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Legendary Iranian actress, voice artist Zhaleh Olov dies



Arts & Culture Desk

In a deep loss for the Iranian art community, celebrated actress

and voice artist Zhaleh Olov died on Monday at the age of 97 after a period of illness. Her son, Shahrokh Razmjoo,

confirmed her death, which occurred around noon at Shahram Hospital in Tehran, IRNA reported. Olov, a towering figure in Iranian cinema, theater, television, and radio, began her artistic journey at a young age, nurtured by a family deeply appreciative of culture. Born in 1927 in the Sangelaj neighborhood of Tehran, she was introduced to the works of prominent Persian poets like Hafez and Ferdowsi by her father, an army officer passionate about the arts. By the age of seven, her love for literature had already taken root, setting the stage for her illustrious career. Starting her professional life in radio shortly after her teacher training in 1948, Olov quickly

became a fixture in Iranian radio drama, particularly known for her work on the 'Night Story' program. She made her film debut in 'The Tempest of Life' (1948) and went on to star in various television series and films, leaving an indelible mark with roles in 'Once Upon a Time' and 'Mum's Guest.' Notably, she was also a pioneer in dubbing, bringing beloved Disney characters to life for Iranian audiences in films like 'Cinderella' and 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.' Her passing has prompted an outpouring of condolences from officials and the artistic community alike. The Iranian Ministry of Culture expressed its sorrow, stating, "Iranian art is forever indebted to luminaries like the late Zhaleh Olov, who faced the chal-

lenges of the path and worked tirelessly for its advancement." Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, highlighted her nearly eight decades of artistic contribution, underscoring her status as a cherished and capable artist. Nadereh Rezaei, the deputy minister for artistic affairs, also extended her condolences, remarking, "Olov was undoubtedly one of the enduring voices and memorable actors of theater and cinema, embodying a brilliant era of contemporary Iranian art." The Board of Directors of Iranian Film Actors Association also mourned her loss, stating, "We express our heartfelt condolences on the passing of our esteemed colleague, Zhaleh

Olov, who illuminated the fields of cinema, theater, radio, and dubbing with her unforgettable performances." Prominent figures in the industry have shared personal reflections as well. Akbar Zanjani, a voice actor and actor, stated, "She was a great actress; since I can remember, she has been either on the cinema screen or the theater stage." He expressed his sorrow over her absence, noting that while her age had led her to step back from the spotlight, her legacy would endure. Behrouz Razavi, a veteran radio announcer, emphasized Olov's significance in the medium. He praised her dedication to the craft and the impact she had on generations of artists.

Iranian medicine backbone of contemporary Western medicine

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

EXCLUSIVE

Iranian medicine, one of the oldest medical practices globally, significantly influenced the foundation of Western medicine. However, some nations attempt to claim this ancient practice as their own. This traditional approach to healthcare focuses on treating diseases and physical ailments through observation and the examination of the four temperaments.

This medicine, also known as traditional or Islamic medicine and other names, is considered one of the oldest and most ancient medical schools in the world, according to Arman Zargaran, head of the history of medicine department at the University of Tehran.

Its history dates back several thousand years, and even the main structure of Western medicine, which is now called modern medicine, is based on it. He believes that despite all the advantages that make Iranian medicine stand out compared to many medical schools in the world, it has not been well introduced to the world. Our weakness in introducing and identifying it has led many countries to try to appropriate Iranian medicine in their own name by changing its name.

In this exclusive interview, Iran Daily reporter spoke with Zargaran, a renowned expert in traditional pharmacy and assistant professor at the School of Traditional Medicine, Tehran University of Medical Science (TUMS). Zargaran also serves as the head of the History of Medicine Department at the University of Tehran and as an international advisor to the Iranian and Complementary Medicine Office of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

IRAN DAILY: Could you first give us some background on Iranian medicine and its history?

ZARGARAN: Iranian medicine is one of the oldest human civilizations, with its roots dating back several thousand years. Archaeological findings and pre-historic periods reveal evidence of medical and pharmaceutical tools from around seven thousand years ago in the Iranian plateau. Written records from various periods also indicate that

the origins of Iranian medicine are ancient, making it one of the oldest and most venerable medical schools in the world.

Iranian medicine in the Iranian plateau and the Middle East has had extensive interactions with other civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Greece in the West, and India and China in the East since ancient times. Furthermore, Iran has been a scientific hub and even a political center in certain historical periods, which has resulted in a strong scientific foundation in medicine. Iran was prominent in the medical field during the Achaemenid period and later in the Sassanid era when Jundishapur University was established as one of the world's significant scientific centers and the first major university in the world. The first training hospital associated with a medical school was also founded in Jundishapur during this period.

It was in this free-thinking atmosphere in Iran that professors and students from various nationalities and religious backgrounds gathered, fostering a rich intercultural environment among different medical schools in Iran and creating connections between them. The medical school we know as Iranian medicine reached its zenith during the Islamic period, leading to the Golden Age of Islamic civilization between the 9th and 13th centuries.

During this era, scholars such as Avicenna, Al-Akhawyni Bokhari, Zakariya Al-Razi, and Ismail, who were mostly Iranian, brought this medical school to its pinnacle, to the extent that it can be said that the foundation of Western medicine and the roots of modern medicine trace back to Iranian medicine. As I mentioned, Iranian medicine had exchanges with Greek medicine in the West and Indian medicine in the East, but nonetheless, the books of our scholars like Avicenna's 'Canon' and Al-Razi's 'Al-Hawi', along with other works, constituted the majority of medical texts in the Western world until the 16th and 17th centuries. Many prominent and serious medical texts, including pharmacopoeias (books containing a complete list of drug information, including type, side effects, storage, and analysis methods) from that era, are related to Iran. The origins of many pharmacopoeias or pharmaceutical texts can be traced back to Iran, such as the Qarabadin Shifai, which was

printed in Latin in France during that period as Pharmacopoeia Persica and inspired medical and pharmacopoeia writing in Europe. Iranians also played a significant role in the development of the scientific and medical field during the Islamic period. Today, we are the inheritors of this medical school globally, and this legacy can play a crucial role in shaping the identity and history of our society, as well as in the advancement of healthcare and treatment in our country.

Despite our significant scientific and medical background in the world, why is Iranian traditional medicine not as well-known globally?

The matter of introducing Iran's medical background and our traditional medicine to the world is a matter of policy and the politicians' perspective. To make a topic globally known, you need to invest properly in it, and so far, we have not invested well in this regard. However, Iran is currently one of the leading countries in medicine, and our medical identifiers and traditional medicine have been incorporated into the medical subject headings of the world. Currently, many short courses on Iranian traditional medicine are being held outside Iran, and our medicine is being taught in countries like Austria, Greece, Tunisia, South Korea, and various other places in short courses. Either our professors go to these countries to conduct these courses, or their students come to Iran to participate. Nevertheless, we are still far from our goal of adequately introducing Iranian traditional medicine centers around the world. Achieving this goal requires our policymakers, especially in the Ministry of Health, to pay attention to promoting and developing Iranian traditional medicine globally. Our neglect in this regard has led to many countries trying to appropriate our traditional medicine as their own or introducing it under different names. For instance, Greek medicine in India is the same as Iranian traditional medicine, which was brought to India by our physicians during the Safavid era. Similarly, in Turkey, Iranian traditional medicine is promoted as Anatolian medicine.

What are the characteristics of



Iranian medicine and how can it be distinguished from other medical schools of thought around the world?

Iranian medicine is a temperamental medicine, and its treatment is based on the identification of the four temperaments: Choleric, Sanguine, Phlegmatic, and Melancholy. Its roots can be traced back to the ancient Iranian science of Avicenna. The Indian government has invested \$250 million in traditional medicine and has established a global center for traditional medicine in Gujarat, India, under the supervision of the World Health Organization. This investment will yield significant returns in terms of identity, culture, health development, and tourism over time. As one of the leading countries in traditional medicine, we should also invest in this field. We need to separate the non-essential elements that may have been incorporated into Iranian medicine and develop its principles and advantages.

Some criticize traditional medicine, claiming it lacks a solid scientific foundation. What is your opinion on this?

These criticisms stem from a lack of knowledge among critics to analyze the subject properly. Iranian traditional medicine is based on personalized medicine, which is a new concept in medical science. The identification of temperaments in Iranian medicine and the treatment based on the phenotype (the characteristics and features that appear in the appearance of organisms) of individuals is rooted in their genetics. Therefore, the identification of diseases based on appearances in Iranian medicine is not very different from genetic testing. In fact, traditional and modern medicine view diseases from different perspectives, but the outcome is the same, and both are used for treatment. Thus, neither is wrong, and in my opinion, if a connection is established between modern and traditional medicine, they will complement each other.

Pezeshkian commits to halt 'Tehran's expansion', promote decentralization



Social Desk

In a decisive move to address the pressing challenges faced by the capital, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian announced on Monday that his government is committed to halting the expansion of Tehran.

The president emphasized the critical shortage of resources and inadequate infrastructure as key factors driving this policy, president.ir reported.

During a meeting focused on decentralizing Tehran, Pezeshkian highlighted the repercussions of imbalanced development, stating, "The continuation of the current trend is impossible, and the capital's expansion must be stopped as the first step to rectify the situation." This clear stance aims to alleviate the serious problems that residents of Tehran have been grappling with due to rapid urban growth without proper planning. To support this initiative, the government is prepared to transfer administrative processes and distribute authority among other provinces.

Pezeshkian underscored the need for universities to step up their involvement in research and studies, which are crucial to devising effective solutions for organizing the situation in Tehran, preventing further expansion, and evaluating the feasibility of relocating the capital.

"We will allocate budgets to universities based on research that provides precise and practical solutions to the country's challenges," he asserted, stressing the importance of academic contributions in tackling urban issues. In line with this directive, Pezeshkian tasked the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development with the urgent development of a comprehensive plan aimed at organizing, decentralizing, and assessing the viability of moving the capital. Moreover, the president urged the ministry to consider previously made decisions and present a detailed plan to the government for approval and subsequent implementation.