
Did You Know?

Compiled by Jirair Tutunjian
Keghart.com -

Varoujan Vosganian, Romania's minister of economy and commerce, has been nominated, by friends for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Vosganian has written a number of books on economics and politics, in addition to fiction and poetry. In 1990 he became president of the Armenians' Union of Romania and was twice member of the Romania's Chamber of Deputies, and twice senator. From 1996 to 2003 he was also head of a political party. Minister of Economy and Commerce (2006), Vosganian--unlikely as it may sound--was a leading member of the Romanian Humorists' Association.

When Soviet anti-Semitism intensified in the 1970s, a large number of Soviet Jews arrived in Armenia. Why to Armenia? Because, Armenia Jewish community leaders said they were well received and anti-Semitism was not a problem. During Perestroika, the majority of Jews who had moved to Armenia left for Israel. The next mass emigration of Jews and the Armenian members of their families was in 1992-1993, when Armenia was blockaded during the Karapagh War. The chief rabbi of Armenia, Gershon Meir Burstein, was quoted saying that Jews who had left during those years would never have done so under normal conditions--they were successful people--doctors, engineers, businessmen, experts in the IT field. Today there are fewer than a thousand Jews in Armenia.

Among celebrated Armenian-Iranians is Andranik Eskandarin, a former football player for the Iranian national team. He moved to the US in 1984. Edmund Bezik and Andranik Teymourian were also celebrated Iranian football players. Loris Tjeknavorian, the classical composer, was born in Iran. Yeprem Khan was an Iranian-Armenian revolutionary leader.

In the summer of 2013 the Turkish "Radical" daily started a discussion about the family origins of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk based on "From Mustafa to Kemal Ataturk's Big Secret", by Fatin Bayhan. The book reported that Ataturk was not born in Thessaloniki as popularly believed, but in Malatya. Ataturk's family emigrated from Malatya. His mother, Zubeida Hanim was, his aunt. He was sent to Thessaloniki when his father died and he was adopted by Zubeide when his mother died.

The author pointed out that the Malatya was a province which was heavily populated by Armenians. Although this is no more than flimsy evidence that Ataturk was Armenian, Turkey is extremely sensitive about the Armenian origins of famous Turks. It's believed that a major reason Hrant Dink was assassinated was because he revealed that Sabiha Gokcen, the adopted daughter of Ataturk, was Armenian.

In his autobiography, "The Tender Hair of Twilights", celebrated American writer Richard Seaver said about his years at Sorbonne in Paris: "The only exception to the doddering professor generalization was a youngish professor by the name of Charles Dedeyan. Comparative literature was his domain, and he was clearly in love with his wide-ranging subject. His hour vanished in a trice, and he invariably, having kept us on the edges of our seats, finished with a flourish that, like the last scene of the serial movie, announced the exciting subject of next week's episode."

Education Minister Yacoub Artin Pasha inaugurated Egypt's first girls'

school in 1873.

Dolmabahce Palace, built by the Balyans, took 13 years to build (1843-1856). It had no fewer than 285 rooms, 44 halls, 68 toilets and six baths. Fourteen tons of gold leaf was used to gild the palace ceilings, from which hung 35 chandeliers. The palace's biggest room, the Muahele Hall, boasts an immense one-piece carpet measuring 1,300 square feet and a chandelier that weighs over 4 tons.

Vahey S. Kupelian (born in 1912) was a Genocide survivor and one of America's top rocket scientists. He attended MIT in Boston at the age of 13. He was the army's chief scientist for ballistic missile defense, deputy undersecretary of defense of strategic and theater nuclear forces under President Ronald Reagan. He also head the army's HIT program-the original "space based" missile interceptors in Strategic Defense Initiative.

Lilliam Kechichian was appointed minister of tourism of Uruguay in June 2012. She is the first Armenian to become a Uruguayan minister.

Several years ago she launched a signature campaign calling the EU to deny membership to Turkey unless Ankara recognized the Genocide of Armenians.

Armenia's indigenous dog is the GAMPR. It's a livestock guarding dog.

It's found in Armenia and the Western Armenia, now occupied by Turkey.

It hasn't changed since its existence from time immemorial in the Armenian Highlands. It's a vital, independent, smart, friendly animal with a large head. Although not trained, it instinctively knows what its master wants. The male can grow to a height of 65 cm/26" and the female 62 cm/24". The male gampr can weigh as much as 45 to 60 kilograms (99 to 130 lbs.). Gampr is also known as archashoon (bear dog), potorgashoon (avalanche dog), and hovashoon (shepherd dog).

Five Armenian proverbs:

The guest hates the other guest, the housewife hates them both.

When a donkey wants to spite his master, he dies.

When they want to kill a dog they say he has gone mad.

Don't burn the carpet to get rid of the fleas.

When God wants to make a poor many happy, He makes him lose his donkey and then find it.

Diane Abgar (1859-1937) was appointed, in 1920, ambassador of Armenia to Japan. She was the first woman ambassador to Japan and the first Armenian woman ambassador. She corresponded with President Woodrow Wilson regarding the International Congress. She descended from Iranian merchant families who had settled in the Far East. After the WWI she lectured on the Genocide of Armenians in Japan, became a public personality in that country and wrote for the Japanese newspapers. She also helped Armenian refugees who had fled the Bolshevik Revolution and sought sanctuary in the Far East. She helped about 500 Armenian refugees to travel from Vladivostok to the US. She was born in Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar) and died in Yokohama, Japan.

Mikhail Pogosyan is the head of the Sukhoi aeronautics design bureau and one of the builders of Russia's first stealth fighter. Levon M. Chailakhyan, a biologist, cloned the first mammal. Boris Artashesovich

Babayn is the Father of the Soviet supercomputer.

Legend recounts that Armenian King Apkar of Edessa (ruled AD 13 to 50), suffering from leprosy, heard of Christ's fame as a healer and sent an artist to paint his portrait. Dazzled by the divine radiance emanating from Christ's face, the artist was unable to paint. Christ, however, washed his face and dried it on a towel which miraculously retained an impression of his features. When this was presented to Apkar he was cured of his leprosy. The towel was able to reproduce itself when placed next to another piece of cloth. Thus a number of Holy Towels came into being. Centuries later Muslim conquered Edessa and came into possession of the Holy Towel. Byzantine Emperor Constantine VI (780-97) rescued the Holy Towel when he took Edessa and transported the cloth to the imperial chapel in Constantinople. The Holy Towel remained in Constantinople until it was acquired by Louis IX of France (1226-70). It was destroyed during the French Revolution.

<http://www.keghart.com/quotes>
