

# DID YOU KNOW? (13)

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**By Jirair Tutunjian**, Toronto, 24 April 2022

There are more than fifty place names (city, village, mountain, valley, creek, etc.) named Armenia in Latin America. The most important of the places named Armenia is the great coffee city by that name in western Colombia. There are two villages named Armenia in Belize and one in El Salvador. Four places in Ecuador and one in Guatemala bear the Armenia name. A Colombian geographical dictionary (1988) listed thirty [Colombian places named Armenia](#). None of these locales are connected to Armenia. The reason for the name remains unknown. There are a number of Armenias in North America as well.

The first recorded mention of *basturma* dates to the reign of King of Kings Medzn Dikran (95 B.C. to 45 B.C). *Basturma* was invented so that Armenian merchants traveling in faraway countries would not be deprived of meat during their long journeys. The technology of air-drying the meat was developed during Medzn Dikran's reign. The Armenian word for *basturma* is *aboukhd*. It means uncooked.

More Armenian inventors:

Cyrus Melikyan: Coffee grinder

Alexander Kemurdzian: First planetary rover

Albert Kapikian: rotovirus vaccine

Rolan Mardirosov: Sukhoi-34 designer

Sergei Mergelyan: Major contributor to the Approximation Theory

James Bagian: Inventor of safety related tools

Alex Seropian: Video game developer, founder of Bungiem, Marathon, and Myth

Zareh Nalbandian: Co-founder of Animal Logic, developer of large-scale screen

Rafi Haladjian: serial entrepreneur, co-creator of the wireless character rabbit Nabazdag

Yuri Oganessian: Discovery of super heavy elements (Flerovium, Livermorium, Oganesson, Moscovium, Nihonium, and Tennesine).

A number of Armenian generals led Byzantium armies to victory over the Arabs. Among these great commanders are John Curcuas, Nicephorus Phocas, Heracles, and John Tzimisces. Phocas, one of the empire's most brilliant generals was behind a series of stunning victories against the Arabs. He drove Arabs from Crete and took Aleppo. Extremely strong, he could skewer an enemy soldier through his armour by the thrust of his spear.

In 1937 famed theatre producer Harold Clurman sent a letter to William Saroyan asking him if he would be interested in writing for the theatre that Clurman managed. Saroyan accepted the invitation but insisted that if he wrote the play, he would direct it. Saroyan had a short story called *The Man With the Heart in the Highlands*, which he had written one afternoon in 1935. Since the story was mostly dialogue, all he had to do was add "he said" and "she said." The one-act play became *My Heart in the Highlands*. Richard Conte, Harry Morgan, and Sidney Lumet (later famous director)

appeared in it. It cost a mere \$9,000 to produce the play.

A relative of the plum, the apricot has been grown all over the Mediterranean for centuries. The English word is derived from the Arabic *albarquq*. Since the Roman armies first saw the fruit in Armenia, they called it *prunusarmenince*.

Unique (probably) Armenian superlatives:

Gaas Garmir, Sep Sev, Jeppes Jermag, Gaaps Ganach, Gaaps Gabouyd, Teppes Tegheen.

Born (1913) to Armenian parents in Los Angeles, Sass Bedig (baptismal name Sargon Bedig) was for many years a leading film special effects/prop master specialist in Hollywood. He was responsible for the special effects of about fifty films including *The Godfather*, *The French Connection*, *Bullit*, *Le Mans*, *Ulzana's Raid*, *Walking Tall*, *The Hawaiians*. He died in 2000. His son, Barry, followed his father's steps and did the special effects for *Sleeper*, *Night Moves*, *The Natural*, *Sorcerer*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Brink's Job*, and *Farewell, My Lovely*.

Some Armenian words imported from Iranian:

Kavazan (gav=gov=cow) and azan (push, drive)

Kharazan (kher=esh=donkey) and azan (push, drive). Driver of donkeys

Darchin (daru=payd=stick) and chin (China). Chinese stick

Engouyz (En=inside in Indo-European), gaoz=hide in Iranian

Saghavard (Sar is head in Iranian), varti (cover, blanket).

After his defeat by the Romans in the battle of Magnesia, Hannibal found refuge in Armenia. When the Armenian king replaced his capital Armavir with Artaxata (Ardashad) Hannibal approved the strategic and military importance of the new site. A Roman general called it "Carthagina of Armenia."

Agn was an Armenian city on the banks of the Euphrates River. It was founded at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century by a group of Nakharars (feudal lords) who had fled Eastern Armenia as a result of the Seljuk Turk invasion. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Agn became the "fountain" of amiras as many Armenian amiras were born in the town. A great many of these amiras held high ministerial (finance, the mint, munitions, etc.) positions in the Ottoman government. Today, Agn is called Kamaliye, after Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

## Comments



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Always great tidbits of knowledge by Tutunjian.