

HISTORICAL IMAGE

Pioneers of Persian Medicine in Iran



Figure 1. A picture of the four pioneers of Persian Medicine from left to right: Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Dr. Mahmood Najmabadi, Dr. Mohammad Reza Shams Ardakani and Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Esfahani 1989. (Personal Album)

Sometimes, pioneers decide to perform a project without any imagination about how much this will be effective and how much it will expand. Such as the fate of academic Persian medicine revivalists in Iran (Mahlooji, and Abdoli, 2018, p. 209-216). A pic-

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ture is mentioned as a document in the history of medical developments in Iran. The above photo was taken at the Faculty of Pharmacy of Kerman University of Medical Sciences on 27 August 1989 (Figure 1). The head of this faculty at that time was Dr. Mohammad Reza Shams Ardakani (Interview with Dr. Mohammadreza Shams Ardakani, 2015), and this picture was taken during the break between lectures at the first Razi Congress held in Kerman, a southern province of Iran.

The first person from the right is Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Esfahani (Zargaran, 2017, p.53), the second is Dr. Mohammad Reza Shams Ardakani, the third is Dr. Mahmood Najmabadi and the last is Dr. Velayati. These four people can be considered the founders of academic Iranian medicine. The first meetings of this group started about a year ago, in 1988, at Dr. Velayati's house. These people gathered in that house because of their interest in traditional medicine and the decision to establish this field in a university in the country. They decided to do two substantial things in this field. First, the collection of traditional books, which Dr. Esfahani took responsibility for, and the result was the brown books project. In this project, a specialized library in the field of Iranian medicine was formed, and about a thousand volumes of books in this field were collected and published in a limited number. This project was carried out at the Research Institute for Islamic and Complementary Medicine, Iran University of Medical Sciences (Institute of Medical History Studies, Iranian and Complementary Medicine, n.d.).

The second step was to hold effective meetings and congresses in this field. This congress can be considered the first serious point for presenting the academic features of Persian medicine by inviting prominent speakers such as Dr. Davari Ardakani, who was later appointed the head of the academy. Dr. Mossadegh was later elected as the head of the Iranian Medicine faculty of Shahid Beheshti University, and Dr. Velayati was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran at that time and was later appointed as the head of the Department of Traditional Medicine at the Academy of Medical Sciences. Other speakers were Dr. Marashi Standard Kerman, Dr. Abu Torab Nafisi F., Dr. Mohammad Esfahani, Dr. Mousavi Garmaroudi, Dr. Samsam Shariat, Dr. Moatar, Dr. Omanzadeh, Dr. Asghari, who was later appointed as head of the Food and Drug Organization in the Ministry of Health. In this regard, the first traditional medicine research center was established in Kerman, and these events became a model for the further development of the Persian medicine field in Iran.

Conflict of Interest

None.

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