

Pioneer in Humanities and Islamic Studies



The late Dr. Mohsen Abolghasemi

Biography

Dr. Mohsen Abolghasemi, born in 1936 in Malayer, completed his education from elementary school through university in Tehran. He earned his high school diploma in literature from Dar ul-Funun School and pursued his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees at the University of Tehran. To further his studies in ancient cultures and languages, he traveled to London. He studied under the supervision of esteemed professors such as Badi' al-Zaman Forouzanfar, Mohammad Moeen, Mohammad Khatibi, Parviz Natel Khanlari, and Ebrahim Pourdavoud. He was also mentored by prominent professors like David Mackenzie, Henning, and Mary Boyce, mastering ancient Persian, Sanskrit, Avestan, and Pahlavi languages under their tutelage.

In 1964, Dr. Abolghasemi began teaching at the University of Tehran. He later joined the Iranian Culture Foundation and eventually became the director of its research institute. Over a 40-year academic career, he held positions as assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor at the University of Tehran. Dr. Abolghasemi authored 20 books on topics such as Persian grammar, the history of the Persian language, and linguistics. His book "On the Asiatic Language" remains the first and only Persian work in this field, even after fifty years. He was renowned for his comprehensive expertise in various aspects of ancient culture and languages, particularly Avestan and Manichean Pahlavi. Dr. Abolghasemi was considered a "reference point" in these fields. In addition to his knowledge of ancient languages, he was proficient in Arabic, English, and French and had a strong command of German and Russian. A multitude of students in fields such as ancient cultures and languages, Persian literature, and linguistics owe their education to this humble, disciplined, and dedicated professor. He played a pivotal role in establishing the independence of the departments of "Ancient Cultures and Languages" and "Linguistics" after the Islamic Revolution. He developed distinct academic programs for these two fields within the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, leaving a lasting legacy at the University of Tehran. His efforts significantly contributed to the development of ancient language studies in Iranian universities and research institutions. Dr. Abolghasemi was instrumental in founding the Iranian Culture Institute, which became the foundation for Allameh Tabatabai University, and the Iranian Culture Foundation, which led to the establishment of the Humanities and Cultural Studies Research Institute. Dr. Mohsen Abolghasemi passed away on February 5, 2019. His contributions remain a cornerstone in the study and teaching of ancient Persian languages and cultures.