medical education, was celebrated on March 23, 2026 (Fig.). He is one of the most prominent figures in 19th-century Russian healthcare. His name is indispensable to the history of medicine of that period. A native of Vologda province, who graduated from a theological seminary, he decided to become a doctor. After graduating from the Medical Faculty of the Imperial Moscow University (IMU) (1800) and a one-and-a-half-year

internship at marine hospitals of Moscow and St. Petersburg, M. Y. Mudrov was sent abroad to improve his knowledge. He actively visited the clinics of Bamberg, Landshut, Berlin, Göttingen, Vienna, Sorbonne, listening to famous professors, mastering surgery (which was the main purpose of the business trip), treatment of internal diseases, obstetrics, eye, skin and sexually transmitted diseases, organization of hospital care, sanitary measures, and learning how to teach theoretical and practical medicine. During his internship abroad (1804),

he prepared a thesis, which was sent to the IMU, and was awarded the Doctor of Medicine degree. Having returned to his homeland in 1807, he was appointed head of the 1,200-bed hospital of the active army in Wilno.

Subsequently (1808–1831), Dr. Mudrov's life was associated with the Imperial Moscow University where he was an extraordinary professor of military medicine and surgery (1808–1809), head of the Department of Pathology and Clinic and at the same time director of the Clinical Institute (1809–1831). He was also elected dean of the Faculty of Medicine four times (1813/14; 1819/20; 1825/26; 1828/29). In 1813–1817, he was a full-time professor of pathology, therapy and clinic at the Moscow Department of the Medical and Surgical Academy; in 1830–1831, he was a senior physician at the Central Commission for Combating the Cholera Epidemic in Saratov and St. Petersburg. He was personally involved not only in organizational matters, but also in the direct fight against cholera, and was in charge of two cholera hospitals in St. Petersburg. On July 8, 1831, he unexpectedly died of this disease. These are the main milestones of his biography [1].

Matvey Yakovlevich Mudrov left a lasting legacy as a brilliant clinician, internist, talented organizer, initiator of medical education reforms, propagandist of the most important principles of medical ethics, author of the first national code of the medical profession, and a man of deep religiosity and service. In this study, an attempt is made to trace the historiography devoted to Dr. Mudrov's life and work, identify the principal topics, characterize the established historiographical tradition, determine the most significant studies and how their impact on the person's role in the history of Russian medicine is understood today.

G. A. Kolosov, a renowned historian of medicine of the beginning of the XX century, was the first to give a detailed assessment of Dr. Mudrov's life and professional activity. His research was published across two newspaper issues of "Russkiy Vrach" ("The Russian Physician") in 1914 and 1915. The historian used numerous archival data to retell M. Y. Mudrov's biography for the first time and referred to him as one of the founders of clinical medicine in Russia. Despite the fact that G. A. Kolosov failed to provide a continuous critical evaluation of sources he relied upon, the narrative presented became the starting point for further research [2].

A small book by Professor V. N. Smotrov, limited to 20,000 copies, issued in 1947, and being part of a larger set entitled "The Outstanding Figures of Russian Medicine", has been the most complete and detailed work devoted to M. Y. Mudrov to date [3]. It seemed to serve as an example for all subsequent publications, establishing a historiographical canon. Most subsequent publications devoted to M. Y. Mudrov reproduce its plot and facts with a broader (or narrower) interpretation of individual issues, simply retelling his text and even using the same structure of the presentation. The author made an extensive use of Dr. Mudrov's characteristics present in the literature of the 19th century. For example, P. I. Strakhov described his teacher as a deeply religious man with sincere faith, who was far from esoteric hobbies of those years, as a humane person who had compassion for all living things being crafted by the Creator including mice and dogs, and as a strict and caring mentor to students who trusted and considered him an ideal "Hippocratic physician" with high clinical culture, personal decency and rare humanity [4]. The ability of V. N. Smotrov to collect and properly submit all the most important assessments of M. Y. Mudrov and vivid and comprehensive portrayal of his image turned the book into an important historiographical source.



Fig. Matvey Yakovlevich Mudrov

An extensive article by A. G. Gukasyan that served as an introduction to the main edition of selected works by Dr. Mudrov, published two years later, was still inferior to the book by V. N. Smotrov, despite the wide range of sources used (mainly journal publications of the 19th and early 20th centuries) and the 100-page volume [5]. It is logical to assume the reasons for that. The selected works by M. Y. Mudrov were published as a separate book in 1949. During the period, the struggle against cosmopolitanism reached its peak. The cold war in the field of medical science and medical education was taking ugly forms. The struggle for medical priorities often reached the point of absurdity. Doctors were not so much looking for the truth as competing to find the names of those Russian doctors who had allegedly been actively fighting against "foreign domination" in Russian science throughout their lives [6]. Thus, the essay by A. G. Ghukasyan, that was strongly ideologically tinged and based on the "friend-foe" idea of those years, often replaced objective assessments with established clichés. Nevertheless, it is an important stage of Soviet historiography, which formed the official idea of Dr. Mudrov and correctly outlined his connection with the subsequent Russian therapeutic tradition.

In a brief essay devoted to M. Y. Mudrov (text editor, full member of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, Professor) and published in "People of Russian Science", a fundamental four-volume edition, in 1963, the reader comes across the established manner of how the information is presented, but without the harsh ideological clichés typical of publications in the second half of the 1940s and 1950s. A fair assessment of M. Y. Mudrov's main merits for national medicine in the

context of the main stages of his biography has been given here in a concise form [7]. This publication, as well as most of all subsequent similar publications that briefly described the life of M. Y. Mudrov, clearly relied on the book of V. N. Smotrov.

Until the early 1990s, M. Y. Mudrov's name was briefly mentioned in articles and monographs on the history of Russian healthcare among other prominent medical names. More attention to this name was given after the publication of academician E. I. Chazov's book. The book was more journalistic than strictly scientific. An outstanding Russian cardiologist, the former Minister of Health of the USSR (1987–1990) E. I. Chazov does not introduce new sources into scientific circulation, but relies on already published works and scientific works of Dr. Mudrov [8].

It is believed that it was the book by E. I. Chazov that has largely spurred a new wave of interest in rethinking the personality of the outstanding Russian scientist, primarily owing to the new approach itself. In this book, a practitioner talks about his colleague, a practicing physician of the last century, showing that despite the existing high evaluation, the contribution of Dr. Mudrov to Russian healthcare is clearly underestimated. According to the book, Dr. Mudrov insisted on understanding a disease as suffering of the whole organism long before the great Russian clinicians (N. I. Pirogov, S. P. Botkin, G. Zakharin et al.) did so. Dr. Mudrov was the first to emphasize etiology and pathogenesis, and the need for comprehensive treatment. He formulated the ideas of preventive medicine earlier than others, and he was the first person who said that a doctor should be educated continuously. Without a doubt, the book of E. I. Chazov represents an important attempt to rethink the legacy of M. Y. Mudrov in the context of modern therapy, personalized and preventive medicine.

L. B. Lazebnik and V. S. Belyaeva try to pay tribute to Dr. Mudrov in "Russian Therapist", a popular scientific biobibliographic essay. The epigraph written by academician B. V. Petrovsky fully reflects the modern assessment of this remarkable doctor: "The fate of some physicians, especially those who could preserve their personalities despite the difficult life paths, obstacles, and collisions, should serve as an example for us, the doctors". The popular style of presentation does not reduce, but rather increases interest in the book, designed to show the continuity and importance of therapeutic traditions [9].

In recent decades, scientific interest in the personality of Dr. Mudrov has grown significantly. This is associated not only with anniversaries in the history of healthcare, often marked by memorable articles or publication of reputable biographical dictionaries, but also with certain circumstances such as frequent appeal to prominent names and authorities in Russian science against the background of the emerging ideological struggle for norms and values; interest in bedside clinical training established by Dr. Mudrov and his reformatory activities related to practical and theoretical training of doctors; studying the patient's clinical examination scheme and case history while discussing the problems of personalized and evidence-based medicine; updating attention to issues of military medicine and military hygiene against the background of the ongoing special military operation (SMO), and finally, with increased attention towards medical ethics and discussions about medical duty and codes of professional conduct.

Each of these theses is reflected in modern publications based on existing works. Many authors of articles in medical journals try to characterize Dr. Mudrov as a founder of internal medicine in Russia through assessment of his holistic system

of clinical diagnosis, which is based on the well-known Hippocratic principle of "treating the patient, not the disease", and analysis of systematic clinical examination in medical practice (including mandatory detailed medical history, consistent examination of organs, comparison of subjective complaints and objective data, analysis of symptoms in connection with personality traits, lifestyle, and living conditions of the patient). Almost all authors agree that, owing to Dr. Mudrov, separate observations in Russian therapeutic practice were included into the system of mandatory clinical bedside monitoring, which in turn became a solid foundation for internal medicine in Russia [10–12].

The issues of military medicine in practical and scientific activities of M. Y. Mudrov are important. They are covered in the article entitled "Matvey Yakovlevich Mudrov and military medicine" by A. A. Mikhailenko et al. Having briefly outlined the main facts of Dr. Mudrov's biography that preceded his work at the military hospital in Wilno, the authors analyze in detail his speech "A word about the benefits and subjects of military hygiene or the science of preserving the health of military personnel", delivered in 1809. It is one of his most important works relevant even today. The speech is interesting not only from a theoretical perspective as an introduction to the course of military hygiene at Moscow University and Medical and Surgical Academy, but also practically as a short set of rules for the Russian army of the early 19th century, involved in a long-term military conflict. Analyzing the most important theses of his speech, the authors rightly note that Dr. Mudrov was the first Russian doctor who identified military hygiene as the "first and most important" subject of military medicine, the task of which is not just to ensure "an absence of diseases", but also to preserve strength, endurance and combat capability of a soldier [13].

Numerous articles that later served as the basis of monographs by A. M. Stochik, M. A. Paltsev, and S. N. Zatravkin with a novel and original scientific approach hold a special place among the studies of the last three decades that affect the scientific and practical activities of Dr. Mudrov [14–16]. Their merits include not only creating the fundamental history of medical education in Russia in the XVIII–XIX centuries and history of the Medical Faculty of the Imperial Moscow University, not only clarification of numerous facts of the history of medicine, which were often presented incorrectly, but also an in-depth study of the multifaceted activities of Dr. Mudrov and primarily assessment of his role in the development of clinical teaching at Moscow University. It starts with a detailed analysis of Dr. Mudrov's letter to M. N. Muravyov, the trustee of the Moscow Educational District, that was sent from Paris on March 27, 1805. The publications add numerous details to the portrait of Dr. Mudrov. They refute the statement of G. A. Kolosov about the "complete destruction" of the IMU Faculty of Medicine [17–18] and analyze in detail the multifaceted activities of Dr. Mudrov devoted to the development of clinical education at Moscow University in 1818–1828.

Based on the analysis of a massive corpus of archival and epistolary sources, researchers have been able to reconstruct the full scale of changes in the system of clinical training and to formulate important conclusions about the personal contribution of Dr. Mudrov into its implementation [19]. One more important topic is related to ethical issues in the work of Dr. Mudrov, a pioneering Russian physician, who established the foundation for medical ethics. Most authors mention the fact, referring to his speeches including the famous speech "Word about piety and moral qualities of a Hippocratic

doctor”. Nevertheless, the informative article by Siluyanova IV, published in 2014, is very interesting in this regard. The author provides a clear classification of the ethical principles of Dr. Mudrov for the first time. The schematic diagram is given below. First, choosing a medical profession is not a game of chance, but a calling, since not everyone can be a doctor. This conclusion is in direct agreement with one of Dr. Mudrov's most important theses stating that “a mediocre doctor does more harm than good”. Secondly, the doctor must adhere to “long-term thoroughness,” which means that continuous study is necessary.

The third includes high moral qualities of a doctor, such as love for one's neighbor, willingness to help, selflessness, chastity, modesty, sense of shame, etc. and their external manifestations such as friendliness, calmness, cleanliness, moderation, and neatness. The fourth concerns respectful relationships with colleagues and gratitude to teachers. The fifth is strict adherence to medical confidentiality. The sixth is

a critical attitude towards superstition and “internal and external worship of God.” The seventh is selflessness and willingness to help with no expectation of receiving anything in return [20]. The author recalls that the “Faculty Promise of Russian Doctors” (1845), which was valid until 1917, was drawn up based on these principles.

In conclusion it should be noted that the main stages of Matvey Mudrov's life and work have been fully and comprehensively researched to date. A range of areas for further development are, however, still present. They include a more detailed research into the life and contacts of M. Y. Mudrov during his internship abroad; search for information about the army hospital in Wilno to obtain a fuller picture of Russian military medicine in the early 19th century; showing the life and work of M. Y. Mudrov in Moscow in the context of the historical and cultural everyday reality of that time, as well as other issues that will eventually allow to compile a comprehensive narrative about this wonderful Russian doctor.

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