

DID YOU KNOW (2)

Posted on June 24, 2021 by Keghart



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By Jirair Tutunjian, Toronto, Ontario, 8 May 2021

Did You Know

In the earliest version of the Armenian alphabet, (iron script), "ayp" consisted of two vertical lines connected at the base, and a tail. The lower case "aip" was just a smaller version of the capital, or upper case. Later, a new "aip", resembling the tines of a fork, was introduced.

Nubar Gulbenkian, the son of oil mogul Calouste Gulbenkian, was for years known in London as a bon vivant who was more interested in good food, good wine, his Rolls-Royce, and in making sure he had a fresh orchid on his lapel every day. Few knew that he had been a British agent in Portugal during WWII. When his father fled Turkey because of the persecution of Armenians, Calouste hid his son in a Gladstone bag.

Paulicians were a 7th century "heretical" Armenian sect believed there were an evil God and a good God; the former is the creator and ruler of the world, the latter is the lord of the world to come. From this they deduced that Jesus was not the son of Mary, because the good God could not have taken flesh and become man. They specially honored the Gospel according to Luke and the Letters of St. Paul, rejecting the Old Testament. They also rejected the sacraments and the hierarchy of the Church. Some scholars believe the Bogomils of Bulgaria and the Cathars of southern France descend from the Paulicians.

The first recorded pair of conjoined twins was born in Armenia in 945 AD. The twin boys were connected from the waist to the abdomen. One died during a surgical attempt to separate them. The other, three days later. The famous Siamese Twins were born in 1811.

To blame the Armenians for the cruelty of Sultan Abdul Hamid II ("the Bloody Sultan," "Abdul the Damned") some anti-Armenian Turkish propagandist claim the mother of the sultan was Armenian. However, facts contradict the allegation. The sultan's mother (Tirimujgan Kadin) was Circassian who was born in North Caucasus. Her father was Behan Bey and her mother was Almas Hanim. She was brought to Istanbul as a child, where her father entrusted her to the imperial harem. According to custom, her name was changed to Tirimujgan. Prior to her marriage to Abdul Majid, she served in the sultan's harem. She died in 1852. Her granddaughter (Hamide Ayse) said Tirimujgan had green eyes and long blonde hair.

In "Armenians in India from the Earliest Times" author Mesrob Jacob Seth says seven centuries before Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived on the Malabar coast of India, Armenian merchant Thomas Cana landed on the same southern coast in 780.

Raymond Chandler was one of the greatest American mystery writers but his taste in classical music left much to be desired. In "The Long Goodbye", hero Philip Marlow says: "At three a.m. I was walking the floor and listening to Khachaturyan working in a tractor factory. He called it a violin concerto. I

called it a loose fan belt and the hell with it."

The first accordion was patented by Cyril Demian (1772-1849) of Vienna on May 6, 1829. Demian, an Armenian, was born in Armenopolis, (Romania) now Gherla. Demian called his invention handoline. It had a small manual bellow and five keys. His two sons Karl and Guido worked with him.

Between 1921 and 1936, some 42,000 diaspora Armenians settled in Armenia. In the mid-to the late '40s, close to 100,000 diaspora Armenians also moved to Armenia although 360,000 had stated their wish to leave for Armenia.

American writer Dawn Powell and a contemporary of William Saroyan wrote: "Bobby Lewis said Saroyan's egotism came from his grandmother. An Armenian, she settled in Fresno, California and remained thoroughly Armenian all her days. Commenting on her next-door neighbor she said, "She is so stupid. Think of it. She has lived next door to me for 28 years and still can't speak a word of Armenian."

There are no comments yet.