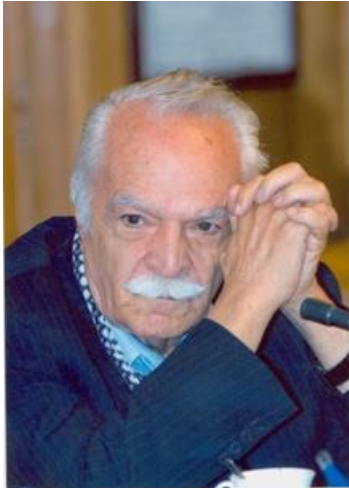


A Look at the Life and Career of Dr. Karim Vessal: The Professor of Shiraz Medical School and a Pioneer in Medical Journalism

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Professor Karim Vessal (b.1933)

Karim Vessal was born in Shiraz in southern Iran in 1933. He grew in a cultured family with a known history of around 400 years. His father, Ali Rouhani Vessal (1878-1959) was a poet and calligrapher who authored a book on the literary works of his family named “Golshane Vessal” (Figure 1). His grandfather was Abdul -wahhab Yazdani who was also a poet, calligrapher, and painter and one of the six sons of Mohammad Shafia (1782-1846 C.E., titled Mirza Kouchak), the famous Iranian poet and skillful calligrapher known as “Vessal Shirazi” (1). Two streets in Shiraz and Tehran are named after him.

Like their father, all the sons of Vessal Shirazi were distinguished figures in the field of literature and art. Dr. E.G. Browne (1862-1926), the British physician and orientalist in his book “A Literary History of Persia” stated that in his voyage to Shiraz in spring 1888, he met some members of Vessel’s family including Yazdani (2), the grandfather of Dr. K. Vessal.

After completing primary and high schools’ education in Shiraz, the young Karim went to Germany to study medicine and enrolled at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and received his MD degree in 1957 (Figure 2). Then, he studied physics at the Berlin School of Science and Philosophy up to 1961 and

afterward continued his academic training in radiology in Berlin University and in 1965, he obtained the board certificate and practiced in Germany and England for few years and finally he returned home. In Shiraz, Dr.Vessal joined the Shiraz Medical School as an Associate Professor and the Head of Radiology Department. Then, he went to the USA and at the Johns Hopkins Radiology Department as well as Vanderbilt University continued his scientific training in radiology (3).



Figure 1. The Late Ali Rouhani Vessal (1878-1959), the father of Professor Karim Vessal.



Figure 2. Dr.Vessal MD degree from the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany, 1957

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Dr. Vessal has written 46 English papers in sound medical journals which are indexed at the PubMed database. He also wrote the first comprehensive Persian book on nuclear medicine, which was published by Shiraz University Press. He became Professor of Radiology in 1976, a duty that continued until his retirement in 2003.

He was a member of the Iranian Radiology Board Examination. In addition to his educational and research efforts, He attended several international and local scientific meetings and delivering remarkable lectures, Dr. Vessal founded an English medical journal in Shiraz University Medical School in 1970, and it was indexed in Index Medicus. He was the editor in chief of the journal (Figure 3). Since that time, he has been a stalwart supporter of medical journalism in Iran as an active editor, a peer reviewer or author.



Figure 3. The first issue of the Shiraz University Medical Journal founded by Dr. K. Vessal -1970

Dr. Vessal has been a permanent member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Iran since 1992 (Figure 4).

In due course, in 1998, he and his colleagues established an English journal entitled the “Archives of Iranian Medicine” “affiliated to the Iranian Academy of Medical Sciences” (Figure 5). The editor in chief of the journal is Dr. Reza Malekzadeh.

In 2001, the third medical periodical founded by Dr. Vessal was the “Iranian Journal of Radiology” (3). Dr. Vessal and Dr. Kavous Firouznia are the chief editors.



Figure 4. Dr. Vessal and some of his colleagues in Academy of Medical Sciences of I.R. Iran

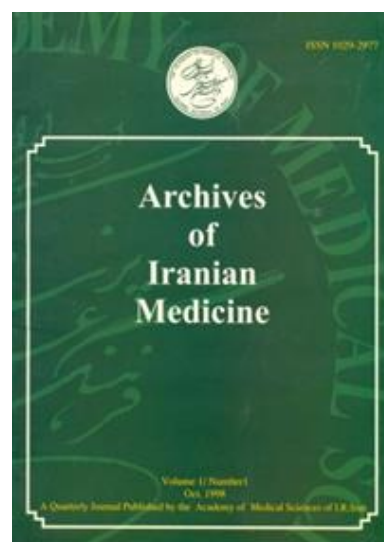


Figure 5. The first issue of the Archives of Iranian Sciences, 1998

Dr. Vessal is a true book lover who enjoys reading, particularly scientific subjects, literary and historical works and he is highly interested in advancing science and culture by the publication of his well-written papers. He knows English, German, and French languages very well as well as being familiar with Latin and Greek. So far, he received several awards including the gold medal of Iranian Congress of Radiology in 2009 and the first rank national medal of science in 2011. Dr. Vessal received this award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to medical science progress in Iran.

In 2014, he collected and published the poems and original literary essays written by his older brother, Abdul-wahhab Nourani Vessel (1923-1994), (Figure 6) who was a poet and a pioneer professor of Literature at the Shiraz University.

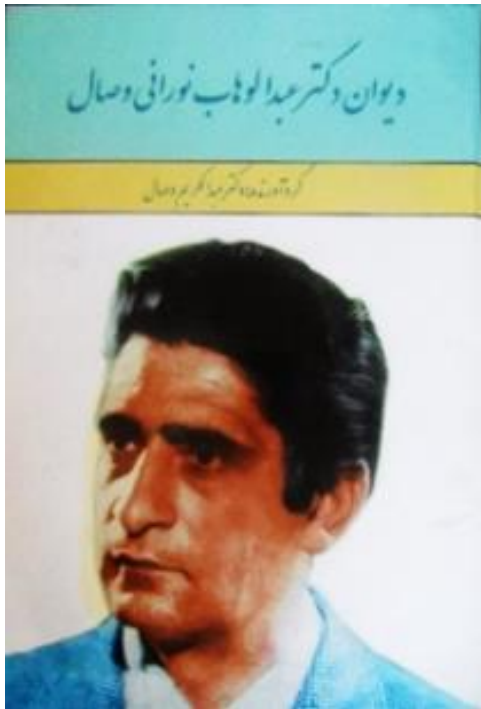
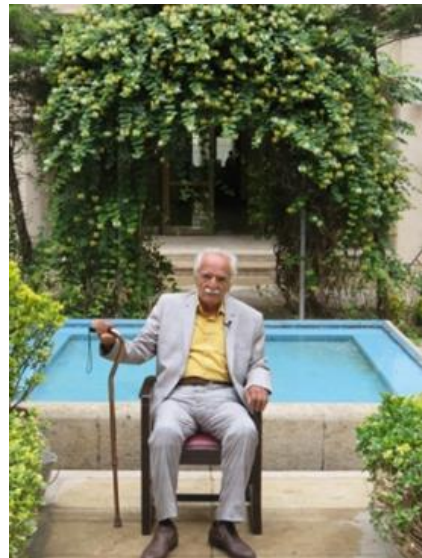


Figure 6. The front cover of the “Book of Poems” of Professor A.Nourani Vessal published in 2014

In 2015, Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME) organized its conference in Shiraz in which several medical editors including Dr. Vessal was honored as “Distinguished Editor “from the region (4).

In conclusion, Dr.Vessal devoted his fruitful life to his career and never entered the private medical practice. As a unique well-educated medical teacher, in the past five decades, Dr. Vessal taught many medical students and residents, advanced the field of radiology, performed research and enhanced the standards of medical journalism in Iran.



Professor K.Vessal, 2018.

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