

This Day in History

(May 16)

Today is Wednesday; 26th of the Iranian month of Ordibehesht 1397 solar hijri; corresponding to 29th of the Islamic month of Sha'ban 1439 lunar hijri; and May 16, 2018, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1220 lunar years ago, on this day in 219 AH, the jurisprudent and hadith authority, Fadhl bin Dukin ibn Na'eem, passed away at the age of 89. He is considered a reliable narrator of hadith by Sunni Muslims and has quoted accounts of the crimes against Islam of Khaled ibn Waleed. An expert on biography of narrators of hadith, he wrote several books and groomed many students.

1121 lunar years ago, on this day in 318 AH, acclaimed Iranian Shafe'i jurisprudent, Mohammad ibn Ibrahim ibn al-Mundhir Naishaburi, passed away in holy Mecca at the age of 77. Born in Naishabur in Khorasan, after mastering hadith and Qur'anic sciences, he travelled to Hejaz where he spent the rest of his life in Mecca, as Shaikh al-Haram. He was well versed with the differing opinions amongst the scholars of hadith, and wrote several books, the largest of which was titled "al-Mabsout", which has not survived. He abridged this voluminous work as "al-Awsat", but only a few volumes of it have been found, and even fewer printed. He further abridged this book into a still smaller version titled "al-Ishraaf", which is regarded as the best book of its kind, since he briefly mentions in it all the different opinions regarding each topic and occasionally mentions the opinion he prefers.

516 solar years ago, on this day in 1502 AD, Honduras in Central America, which was the centre of the Mayan civilization, was occupied by Spain. Spain subsequently decimated the indigenous Mayan people. In early 19th century, due to the chaotic state of affairs in Spain, Honduras like the majority of the American colonies gained independence from Spanish colonial rule. Honduras covers an area of more than 112,000 sq km. it is a republic and shares borders with Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

230 solar years ago, on this day in 1788 AD, German poet and orientalist, Friedrich Ruckert, was born in the city of Hamburg. He was a researcher on eastern languages and lectured at German universities. He has translated numerous poems from Persian, Arabic, and Chinese to German language. He is one of the German poets who have translated the Diwan of poems of renowned Iranian poet, Hafez, to German language, which has been published on several occasions.

114 lunar years ago, on this day in 1325 AH, the draft of Iran's first Constitution was signed, albeit reluctantly, by the despotic king Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar. It was hastily drafted and contained 107 articles. The constitution was tampered with and changed constantly, especially during the despotic rule of the British-installed and American-backed Pahlavi regime. Passages pertaining to people's rule and the Islamic shari'ah were eliminated, while clauses were added to spread corruption and depravity in society for weakening the people's cultural values in order to strengthen the repressive rule of the Pahlavis. Following the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 that ended domestic despotism and foreign hegemony, the Iranian people voted for a popularly drafted constitution to replace the obsolete one.

106 lunar years ago, on this day in 1333 AH, the Gnostic Shaikh Baqer Bahari Hamedani passed away in his hometown Hamedan at the age of 58 and was laid to rest in the mausoleum of Imamzadeh Abdullah. After preliminary studies in the village of Bahar under his father, he left for Iraq for higher studies at the Islamic seminary of Holy Najaf, and benefitted from the classes of such prominent scholars as, Ayatollah Mirza Hassan Shirazi, Muhaddith Noori, Mirza Habibollah Rashti, Akhound Khorasani, and Fazel Iravani. On attaining the status of Ijtihad, he returned to Iran to serve the people of Hamedan. A pious person, known for his simple life, he was nevertheless a strong opponent of despotism and foreign hegemony. He trained a large number of students, and wrote some 40 books and treatises, on a wide variety of subjects.

102 solar years ago, on this day in 1916 AD, the scandalous Sykes-Picot Accord was signed by representatives of Britain, France, and Russia in Paris for dividing up the Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire and limiting the Turkish possessions to Anatolia or present day Turkey. Even before the formal defeat of the Ottomans in 1917, lines were drawn on paper to share the spoils by the two principal European colonial powers. The British took control of Iraq and the Hijaz. Shaam or Greater Syria was split up into four parts, with the British taking Jordan and Palestine, and the French taking Syria and Lebanon. The main goal of this plan was to set up in Palestine, an illegal entity called Israel as a homeland for European Jews.

43 solar years ago, on this day in 1975 AD, India annexed Sikkim and abolished the Chogyal monarchy. The Himalayan land of Sikkim was part of the British subcontinent, but in 1947 when India became independent, a popular vote rejected Sikkim's joining the Indian Union and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru agreed to a special protectorate status for Sikkim. The land, however, came under the suzerainty of India, which controlled its external affairs, defense, diplomacy and communications, but otherwise retained administrative autonomy. A state council was established in 1955 to allow for constitutional government under the Chogyal. Meanwhile, the Sikkim National Congress demanded fresh elections and greater representation for the Nepalese majority. In 1973, riots in front of the Chogyal palace led to a supposed request for protection from India. In 1975, the Prime Minister of Sikkim reportedly appealed to the Indian Parliament for Sikkim to become a state of India. In April, the Indian Army took over the city of Gangtok and disarmed the Chogyal's palace guards. A referendum was held in which over 90 percent of the electorate allegedly voted to join the Indian Union. On 16 May 1975, Sikkim was formally declared the 22nd state of the Indian Union.

36 lunar years ago, on this day in 1403 AH, Iran's lady jurisprudent and exegete of the Holy Qur'an, Bano Nosrat Amin, passed away in the central Iranian city of Isfahan at the age of 97. She was regarded as equivalent to a mujtahed, and groomed numerous lady students. She also wrote several books including a 15-volume exegesis of the Holy Qur'an titled "Makhzan al-Irfan" in Persian. She also authored for the moral uplifting of Iranian women the book "Ravesh Khoshbakhti va Towsiyeh beh Khaharan-e Imani" which means "Methods of Happiness and Prosperity for Sisters-in-Faith. Another of her excellent books is on the unsurpassed merits of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (AS) titled "Makhzan al-La'ali Manaqeb Mawla al-Mawali, Ali." She was a staunch supporter of the Islamic Revolution and was held in deep respect by Imam Khomeini (RA).

21 solar years ago, on this day in 1997 AD, the autocratic president of Congo (formerly Zaire), General Mobutu Sese Seko, fled after the united forces, led by Lauren Kabila, closed in on the city of Kinshasa. He came to power in the wake of a coup in 1965 and ruled Congo with an iron fist for 32 years. Although he was a violent and ruthless dictator, he was always supported by the Western regimes, especially the US and France. Congo has always been on the spotlight of the Western regimes, given its strategic position in Central Africa and existence of ample copper and diamond resources. A day after the escape of Sese Seko, the opposition forces captured Kinshasa; and Lauren Kabila was installed as the president. A while later, the refusal of Kabila to allow his Tutsi allies a share in the government, once again fanned the flames of civil war resulting in the assassination of Kabila on January 16, 2000, by one of his bodyguards.

25 solar years ago, on this day in 1993 AD the researcher, author, and lecturer of Persian language and literature at Tehran University, Dr. Mahdi Derakhshan, passed away at the age of 75. For a while, he also researched and lectured at Turkey's Ankara University. He has left behind a large number of valuable compilations

7 solar years ago, on this day in 2011 AD, philologist and grammarian of the Persian language, Professor Hassan Ahmad Givi, passed away at the age of 84. A prominent student of the famous Professor Badi oz-Zaman Farouzanfar, after obtaining PhD from Tehran University, for over four decades he taught at his alma mater as well as other universities. He actively participated as a contributor to the Dehkhoda Lexicon (Loghatnameh), accounting for over 20 percent of the voluminous project. He compiled over 50 books, including "A Comparative Study of Persian and Turkish Literature."

5 solar years ago, on this day in 2013 AD, Takfiri terrorists backed by Saudi Arabia and the US detonated car bombs in the Shi'a Muslim neighbourhoods of Baghdad and Mosul, resulting in the martyrdom of dozens of men, women, and children, and injury to scores of others, as part of their failed plot to stir sectarian clashes in Iraq. Seven years earlier on this same day in 2006, Takfiri terrorists had raided a parking lot in a predominantly Shi'a Muslim neighborhood of Baghdad, shooting dead several guards, and leaving behind an explosives-rigged car that led to the martyrdom of over a score of would-be rescuers.

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

Iranians Mark National Day of Ferdowsi



TEHRAN (FNA) - **Iranians on Tuesday commemorated the national day of Ferdowsi, a highly revered 10th-century Persian poet who created Shahnameh, the national epic of Iran.** Hakim Abu'l-Qasim Firdowsi Tusi commonly transliterated as Ferdowsi (or Firdausi, Firdavsi), (940-1020 C.E.) is a highly revered

Persian poet. He was the author of the Shahnameh, the national epic of Iran and related societies.

Ferdowsi is best known for his literary epic Shahnameh, to which he devoted most of his life. Shahnameh was originally drafted by Ferdowsi for the Princes of Samanids, who were responsible for revival of the Persian cultural traditions after the Arab invasion. Ferdowsi would live to see the Samanids conquered by the Ghaznavid Turks. The new ruler Mahmud of Ghaznavi would lack the same interest in Ferdowsi's work as that shown by the Samanids, resulting in him losing favor with the royal court. Ferdowsi died in 1020 C.E. in "poverty and embittered by royal neglect" though

confident that the work that he had created would last the test of time.

Ferdowsi's literary masterpiece is in many ways a political, social reflection of his time period. Shahnameh marks a transitional period for the Persian culture, in a sense that in one hand it represents the summation of what has transpired before and the irretrievable Persian golden age, and on the other what is to come in way of adaptation of a new cultural identity and creation of a new "self-image. "As such an accurate historical background is consequential to understanding the message and the importance of Shahnameh and indeed of Ferdowsi's ordeal.

Tunisian Publisher Purchases Copyrights of 31 Persian Books

TEHRAN (IBNA) -- **Within the framework of the Iranian Grant Plan, copyrights of 31 Persian books were purchased by Nirvana Publishing from Tunisia.**

According to IBNA correspondent, deputy director of the Grant Plan, Ayoub Dehqankar spoke on the new accomplishments in this field: "Following the process of translation and publication of Iranian books which is aimed to strengthen cultural diplomacy, we have been in contact and discussion with foreign publishers from several months ago."

"On the tenth day of the 31st Tehran International Book Fair, we finalized the agreements for 31 Iranian books to be translated into Arabic and Persian and released in North Africa and Europe," he said.

Referring to the agreements,

Dehqankar added: "One of them was signed earlier with the Shahrestan-e Adab Publishing and 30 others are being signed by the other Iranian publisher, Shabaviz.

"Among the works in the second agreement, 6 books are novels for children and young adults and 24 others are books for children. The other party is Nirvana Publishing House in Tunisia which will undertake the entire process of translation and publication," he said.

"We try to translate the books which have won Iranian literary awards and introduce them to the international markets," deputy director of the Grant Plan asserted.

The 31st Tehran International Book Fair took place from May 2 to May 12 in the Mosalla of Imam Khomeini in Tehran.

'The Woodpecker' Goes On Screen in Tehran



A still from "The Woodpecker".

TEHRAN (IFILM)-Directed by Behrouz Shoeibi, "The Woodpecker" is soon to screen at Esteghlal cinema in the Iranian capital of Tehran.

The flick which is the director's third feature film, pinpoints the bitter story of loneliness.

There is nothing more unbearable than seeing that your loved one has picked solitude over you. While the only thing you want is to enjoy the tone of their voice in your ears and the sight of them in your eyes, they choose to be alone.

What is more difficult than seeing yourself deserted. You see your loved ones and you love them but alas, you are being case aside and they ignore you.

Now you are on your own knowing that loneliness is a swamp.

The cast of 'The Woodpecker' includes Sara Bahrami, Jamshid Hashempour, Hadi Hejazifar, Toufan Mehrdadian, Negar Abedi, Shadi Karamroudi, Soraya Helli, Atieh Javid, Ali-Reza Keymanesh, and Amin Hayaee.

The film had 10 nominations in the 36th edition of Fajr Film Festival in Iran, and scored 2 Crystal Simorgh awards at the festival.

Sara Bahrami received an award for the Best actress in a leading role for her amazing portrayal of an addict.

Jamshid Hashempour won an award for the Best Actor in a Supporting role.

Biologists 'Transfer' Memory

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - **Biologists report they have transferred a memory from one marine snail to another, creating an artificial memory, by injecting RNA from one to another.**

The research by the University of California could lead to new ways to lessen the trauma of painful memories with RNA and to restore lost memories.

"I think in the not-too-distant future, we could potentially use RNA to ameliorate the effects of Alzheimer's disease or post-traumatic stress disorder," said David Glanzman, senior author of the study and a UCLA professor of integrative biology and physiology and of neurobiology. The team's research is published May 14 in eNeuro, the online journal of the Society for Neuroscience.

RNA, or ribonucleic acid, has been widely known as a cellular messenger that makes proteins and carries out DNA's instructions to other parts of the cell. It is now understood to have other important functions besides protein coding, including regulation of a variety of cellular processes involved in development and disease.

The researchers gave mild electric shocks to the tails of a species of marine snail called Aplysia. The snails received five tail shocks, one every 20 minutes, and then five more 24 hours later. The shocks enhance the snail's defensive withdrawal reflex, a response it displays for protection from potential harm. When the researchers subsequently tapped the snails, they found those that had

been given the shocks displayed a defensive contraction that lasted an average of 50 seconds, a simple type of learning known as "sensitization." Those that had not been given the shocks contracted for only about one second.

Picture of the Day



The Anahita Temple is the name of an archaeological site in Iran popularly thought to have been attributed to the ancient deity Anahita. It is located at Kangavar in Kermanshah Province, west of Iran, and is thought to have been built by Achaemenian Emperor Artaxerxes II.

Courtesy: Tasnim News Agency