

In Remembrance of Professor Shams Shariat Torbaghan (1926 – 2014)

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Professor Shams Shariat Torbaghan

The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates, the great teacher inspires.

William A. Ward (1921 – 1994)

Dr. Shams Shariat Torbaghan, superb professor of pathology at the Tehran University of Medical Sciences passed away on May 27, 2014 in Tehran.

He was born in 1926 in Torbaghan, a village near Kashmar in Razavi Khorasan Province in northeastern Iran. After completing high school in Mashhad and Tehran, he enrolled in Tehran School of Medicine in 1947 and received his MD degree in 1953. In due course, he practiced medicine for two years in Aarak and Shiravan from 1954 to 1955. Thereafter, he began his pathology residency course in 1956 at the Tehran Medical School.¹ His main pathology masters were Dr. Mahmoud Zia Shamsa (the renowned pathologist who passed away in 1999) and Dr. Hossein Rahmatian, professor of pathology at Tehran Medical School and the Chairman of Cancer Institute of Tehran University. As Professor Alireza

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Yalda stated, Dr. Shariat has been the co-founder of the first cancer research institute of Tehran University.



Dr. Shams Shariat Torbaghan (in the middle) and his colleagues.

Then, Dr. Shariat joined the Tehran University Medical Faculty as Assistant Professor of Pathology in 1960. In 1961, he attended a training program in cancer pathology for a year at the "Cancer Center of Lyon", France which was founded by Professor Léon Bérard, the French surgeon and oncologist. On his return, he became associate professor and full professor in 1964 and 1970, respectively.¹

Dr. Shariat had a lifelong love of teaching and learning and he was an inspiring teacher who positively impacted the lives of his students. He was enthusiastic and treated all trainees in a friendly fashion, always with a smile on his face.

His main interest in pathology was bone and soft tissue and he was co-author of several Persian books on various pathological subjects including bone tumors, salivary gland tumors, joint lesions and breast masses. He published over 80 Persian and English papers in academic journals.¹

In 1992, he was appointed as the Head of Electron Microscopy Unit of the Pasteur Institute of Iran which was effective in cancer diagnosis. Dr. Shariat retired in 1996, but continued his fruitful efforts and served as the Head of 'The Iranian National Museum of Medical Sciences History' until the end of his life.¹

He was highly interested in the history of medicine in Iran and appreciated the efforts of pioneer physicians who were instrumental in propagation of modern medicine in the country. Since the establishment of 'The Iranian National Museum of Medical Sciences History' affiliated to the Tehran School of Medicine in 2002,



From right: Dr. Shams Shariat Torbaghan and Dr. Kazem Oskouie.



Dr. Shams Shariat Torbaghan (sitting in the middle) and his colleagues and residents of pathology.



Dr. Shariat Torbaghan (third from the left) in The Iranian National Museum of Medical Sciences History, Tehran, Persian New Year, 2012. (Courtesy of Alireza Parsapour MD)

Dr. Shariat was appointed as its director. He authored a number of Persian books on the history of medicine in Iran, including *Medicine and its Education in Iran*, *Professor Oberling and its Role in Medical Education in Iran*, *History of Pathology in Iran*, *The Impact of the Iranian Medicine on Western Medicine*, *The biography of Dr. Amir Aalam* and the *Biography of Medical Teachers in Iran from 1939 to 1949*. Dr. Shariat was a member of the *Iranian Journal of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine*.¹

In 2008, he was honored in the annual ceremony to honor influential contemporary Iranian scientific and cultural pioneers for his nearly 55-year full-time medical career devoted to promotion of education, research, professional ethics and patient care.

Dr. Shariat Torbaghan got married to his lovely wife 59 years ago. Although they were deeply distressed by the loss of a youthful daughter, they lived a happy and wonderful life until two years ago when he lost his companion. He is succeeded by his three sons who follow their father's ethics and moral goodness. He will continue to survive in the name of Dr. Siamak Shariat, his eldest son, who pursues the same career as his father as pathologist at the

Tehran Medical School.

His colleagues, the Iranian researchers, pathologists and graduates of the Tehran Medical School never forget him as a role model and instrumental mentor.

Acknowledgments

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Reference

1. The Persian autobiography of Dr. Shams Shariat Torbaghan.