

This Day in History

(April 13)

Today is Tuesday; 24th of the Iranian month of Farvardin 1400 solar hijri; corresponding to 30th of the Islamic month of Sha'ban 1442 lunar hijri; and April 13, 2021, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

894 lunar years ago, on this day in 548 AH, the famous Iranian Sunni Muslim scholar and exegete of the holy Qur'an, Mohammad Ibn Abdul-Karim Shahrestani, passed away at the age of 81 in his hometown Shahrestan in Khorasan, northeastern Iran. In the city of Nishapur he studied under different masters who were all disciples of the Ash'ari theologian al-Juwayni. At the age of thirty, he went to Baghdad to pursue theological studies and taught for three years at the famous Nizamiyya Academy, before returning to Khorasan, where he worked as Deputy Chancellor for Sultan Sanjar, the Seljuq ruler. He wrote several important works, such as "al-Milal wa'n-Nihal" (The Book of Sects and Creeds), which presents the doctrinal points of view of religions and philosophies that existed up to his time. This book is one of the earliest systematic studies of religion and is noted for its scientific approach. Another of his famous works is the exegesis "Mafatih al-Asraar wa-Masabih al-Abraar" (The Keys of the Mysteries and the Lamps of the Righteous), which introduces the Qur'an and gives a complete commentary on the first two Surahs. In this book, pointing to the confused events of the days of the 3rd Caliph, Osman Ibn Affan, concerning the compilation of the Qur'an, Shahrestani says: We should study why (Imam) Ali Ibn Abi Taleb (AS) was not approached for compilation of the Qur'an? Was he not a greater authority than Zayd Ibn Thabit in transcribing the Qur'an (as well as its memorization and familiarity with its contents)? Did he not possess a better knowledge of Arabic and its grammar than Sa'eed Ibn Aas? Was not (Imam) Ali Ibn Abi Taleb (AS) considered closer to the Prophet of Allah (SAWA) than any of the sahabah? Why did they (Abu Bakr and Omar) reject the first ever copy of the Qur'an compiled by (Imam) Ali (AS) immediately after the passing away of the Prophet?

817 solar years ago, on this day in 1204 AD, Constantinople fell to the Latin Catholic West European hordes of the Fourth Crusade, who unable to confront Muslims in Palestine, turned against their own co-religionists of the Greek Orthodox Church, temporarily ending the Byzantine Empire, as the final act in the permanent separation of the two Christian Churches. For three days the Crusader thugs looted and burned Europe's largest and most civilized city, committing every crime and sin under the sun. During the siege and attacks and counterattacks of the two sides, nearly 35 percent of the city that had known peace for several centuries was destroyed, and over 50 percent of the population became homeless, in addition to the tens of thousands of people massacred.

396 solar years ago, on this day in 1625 AD, the word "microscope" was coined as a suggested term in a letter written by Johannes Faber of Bamberg, Germany, to Federigo Cesi, Duke of Aquasparta and founder of Italy's Accademia dei Lincei (Academy of the Lynx). The science of optics is indebted to Muslim scientists who invented the telescope.

326 solar years ago, on this day in 1695 AD, Jean de La Fontaine, the famous French poet of the 17th century, died. He is known above all for his "Fables", which provided a model for subsequent fabulists across Europe and numerous alternative versions in France.

278 solar years ago, on this day in 1743 AD, Thomas Jefferson, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America, and the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (1776), who later served two terms (1801-1809) as the Third US president, was born in what is now Albemarle County in Virginia in an English family. A controversial character, he was profoundly influenced by the British Empiricists, including John Locke, Francis Bacon, and Isaac Newton.

153 solar years ago, on this day in 1868 AD, the Abyssinian War ended as British and Indian troops captured Magdala but were deprived of taking as prisoner, Emperor Tewodros II, who committed suicide captivity, and thus became a symbol of the defiant independence of the Ethiopian people. The British burned Magdala and its churches, and looted many historical and religious artifacts, including manuscripts and the crown of Tewodros II.

148 solar years ago, on this day in 1873 AD, some 153 African-Americans were cold-bloodedly massacred at Colfax, Grant Parish, Louisiana, by white Democrats, and the bodies thrown into the river. It was preceded since 1870 by systematic killings of scores of black people by the racist Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi to deny them voting rights.

112 solar years ago, on this day in 1909 AD, the Turkish military reversed the Ottoman counter-coup of March 1909 to force the overthrow of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and replace him with his brother, Mohammad V. The counter-coup was an attempt to dismantle the Second Constitutional Era of the Ottoman Empire and replace it with autocracy.

102 solar years ago, on this day in 1919 AD, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place in Amritsar in Punjab, India, when British troops massacred in cold blood hundreds of unarmed demonstrators and injured over a thousand others. The perpetrator of the massacre was Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, who on hearing that a crowd of 15,000 to 20,000 people had assembled at the Jallianwala Bagh, placed his riflemen on a raised bank and ordered them to shoot at the crowd that included men, women, and children. The casualty number estimated by the Indian National Congress was more than 1,500, with approximately 1,000 killed.

55 solar years ago, on this day in 1966 AD, Iraqi President, Colonel Abdus-Salaam Aref, was killed in an air crash, while returning to Baghdad from Basra, after a blasphemous attempt during a public address to ridicule the famous censuring of the rebellious people of Basra by the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS), following the historical Battle of Jamal. On hearing the president's speech on radio the people of Iraq were greatly saddened at his ridiculing of the Imam's statements. In holy Najaf, Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohsin al-Hakeem, went to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (AS) and clinging to the metal enclosure wept bitterly and prayed fervently, before leaving the place in a state of profound grief. No sooner had he left the shrine, when the radio cut its regular broadcasts to announce the death of the Iraqi president in air crash. Abdus-Salaam Aref had seized power in 1963, in a coup with the help of the Ba'athists, against President General Abdul-Karim Qassem, who was killed.

46 solar years ago, on this day in 1975 AD, the brutal killing of 26 Palestinians in Lebanon by the Israeli-backed Phalangist Christian militia, set off the 15-year Lebanese Civil War in which Israel, France, and the US were all brutally involved and indulged in unprintable atrocities.

37 solar years ago, on this day in 1984 AD, India moved into the Siachen Glacier to annex more territory from the Line of Control that determined the border with Pakistan, thus bringing swift response from the latter. The Siachen Glacier is located in the eastern Karakoram Range in the Himalaya Mountains and is the world's highest battleground. It lies immediately south of the great watershed that separates the Eurasian Plate from the Subcontinent in the extensively glaciated portion of the Karakoram, called the "Third Pole" (after the North and South Poles).

35 solar years ago, on this day in 1986 AD, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khatami Lankarani, passed away at the age of 75 in his hometown Isfahan.

18 solar years ago, on this day in 2003 AD, following the fall of Saddam and the American occupation of their country, the people of Iraq staged the first public demonstrations after three decades of suffocating Ba'ath minority rule, calling for establishment of Islamic government amid vociferous cries of "Allah-o Akbar" (Allah is Greatest) and "la ilaha il-Allah" (there is no god but Allah). The huge rally called for end of occupation, holding placards and chanting such slogans as "No to the US & Israel", and "Bush & Saddam are Alike".

13 solar years ago, on this day in 2008 AD, a terrorist bomb blast at the "Martyrs of Shiraz Hussainiya" in the city of Shiraz, led to the martyrdom and injury of several people. Its perpetrators, who were agents of the enemy intelligence services, were caught in a Tehran hotel and given due punishment.

'The Phoenix' Walks Away With Award of Excellence in U.S.



TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iranian flick 'The Phoenix' has grabbed Award of Excellence (Special Jury Mention) at the 2021 edition of the Indie Short Fest - Los Angeles In-

ternational Film Festival in the U.S.

A synopsis of the short film reads, "energy can neither be created nor destroyed; rather, it can only be transformed from one

form to another".

Directed by Farzin Nobarani, the short flick was a nominee at the 37th Tehran Short Film Festival.

Nobarani said, in a previous interview about the short flick, "I'm interested in Albert Camus' works, so I tried to make a film close to his films".

"The film depicts people's everyday life and aims to focus on hope. Because the loss of hope is the loss of life", he added.

Also written by Nobarani, the cast list of the short includes Manouchehr Alipour, Melina Qadimi, Fariborz Shahkarami, Kourosh Kia, Atefeh Oranipour, Shabnam Eskandari, Azadeh Akbari, Mojgan Aqadavoudian, and Kiana Rahmani.

IMDb qualifier Indie Short Fest holds monthly international competitions and has a major annual awarding event.

The festival aims to screen independent films from around the world.

The latest edition of the fest was held in April 2021.

Moscow Festival Hosts Iran's 'Walnut Tree'

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iranian feature film 'Walnut Tree' has made its way to the Moscow International Film festival.

Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavi-an's flick will represent Iran at the 43rd edition of the Russian event.

Previously the film was screened at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival in Estonia.

Based on a true story, 'Walnut Tree' is a film about the chemical bombings of a region in northwestern Iran by the U.S.-backed former Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.

Written by Ebrahim Amini and Hossein Hassani, 'The Walnut



A still from Iranian feature film 'Walnut Tree'.

Tree' enjoys famous Iranian actors Peyman Maadi, Mina Sadati and Mehran Modiri.

The film participated in the 38th Fajr Film Festival in February 2020 and garnered Best Actor in a Leading Role and Best Director awards.

Dating back to 1935, Moscow International Film Festival is considered one of the oldest film festivals in the world.

This Russian cinematic event is compared in importance to its other European equivalents such as Cannes and Berlin film festivals.

The 43rd edition of the event is slated for April 22-29, 2021.

Hong Kong Festival Crowns 'The Wasteland'

TEHRAN (MNA) -- Iranian film 'The Wasteland' directed by Ahmad Bahrami, won Best Film Award at 45th edition of the Hong Kong International Film Festival.

The synopsis of 'The Wasteland' reads, "A remote brick manufacture factory produces bricks in an ancient way. Many families with different ethnicities work in the factory and the boss seems to hold the key to solving their problems. Forty-year-old Lotfollah, who has been born on-site, is the factory supervisor and acts as a go-between for the workers and the boss. Boss Lotfollah has gathered all the workers in front of his office. He wants to talk to them about the shutdown of the factory. All matters now to Lotfollah is to keep Sarvar unharmed, the woman he has been in love with for a long time."

The cast includes Ali Bagheri, Farrokh Nemati, Mehdi Nassaj, Majid Farhang, and Mahdieh Nassaj.

Recently, 'The Wasteland' grabbed the FIPRESCI award handed out by the Independent Federation of Film Critics on the sideline of the 77th Venice International Film Festival in Italy.

It has also taken part in the 65th edition of the Valladolid International Film Festival in Spain and the 31st edition of the Singapore International Film Festival.

The Hong Kong International Film Festival is one of Asia's oldest international film festival. Founded in 1976, the festival features different movies, filmmakers from different countries in Hong Kong. HKIFF screens around 230 films from more than 60 countries in different major cultural venues across the territory every year.



A scene from Iranian film 'The Wasteland'.

Picture of the Day



The Time Museum is a historical house in an upscale Tehran neighbourhood and dates back to the Qajar era. It is Iran's first museum showcasing items used to show time including different types of sundials, hourglasses, water clocks and fuel-powered clocks.

Courtesy of ILNA