

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR****The History and Background of the Iranian Orthopedic Congress****Dear Editor**

**P** The term orthopaedy was first introduced by Nicholas Andry in 1741, nearly three centuries ago.<sup>1</sup> Since then, this medical discipline has undergone extensive development worldwide. The history and background of orthopedics in modern Iran demonstrate remarkable progress. The Annual Orthopedic Congress in Iran, where orthopedic surgeons from across the country gather to exchange scientific knowledge and practical experiences, is regularly held under the auspices of the Iranian Orthopedic Association. Historical records indicate

that the first medical congress in Iran was held in 1945, following the end of World War II. It was organized by the Ministry of Health to promote friendship and solidarity among Iranian physicians and those of the Allied nations.<sup>2</sup> This congress took place in the hall of the Preparatory Teacher Training College (currently Kharazmi University) in Tehran, with representatives from thirteen foreign governments in attendance [Figure 1].



**Figure 1.** The first medical congress in Iran was held in 1945, after the end of World War II

The first official medical congress in Iran was held in 1952. According to its statute, several prominent physicians and health officials were elected to the executive committee of the Iranian Medical Congress for a three-year term. This committee reviewed the submitted papers and presentations and organized the congress program.<sup>3</sup> The first Iranian physician specializing in orthopedics was Dr. Shoja-ad-Din Sheikholeslamzadeh, who completed his training in the United States in 1953.

Upon returning to Iran, he established the field of orthopedics in Shiraz and founded the first orthopedic department at Shiraz University in 1963. Therefore, compared with other advanced countries, the modern history of orthopedics in Iran dates back approximately six decades.

In 1970, the first International Congress on Orthopedics and Rehabilitation was held in Tehran and Ramsar, Iran, under the supervision of Dr. Shoja-ad-Din

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Sheikholeslamzadeh, who served as the executive director and main organizer.<sup>4</sup> The Iranian Orthopedic Surgeons Society was founded in 1979, shortly before the Iranian political revolution, with a limited number of orthopedic surgeons. It soon became one of the leading orthopedic organizations in the Middle East. Following the revolution and subsequent political transitions, scientific activities were temporarily suspended, and many orthopedic surgeons emigrated abroad. The eight-year Iran–Iraq War, along with the high number of war-related injuries, resulted in a period of stagnation in scientific and research activities within the Iranian Orthopedic Surgeons Society.

In 1993, the Society restructured its organization, and scientific and research activities were resumed. The first orthopedic congress after the 1979 revolution was held that same year in Tehran as a five-day event organized by the Iranian Orthopedic Surgeons Society [Figure 2]. Since then, the Iranian Annual Orthopedic Congress has been held every year as a five-day scientific meeting, except between 2018 and 2020, when it was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Figure 2. The first orthopaedic congress after the islamic revolution of Iran was held in 1993 in Tehran. Dr. Shoja-ad-Din Sheikholeslamzadeh and Dr. Aziz Ahmadi the editor of Iranian Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery were present at the end of this scientific event

As part of the Society's academic initiatives, the first issue of the *Iranian Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, edited by Dr. Aziz Ahmadi, was published in 1995 in Persian. This inaugural issue included eight scientific articles on orthopedic topics.<sup>5</sup> Since then, summaries of the papers presented at each Annual Orthopedic Congress have been regularly published in this journal.

During the Annual Orthopedic Congress, specialized subspecialty sections—such as knee, hip, spine, hand, foot and ankle, tumors, pediatric orthopedics, shoulder, sports medicine, and trauma—present independent papers and lectures in their respective fields, making this congress one of the largest scientific events organized by the Iranian Orthopedic Surgeons Society. Professor Alami Harandi, one of the pioneers of orthopedic surgery in Iran, played a key role in organizing the Annual Orthopedic Congress and other scientific meetings.<sup>6</sup> Sports medicine, as a subspecialty of orthopedics, has also achieved remarkable progress, with new experiences and findings in arthroscopy presented annually at the Iranian Orthopedic Congress.<sup>7</sup> In 2002, the Iranian Orthopedic Trauma Association (POTA) was founded at Atieh Hospital by Dr. Khalil Alizadeh and Dr. Mohsen Tavakoli and was officially registered as a medical professional organization by the

Ministry of Health and Medical Education. The first POTA seminar was held in 2005 at Atieh Hospital in Tehran, focusing on upper limb trauma, and featured invited speakers from Switzerland, Germany, and Austria.<sup>8</sup> Continuing the scientific and research advancement of the Iranian Orthopedic Society, a joint orthopedic congress was organized in 2018 by three major universities of medical sciences—Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Iran University of Medical Sciences. This event, known as *Orthobit*, was hosted at Tehran University of Medical Sciences over three days and has since been held seven times.<sup>9</sup>

### Conclusion

The Annual Orthopedic Congress provides an excellent opportunity for orthopedic surgeons from across the country to convene and exchange ideas. It serves as a platform for sharing new research findings and clinical experiences, encourages young surgeons to engage in innovative research projects, and plays a vital role in the continued advancement of the field.<sup>10</sup> The Iranian Orthopedic Association remains dedicated to organizing this scientific event each year and continues to fulfill its

mission with professionalism and commitment to academic excellence.

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