Editorial

Iranian Ophthalmology - Past and Present

November arrives and as each year the Iranian Congress of Ophthalmology organized by the Iranian Society of Ophthalmology, a national and very popular reunion of the Iranian ophthalmologists and some colleagues from the surrounding countries. This year a new congress center (Aboreyhan International Conference Center, Shahid Beheshti University) at north of Tehran has been chosen for this very important event. We all agree that the quality and scientific level of our congress is getting better each year. In this November we are presenting more than hundred of free papers, many workshops, symposia, video-club and live surgeries, and more important we are having many distinguished guests giving us scientific lectures and informing us of the new progresses of ophthalmology in the world.

The very active participation of the MEACO this year and AAO since last few years is the hallmark of our congress.

The Iranian Society of Ophthalmology has been found in 1947 under the patronage of the late Professor Mohammad Gholi Chams and ever since many progresses have been achieved in the scientific and social activities. In fact our congresses go back to decades ago when Professor Khodadoust was organizing the seminars in Shiraz and Professor Daneshgar by organizing scientific and social events in Esfahan tried to attract us to his historic university town. Thanks to God and our Professors, today we have more than 1500 well trained ophthalmologists and many well equipped ophthalmic centers all over Iran.

In fact the history of ophthalmology in Iran and Middle East dates at least 5000 years. In the Burnt city located in the Eastern part of the country, South of Zabol in the Sistan they have excavated and found some neurosurgical and ophthalmic evidences dating to 5300 years ago.

Reviewing the history of our ophthalmology, in the kingdom of Achaemenades (550-331 BC) many physicians and ophthalmologists from Egypt, India etc. were invited to this country. Universities at Persepolis, Ecbatana, etc educated many physicians and ophthalmologists.

During the ruling of Sassanid’s (224-646 AD) the famous university of Jondishapour was founded and scientists from abroad and Iran were invited to this university, example is the famous Baktishou family, physicians, ophthalmologist who worked at Jondishapour (Ahvaz, Iran) and Bagdad for 250 years. At that period many universities were very actively educating students, physicians, ophthalmologists at Rei (Where Razes has been educated), Gorgan, Neishabour etc. which have produced personalities such as Tabari (807 AD), Razes (860-925 AD) Ahvazi (930-994 AD), Avicenna (980-1037 AD), Jorjani (1042-1136 AB), and Zarindast (1088 AD). They were all physicians and ophthalmologists.

After the attack and conquest of Iran by the Mongols in the years 1200 AD many libraries and scientific centers were destroyed and Bagdad had the same destiny in 1258 AD, Azodi hospital and libraries were destroyed and science and ophthalmology turned to Europe, Salerno in Italy and Montpellier in France and other centers were glorified by their scientific progresses.

In the more recent years, during the reign of the Qajar Dynasty the prime minister of Iran (Amir-Kabir) constructed the new university Dar-al-fonoun (1850 AD). Many European scientists participated in the education of the Iranians and many students went to Europe to be educated. Professor Galesowski came to visit Dar-al-fonoun and encouraged the creation of the chair of ophthalmology. The chair was given to Professor Yahia Chams, a French educated ophthalmologist. After the foundation of Tehran University in 1934 AD many other universities in Tehran and other cities were created and the product of their work, particularly in ophthalmology is being evident today. The late Professor Mohammad Gholi Chams, again a French educated ophthalmologist obtained the chair of ophthalmology at Tehran University. He was the founder of Farabi Eye Hospital which is a major ophthalmic center in Iran and Middle East. Professor Mohammad Gholi Chams was also the founder of our Iranian Journal of Ophthalmology which is now being published for 40 years. Actually we are very honored to be indexed and abstracted in ISI: web of science, Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE), Scopus (Elsevier), CINAHL, Index Copernicus, Scientific Information Database (SID), Magiran, and lately in EBSCO database, which indicates the place of our Iranian Journal of Ophthalmology (IRJO).

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References