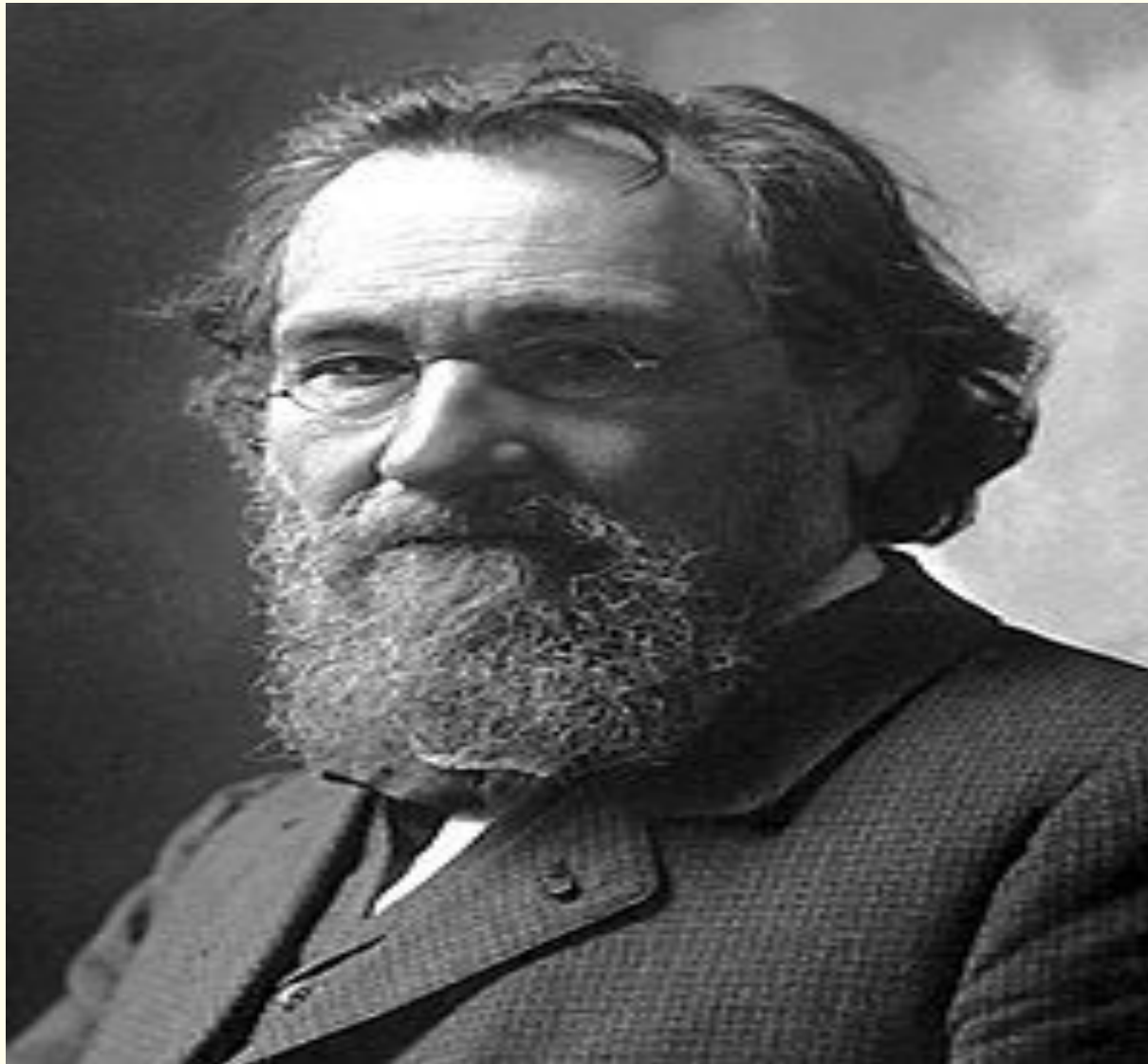


Ilya Ilyich Mechnikov

and his research into the immune system



Ilya Ilyich
Mechnikov was
a Russian
biologist,
zoologist and
protozoologist

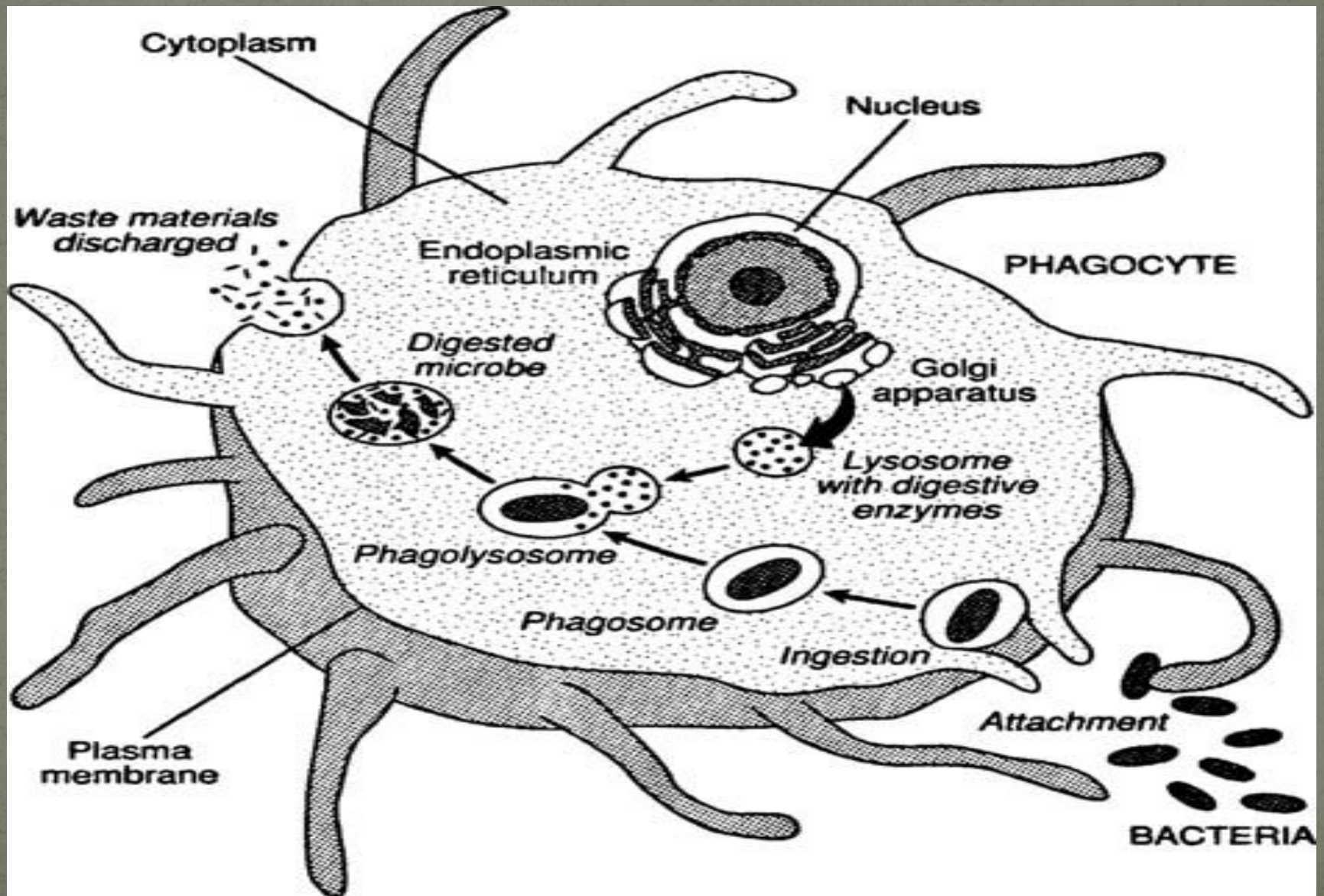
A little from biography

- Ilya Ilyich Mechnikov was a prominent Russian scientist. Best remembered for his pioneering research into the immune system. Mechnikov received the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1908, shared with Paul Ehrlich, for his work on phagocytosis. He is also credited by some sources with coining the term gerontology in 1903, for the emerging study of aging and longevity.

- He attended Kharkiv University where he studied natural sciences, completing his four-year degree in two years. He then went to Germany to study marine fauna on the small North Sea island of Heligoland and then at the University of Giessen, University of Göttingen and then at Munich Academy. In 1867 he returned to Russia to the appointment of docent at the newly established Imperial Novorossiia University (now Odessa University), followed by an appointment at the University of St. Petersburg. In 1870 he returned to Odessa to take up the appointment of Titular Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy.

- Ilya Ilyich Mechnikov first recognized that specialized cells were involved in defense against microbial infections. In 1882, he studied motile (freely moving) cells in the larvae of starfishes, believing they were important to the animals' immune defenses. To test his idea, he inserted small thorns from a tangerine tree into the larvae. After a few hours he noticed that the motile cells had surrounded the thorns. Mechnikov traveled to Vienna and shared his ideas with Carl Friedrich Claus who suggested the name “phagocyte”.

Mechanism of phagocytosis



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