

This Day in History

(September 19)

Today is Tuesday, 28th of the Iranian month of Shahrivar 1396 solar hijri; corresponding to 28th of the Islamic month of Zi'l-Hijjah 1438 lunar hijri; and September 19, 2017, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1383 solar years ago, on this day in 634 AD, Damascus, fell to Arab Muslims, only seven years after the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius' triumph in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia over Iran's Sassanid Empire in the 26-year long final and most bloody round of the Roman-Persian Wars fought intermittently for the past 720 years since 92 BC. Heraclius' loss of Syria to the Muslims, who soon seized the Iranian capital, Ctesiphon (near Baghdad), meant the end of four centuries of Byzantine-Sassanid rivalry, as new players took charge of the battlegrounds of Syria and Mesopotamia that would see some of the most crucial battles in Islamic history.

1375 lunar years ago, on this day in 63 AH, the Battle of Harrah and the brutal massacre of the people of Medina took place in less than two years after the tragedy of Karbala, when the Godless Yazid dispatched a huge army led by the notoriously immoral Muslim bin Uqbah to sack the city of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). It happened that after the heartrending martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Imam Husain (AS), the people of Medina who had failed to support him, sent a delegation to Damascus to ascertain Yazid's character. The delegation found him completely devoid of all Islamic values, and as a result the people of Medina expelled the Omayyad governor and refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Yazid's un-Islamic rule. The ungodly tyrant sent a force of 10,000 Syrians who attacked the defenders at Harrah, northeast of Medina. The well-equipped Omayyads after slaughtering a large number of Muslim defenders pursued them into the city and mercilessly butchered the people, including those that had sought refuge in the Prophet's Mosque and the Prophet's shrine. As many as 10,000 people, including 700 prominent persons comprising the Prophet's companions and scholars were massacred in cold-blood. Next, Muslim Ibn Uqbah, who has earned notoriety in Islamic history as the criminal transgressor who violated all bounds of sanctity, ordered his troops to plunder and desecrate the property and womenfolk of Medina for three days, before marching upon Mecca and blasphemously attacking the holy Ka'b'a. For generations the heinous crime of Harrah was remembered. Of the women of Medina gang-raped by Yazid's soldiers, over a thousand gave birth to illegitimate children with no clue about their fathers. These are known in history as the "*Offspring of the Sedition of Harrah*", and it is said that the schismatic ideas known as Wahhabism today, especially the prohibition on visiting the graves and recitation of Fateha for the dead, could actually be traced to these children of unknown and illegitimate parentage.

1153 lunar years ago, on this day in 285 AH, the Arab grammarian Abu'l-Abbas Mohammad al-Mubarrad died in Baghdad. He has criticized some points in the grammar of the famous Iranian grammarian of Arabic language, Sibawayh, the greatest writer of his own school. His main work is the grammatical book "*al-Kamel*". Although a Sunni Muslim, al-Mubarrad has mentioned the account that Princess Shahr-Banu – daughter of Yazdegerd III, the last Sassanid Emperor of Iran – had married Imam Husain (AS) and was the mother of Imam Zayn al-Abedin (AS).

1151 solar years ago, on this day in 866 AD, Byzantine Emperor, Leo VI, was born. Of doubtful paternity, since his mother was the mistress of Emperor Michael III and at the same time the wife of the future Emperor Basil the Macedonian, he succeeded to the throne on the latter's death and ruled for 26 years. His reign saw the loss of more territory to the Muslims in both Sicily and in Asia Minor, as well as islands in the Aegean Sea. The greatest setback for him was in 904, when the Greek Muslim admiral, Rasheeq al-Wardami, sailing from Syria, seized Thessalonica, took charge of some 60 ships and forced the Christians to free over 4,000 Muslim prisoners. Born as a Christian and named Leo by his parents, Rasheeq was an officer in the Byzantine navy, before embracing Islam. Also known as Ghulam Zurafa, three years later in 907, he had sailed up the Dardanelles and besieged Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, much to the horror of Emperor Leo VI. In May 912, just before the humiliated Leo VI died, Rasheeq and his fellow Greek Muslim admiral, Damian of Tarsus, known by his Muslim name, Ghulam Yazman, decisively defeated the Byzantine admiral, Himerios, off the island of Chios in the Aegean Sea.

661 solar years ago, on this day in 1356 AD, the Battle of Poitiers occurred during the "Hundred Years War" in Europe when an English army under the command of Edward the Black Prince defeated a French army and captured the French king, John II.

280 solar years ago, on this day in 1737 AD, a devastating cyclone in Bay of Bengal destroyed some 2,000 ships and other vessels. Over 30,000 people died in the densely populated area called the Sundarbans in what is now Bangladesh and India's state of Bengal.

178 solar years ago, on this day in 1839 AD, British chocolate manufacturer, George Cadbury, was born in Birmingham. He joined his father's chocolate business, and along with his elder brother, Richard, built it into the highly prosperous Cadbury Brothers Cocoa & Chocolate Manufacturing Firm. He was more important for his successful experiments with a new cocoa bean processing technique. This British company was bought in 2010 by the American Mondelez International (Kraft Foods), which is facing strong criticism for "secretly" rolling out a cheap-tasting Creme Egg. It has also replaced the hugely popular Cadbury's Dairy Milk shell.

149 lunar years ago, on this day in 1289 AH, famous Iranian theologian and philosopher, Mullah Hadi Sabzevari, passed away at the age of 78. Born in a wealthy family, he lived a life of piety and asceticism, spending whatever he had for the poor and the needy. He was an authority in the exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, logic, mathematics, literature, and medicine. He used to lecture both in Mashhad and his hometown Sabzevar, and trained a large number of students from Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Turkey, Caucasus, Afghanistan and the Subcontinent. He was a great exponent of the Transcendent Philosophy of Mullah Sadra, and has written 52 books in Arabic and Persian, including the famous versified "*Manzoumah*" and its commentary, which, along with another of his famous work, "*Asrar al-Hekam*", are taught till this day at seminaries.

147 solar years ago, on this day in 1870 AD, during the Franco-Prussian War, the Siege of Paris began, resulting in the surrender of Paris and a decisive Prussian victory on January 28, 1871.

36 solar years ago, on this day in 1981 AD, the city of Susangerd and its surrounding areas in southwestern Iran, were liberated by Iran's Muslim combatants from Ba'thist occupation. Some 750 Ba'thist occupation soldiers were either killed or injured, while 40 tanks and personnel carriers of the enemy were destroyed. Several tanks and personnel carriers and a large amount of ammunition and communication equipment were captured by the Iranian soldiers.

26 solar years ago, on this day in 1991 AD, the US imposed a military pact on the Persian Gulf emirate of Kuwait, for stationing troops and equipment on the claim of preventing a repetition of Iraq's military aggression and occupation that had ended some six months ago. In the next few years, the US, along with Britain and France, imposed similar military pacts on Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, in order to seize billions of petrodollars by supplying obsolete military hardware which the Arab states cannot use. These pacts have led to a rise in the unwanted military presence of foreign powers and fueled insecurity in the Persian Gulf.

23 solar years ago, on this day in 1994 AD, US troops invaded and occupied Haiti in the Caribbean Sea on the pretext of reinstatement of President Jean Bertrand Aristide, three years after his ouster by Gen. Raoul Cedras. Aristide, who had sought refuge in the US, was reinstated in October but the real intention of the US was control of Haiti. A decade later, Washington, by openly supporting rioters, kidnapped Aristide from the presidential palace and replaced him with another president. The recurring aggressions of the US on Haiti are a clear example of violation of international rules and regulations and military interference in the affairs of other countries.

12 solar years ago, on this day in 2005 AD, prominent Iranian geographer, Dr. Hussain Begzadeh Shokoei, passed away at the age of 72 in Tehran. Born in Tabriz, he was a member of cultural and geographical academies and made lasting contribution to Iran's geography.

11 solar years ago, on this day in 2006 AD, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in his address to the UN General Assembly for the second consecutive year, criticized the hegemonic policies of the US in Iraq and Lebanon. He said Washington was abusing its power in the UN Security Council to punish others while protecting its own interests and allies. The American press widely covered his speech, while President George Bush again shied away from accepting his Iranian counterpart's proposal for a televised debate on major international issues.

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

Persian Poetry Day Marked in Iran



Eminent Iranian poet Mohammad Hosseini Behjat Tabrizi's bust is seen at the entrance to the Maqbaratoshara, or the Tomb of Poets, in the city of Tabriz, in Iran's East Azarbaijan Province.

Cells Programmed Like Computers to Fight Disease

TEHRAN (Science Daily) - Cells can be programmed like a computer to fight cancer, influenza, and other serious conditions -- thanks to a breakthrough in synthetic biology.

Led by Professor Alfonso Jaramillo in the School of Life Sciences, new research has discovered that a common molecule -- ribonucleic acid (RNA), which is produced abundantly by humans, plants and animals -- can be genetically engineered to allow scientists to program the actions of a cell.

As well as fighting disease and injury in humans, scientists could harness this technique to control plant cells and reverse environmental and agricultural issues, making plants more resilient to disease and pests.

RNAs carry information between protein and DNA in cells, and Professor Jaramillo has proved that these molecules can be produced and organised into tailor-made sequences of commands -- similar to codes for computer software -- which feed specific instructions into cells, programming them to do what we want.

Much like a classic Turing computer system, cells have the capacity to process and respond to instructions and codes inputted into their main system, argues Professor Jaramillo.

Similar to software running on a computer, or apps on a mobile device, many different RNA sequences could be created to empower cells with a 'Virtual Machine', able to interpret a universal RNA language, and to perform specific actions to address different diseases or problems.

This will allow a novel type of personalized and efficient healthcare, allowing us to 'download' a sequence of actions into cells, instructing them to execute complex decisions encoded in the RNA.

The researchers made their invention by first modeling all possible RNA sequence interactions on a computer, and then constructing the DNA encoding the optimal RNA designs, to be validated on bacteria cells in the laboratory.

After inducing the bacterial cells to produce the genetically engineered RNA sequences, the researchers observed that they had altered the gene expression of the cells according to the RNA program -- demonstrating that cells can be programmed with pre-defined RNA commands, in the manner of a computer's microprocessor.

Tabriz Constitution House, Symbol of Fighting Despotism

TEHRAN (Iran Review) - Tabriz Constitution House is a symbol of fighting despotism and reminiscent of struggles by Sattar Khan and Baeer Khan, the two key figures in the Iranian Constitutional Movement.

During the years which led to Constitutional Revolution and afterwards the house was used as a gathering place of the leaders, activists and sympathizers of the movement. Among them, the most famous people were Sattar Khan, Bagher Khan, Seqat ol-Eslam Tabrizi and Haji Mirza Aqa Farshi.

Located in Rasteh Koucheh District in the vicinity of the city's historical bazaar, the two story building was constructed in 1868 by Haj Vali Me'mar-e Tabrizi. It has numerous rooms and halls.

The house is constructed by order of Haj Mehdi Koozekanani on 1868. It includes a two floor building with internal and external part, with Qajar period architecture. Haj Mehdi Koozekanani was a merchant in the Bazaar of Tabriz. With initiating of Constitution revolution and rising up in Tabriz city, Haj Mehdi joined the revolution and became one of the major financier of the revolution.

At the same time he used the house as a place for meeting of



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the revolution heads, and a place for publication of underground paper of the constitution movement. The house became important in the history once again just after World War II when it was used as a place for Azerbaijan's Democrat Party meeting center (1946-1947). On 1975 the house was registered by Cultural Heritage of Iran.

Statues of Sattar Khan and Baeer Khan, known as Sardar-e Melli (national commander) and Salar-e Melli (national leader) respectively, are standing at the entrance of the building, reminding the passion for fighting at that era.

Constitution House of Tabriz has numerous rooms and halls. The most beautiful part of the house is

a skylight and corridor decorated with colorful glass and mirrors. The house includes a two-floor building with internal and external parts ("andaruni" and "biruni") with Qajar period architecture.

The first floor is an exhibition of sculptures of famous Iranian constitution revolutionaries and some of their personal belongings including their weapons, underground published newspaper of the revolution, night letters, the printing machine which was used in the house to publish revolution papers, and numerous photos from the revolution. One of the rooms in the building belongs to the women's role in the revolution.

Picture of the Day



Students in Iran are buying new uniforms, shoes and stationery in a bid to prepare themselves for the new school year due to be started on September 23 this year.

(Photo: Tasnim)