

This Day in History

(May 4)

Today is Wednesday; 15th of the Iranian month of Ordibehesht 1395 solar hijri; corresponding to 26th of the Islamic month of Rajab 1437 lunar hijri; and May 4, 2016, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

Ordibehesht 15 is commemorated every year in the Islamic Republic of Iran as National Day for the great jurist and theologian, Abu Ja'far Mohammad ibn Ali ibn Babawayh al-Qomi, known popularly as Shaikh Sadouq. He was born in holy Qom in 306 AH to the great scholar, Ali ibn Babawayh, who had petitioned the Lord of the Age, Prophet Mohammad's 12th and Last Infallible Heir, Imam Mahdi (AS), for a son. After studying under his father and other leading scholars, he travelled widely around Iran, Iraq and Central Asia. During his fruitful life of 74 years, he groomed several scholars and wrote over a hundred books and treatises, including the 4-volume jurisprudential manual "*Man la yahdharuhu al-Faqih*" (which means "For those without Access to a Jurist"). This book is among the "*Kutub al-Arba*" or the Four Basic Books of Hadith referred by followers of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt till this day. Among his other famous works, mention could be made of "*at-Towhid*" on monotheism; "*al-Khisal*" on moral instructions, points of scientific, historical and legal origins; "*Ilal ash-Shara'*" (Cause of the Situations) which includes the reasons behind the philosophy of the Islamic ordinances; "*E'yeqadaat-al-Imamiya*" (Imami Creed) which presents a summary of the core tenets of the creed of Shi'ite Muslims as the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt are known; "*Oyoun Akhbar ar-Redha*" (on Imam Reza [AS], the Prophet's 8th Infallible Heir), and "*Ikamaat od-Din wa Atmaan an-Ne'mah*" (Perfection of Faith and Completion of Blessings) on proofs about Imam Mahdi (AS). He was laid to rest in Rayy, south of Tehran, where his mausoleum is a site of pilgrimage.

1182 lunar years ago, on this day in 255 AH, the 13th self-styled Abbasid caliph, Mu'taz was removed from power after a rule of 3 years and 6 months during which this tyrant martyred through poisoning, Imam Ali al-Hadi (AS), the 10th Infallible Successor of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). He was a pawn in the hands of the Turkic guards and an inefficient fratricidal thug who killed his own brothers. His excesses so enraged the Turkic officers that they finally decided to depose him. They first beat him with clubs and kicked him; then dragging him by his torn robes outside; they left him seated in the scorching heat of a midsummer sun of Samarra. He was then shut up in a room alone without food or water; and so after three days the wretched caliph died, at the early age of twenty-four.

1010 solar years ago, on this day in 1006 AD, the Persian Gnostic poet and scholar, Khwajeh Abdullah Ansari, was born in the northeastern Iranian city of Herat, which is now in Afghanistan, but was then an integral part of Khorasan. He was a commentator of the holy Qur'an, a compiler of hadith, and known for his oratory and poetic talents in Arabic and Persian. He wrote several books on Islamic mysticism and philosophy. His most famous work is "*Munajat Namah*", which is considered a masterpiece of Persian literature. His exegesis on the holy Qur'an is titled "*Kashf al-Asrar*" and was compiled in 10 volumes by his disciples after his death. He used to avoid the company of the rich, powerful and the influential. Abdullah Ansari was a direct descendant of the Prophet's companion and host in Medina, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. He died in 1088 in his hometown Herat. He is the ancestor of the line of the Heravi Khajavi in Iran, who once dominated Khorasan and eastern Iran. Some of his descendants moved to the Subcontinent. Among them was Hakim Shaikh Ilm ud-din Ansari, better known as Wazir Khan, who was a governor of the Mughal Emperors in Multan, in what is now Pakistan. He is best known for having built the famous Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore. His other prominent descendant was Qutb ud-din Ansari who founded the Firangi Mahal school of religious thought and education, near Lucknow in India.

756 lunar years ago, on this day in 681 AH, the famous biographer of Kurdish origin, Shams od-Din Abu'l-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Khallikan passed away in Damascus at the age of 73. He was born in Arbil in northeastern Iraq and studied in Aleppo, Damascus, and Mosul before settling in Cairo, where he served as assistant to the chief judge of Egypt. Later he became the chief judge of Damascus. His most renowned work is the biographical dictionary entitled "*Wafayaat al-Ayyaan wa-Anba Abna az-Zamaan*" (Deaths of Eminent Men and Accounts of the Sons of the Epoch), which took eighteen years to complete. This book does not include biographies of individuals already sufficiently covered, such as the Prophet and the caliphs. It was translated into English by William McGuckin de Slane.

510 solar years ago, on this day in 1506 AD, Sultan Hussain Bayqarah, the Timurid ruler of Herat died at the age of 68, after a rule of 38 years during which he patronized Persian art, architecture and literature. For a time, he was involved in struggle for supremacy with other Timurid princes and the Aq Qoyunlu Turkish tribe for domination of Khorasan and eastern Iran. His boundary with the Aq Qoyunlu started on the southern edge of the Caspian Sea, running south, then east across the north of the Dasht-e Lout, ending at Lake Hamun. His border with the Timurids was the Oxus River. Sultan Hussain Bayqara was viewed as "a good king, a lover of peace and justice", and he built numerous structures including a famous school. His vizier was the famous scholar and patron of Persian literature, Ali Shir Navaie.

217 solar years ago, on this day in 1799 AD, the British imposed Battle of Seringapatam ended with the martyrdom of the Muslim ruler of Mysore in southern India, Fath Ali Khan Tipu Sultan. The British colonialists had started this 4th Mysore in violation of an earlier treaty for peace, since they feared Tipu Sultan's growing ties with Napoleon Bonaparte of France, as well as his correspondence with the Ottoman Empire and the rulers of Iran. Fath Ali Shah Qajar dispatched a force of 6,000 Iranians to assist Tipu, but because of the sea journey these contingent arrived after the fall of Seringapatam. Tipu was an enlightened ruler and patronized Arabic and Persian literature. He also experimented with the manufacture of artillery rockets, which greatly alarmed the British. Among the reliable history books of the Muslim Dynasty of Mysore founded by Tipu's father, Hyder Ali Khan, is "*Nishan-e Haideri*", and "*Tadhkirat-al-Belad wa'l-Hukkam*" written by the migrant Iranian scholar to his court, Hussain Ali Khan Kirmani.

209 solar years ago, on this day in 1807 AD, Iran and France concluded the Treaty of Finckenstein (also spelled Finkenstein), at the palace of the same name in Eastern Prussia (Germany), thereby formalizing the Franco-Persian alliance. Napoleon I, who was embroiled in wars against European states, guaranteed the integrity of Persia, recognized part of Georgia and other eastern Transcaucasia as Fath Ali Shah Qajar's possession, and promised to make all possible efforts for restoring those Russian occupied territories to Iran. France on its side required the Shah to declare war against Britain, to expel all Britons from Iran, and to come to an understanding with the Afghans with a view to a joint Franco-Perso-Afghan invasion of British India. France, however, failed to capitalize on diplomatic efforts in Iran as Napoleon entered into an amity accord with Russia, thereby leaving Iran on its own in the face of Russian aggression. Thus, none of the terms of the 16-point Finckenstein Treaty were realized. On 12 March 1809, Britain forced Fath Ali Shah Qajar to sign a treaty forcing the French out of Iran.

73 solar years ago, on this day in 1943 AD, at the age of 42 years, the father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (God bless him), revealed the first signs of his political acumen and future greatness as a world leader, through release of his famous book "*Kashf al-Asrar*", or "*Exposure of Secrets*", following the removal from power of the British-installed Pahlavi dictator, Reza Khan. He called on the people to rise for the sake of Islam and eradication of oppression. He analyzed the social conditions with references to the events of the past and his vision for the future, detailing the causes for the misery of Muslims and the Iranian nation. He cautioned the ulema of the harm to the nation and the Muslim ummah, if they shied away from shouldering their responsibility to strive for salvation of the society, in the face of the plots of the enemies of Islam. He clearly saw the Pahlavi dictator's mortgaging of national prestige and natural resources to foreigners, his repression of the Iranian people and their traditional values, and his forced unveiling of women in the name of progress and civilization, as part of an elaborate plot conceived by world imperialism to eliminate Islam as a social and political force. He wrote: "*All the orders issued by the bandit Reza Khan have no value. The laws passed by his parliament must be scrapped. All the idiotic words that have proceeded from the brain of that illiterate soldier are rotten and it is only the law of God that will remain and resist the ravages of time.*"

The publishing of the book "*Kashf al-Asrar*" could be called the start of Imam Khomeini's mission which would begin to bear fruits twenty years later in 1963 with launching of the Khorad 15 Uprising, his subsequent exile, his return home in 1979 to lead the Iranian people's grassroots movement to victory, and his establishment of the Islamic Republic system of government, thereby ending domestic tyranny and foreign hegemony.

71 solar years ago, on this day in 1945 AD, the official dissolution of the German Nazi Party took place. The Nazi Party was established in October 1920. The Nazi Party intended to unite German-speaking peoples to create a powerful Germany which would expand its territories. Upon the defeat of Adolf Hitler in World War II, the Nazi Party was declared illegal.

46 solar years ago, on this day in 1970 AD, during the Vietnam War, four unarmed students, protesting the American invasion of Cambodia, were brazenly shot to death by US soldiers of the Ohio National Guard, sent to Kent State University after disturbances in the city of Kent the weekend before. Nine other students were injured by the brutal US forces.

36 solar years ago, on this day in 1980 AD, Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslav World War Two marshal and 1st President of Yugoslavia died at the age of 88 after 27 years as head of state. He was a socialist but resisted the Soviet Union's domination by making Yugoslavia a neutral state. He gained international attention as the chief leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, working with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India, President Jamal Abdun-Nasser of Egypt and President Sukarno of Indonesia. Tito was a Croat and tried to spread the Serbs out over the six Yugoslav republics so that they would not dominate the country. His policy was considered a major cause of the Bosnian war in the 1990s.

17 solar years ago, on this day in 1999 AD, the Iranian poet and scholar Mohammad Ali Mardani passed away at the age of 77. Born in the city of Khomein in Central Province, he was a child prodigy, composing his first marsiya or elegy on the tragedy of Karbala at the age of 10 years. He thereafter became a regular reciter at the Hussainiyas commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Husain (AS). He established an association of religious poets in Khomein, as a result of which he was targeted by the Godless Pahlavi regime, whose agents burnt down his house. He shifted to Tehran and set up a similar association in the eastern part of the capital. Following the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, his talents flowered and were appreciated by the authorities. He soon became active in the Council of Poets at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, and Cultural Department of the Islamic Propagation Organisation. During the 8-year war (1989-88) imposed on Islamic Iran by the US through Saddam, Mardani, served for long periods at the warfronts and suffered severe injuries. As a devotee of the Prophet of Islam and Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, he composed a wide variety of poems, which were published in the form of several books, such as "*Ashura Literature*", "*Along with the Caravan of Love*", and "*Faith Strengthened*".

(Courtesy: IRIB English Radio - <http://parsoday.com/en>)

Tehran Int'l Book Fair Pursuing New Approaches



Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Ali Jannati.

TEHRAN (IRNA) – Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Ali Jannati said new and creative approaches are being used in this year's Tehran International Book Fair which began in the Iranian capital on Tuesday morning.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the 29th Tehran International Book Fair, Jannati referred to the fair as 'the most important cultural event' in the country.

The 29th edition of Tehran International Book Fair was inaugurated in the presence of President Hassan Rouhani and the minister of culture and Islamic guidance a new place this year called 'Shahr-e Aftab' (Sun City) Exhibition Complex in southern Tehran.

The event will continue until May 14 with the motto of 'Tomorrow is late for reading'.

Isfahan to Host General Assembly of World Crafts Council



Naghsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan, Iran.

MASHAD (IRNA) – Central Iranian province, Isfahan, has been chosen as a host city for general assembly of the World Crafts Council (WCC), an Iranian official told reporters, talking in this city in the northwestern Khorasan Razavi province on Tuesday.

Jury member of world cities in WCC, said the event will be held in Isfahan on Sept 25, 2016.

Citing the event as a turning point in Iran's handicraft industry, Omid Shiva said the WCC is seeking to help the craftspeople across the world.

Last year, the World Crafts Council announced that the Iranian cities of Isfahan and Tabriz were registered as the world cities of handicrafts and carpet.

The Council's President Wang Shan congratulated the Head of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization Masoud Soltanifar on this success.

In 2015, only six countries were candidates for global registration. The two cities mentioned were successfully registered for their particular features in terms of handicrafts and carpet-weaving.

One of the programs for Iranian traditional arts in the incumbent government is the motto of 'each province is a global brand and each city is a national brand'.

The World Crafts Council is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that was founded in 1964 to promote fellowship, foster economic development through income generating craft related activities, organize exchange programs, workshops, conferences, seminars, and exhibitions - and in general, to offer encouragement, help, and advice to the craftspeople of the world.

Exhibit to Pay Tributes to Founder of Visual Arts in Damavand

TEHRAN (MNA) – The exhibition commemorating Isa Ahmadi, founder of visual arts in Damavand, will be held on May 10 at Kowsar Artistic and Cultural Center in Damavand.

On Tuesday, May 10 in Damavand, a city near Tehran, the Iranian Artists will join together to celebrate the life and work of Isa Ahmadi, Iranian painting and sculpture artist who moved to Damavand from Tehran and started the first art school there, and since then has been evolved in teaching and representing visual Arts.

Isa Ahmadi was born in the Cheshmeh-Ala neighborhood of Damavand in 1940. He spent his childhood and adolescence in Tehran. He was very interested in art, especially painting since childhood, hence, he experienced painting and designing in this period and was very encouraged and applauded in this regard.

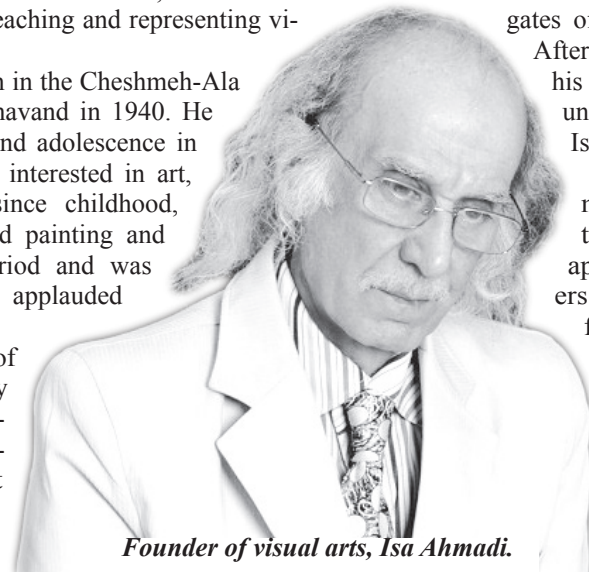
In the beginning of adulthood, not only did his economic activities in decoration hinder his artistic pursuit painting-sculpting, but it cre-

ated new experiences and familiarity with new techniques in line with his goals.

He moved to Damavand County and Roodehen city in 1976 in order to promote art in his hometown. He established this county's first art gallery called 'Khane-ye-Honar', and started teaching and promoting art. After a few years, when the Roodehen Branch of the Islamic Azad University was opened, he was invited to collaborate in decorating and building the gates of the university's main building.

After finishing this task, he continued his collaboration by working in the university's public relations and the Islamic development offices.

Through the years, he has held many exhibits all over the country which were welcomed and applauded by experts and art-lovers. He has taken this arduous path for more than half a century in order to serve his beloved country, and although he has never had a teacher, he has raised and trained many art students who are currently serving as teachers throughout the country.



Founder of visual arts, Isa Ahmadi.

Swiss Author Peter Stamm to Meet with Fans in Tehran

TEHRAN (CHN) – Prolific Swiss author Peter Stamm is scheduled to meet with Iranian readers of his works on Thursday at Ofoq Publications, the Persian publisher of his books in Tehran.

He will also autograph some of his works for the Iranian readers during a session.

Stamm, who is also an established



Swiss author Peter Stamm.

playwright and radio dramatist, plans to hold several meetings and reading sessions at the 29th Tehran International Book Fair, which will be held from May 5 to 15.

His literary debut "Agnes", a 1998 novel that follows a romance between a nameless older man and Agnes, and "Ice Moon" are among the works translated into Persian.

Picture of the Day



The Shah Nematollah Vali Shrine is a historical complex, located in Mahan, Kerman province, which contains the mausoleum of Shah Nematollah Vali, the renowned Iranian mystic and poet. Image Credit: Mehr News Agency