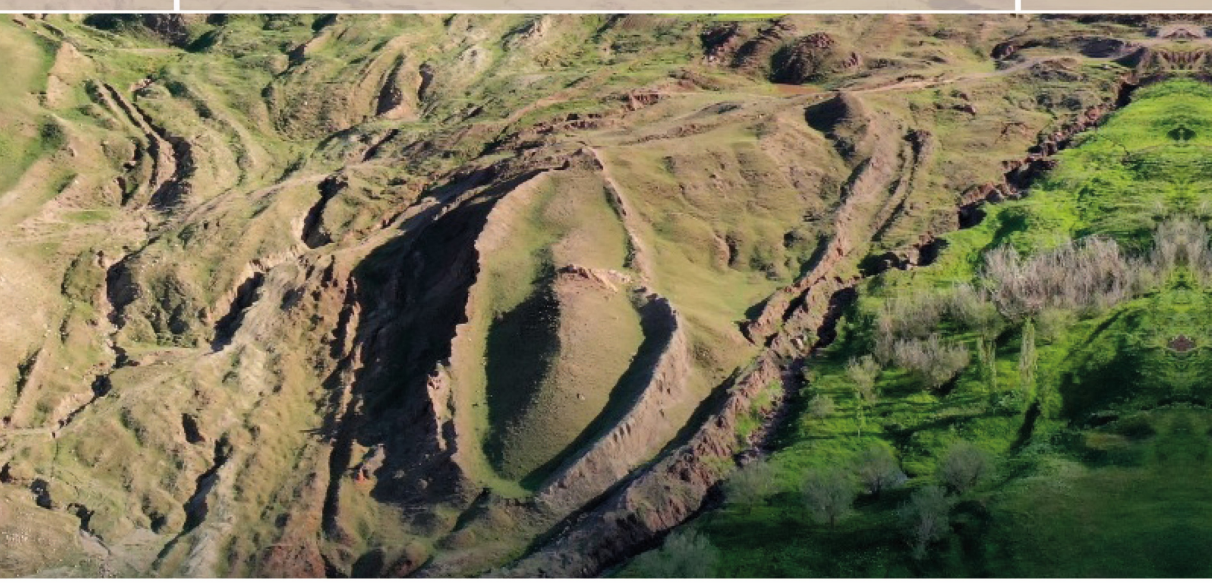
MOUNT ARARAT and NOAH'S ARK

History, Myth and Land



Editors: Prof. Dr. Faruk KAYA - Prof. Dr. Oktay BELLİ - Prof. Dr. Randall W. YOUNKER

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Dedicated to ***Mr. İbrahim Çeçen,*** *a philanthropist businessman and education volunteer who brought a university to Ağrı bearing his own name by reiterating his life philosophy with this quote: "My greatest wealth in life is my investment in education"…..*

PREFACE

Dear Readers,

Mount Ararat is a peak that stands out not only geologically and geomorphologically, but also for its fabled status as the site of Noah's ark after the deluge. Mount Ararat is not only Turkey's highest peak, but also a significant symbol and sacred site that has left indelible marks on global culture. This mountain reflects on humanity's common cultural history through its inclusion in numerous nations' beliefs and stories. This study by scientists from various disciplines examines the history, mythology, and location of Noah's Ark, as well as the geographical features, geology, environmental impacts, and natural and cultural values of the Ağrı region.

This book contains papers delivered during the 7th International Ağrı Mountain and Noah's Ark Symposium, hosted by Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University on October 19-21, 2023. The editorial board chose and expanded these articles to be published as book chapters. This research examines how the quest for Noah's Ark can impact religion tourism and the socio-economic structure of Ağrı province and Turkey.

In addition to Mount Ararat, another notable site within the confines of Ağrı province has been recognized as the location of Noah's Ark. This natural monument is situated in the southern section of the Gürbulak Trough, between the settlements of Telçeker (Sürbehan) and Üzengili (Meşar). This natural formation, which resembles a ship's outline, is located 3.5 kilometers from the Turkey-Iran transit road. According to some researchers, this region contains the ark, which is thought to have run aground following Noah's Flood, as well as Noah's lost city of Naxuan. A comprehensive search for Noah's Ark using sustainable scientific approaches and the resulting scientific findings might transform Ağrı into an international religious tourist destination. This will enhance the number of tourists visiting the region, boost the local economy, and significantly impact employment opportunities.

This book will provide a significant contribution to the region, not only in terms of ship exploration and study outcomes, but also in terms of scientific and cultural knowledge creation. These studies, which will add to archaeological and geological knowledge and shed light on humanity's history, will also allow for further exploration of Mount Ararat's natural and human cultural richness, as well as an important contribution to the region's promotion.

We are grateful to Prof. Dr. Abdulhalik Karabulut, Rector of Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, for his assistance and support in developing and publishing this study. We would like to thank each chapter author specifically for their contributions. We also would like to thank Prof. Dr. Yakup Karataş, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emrullah Ataseven, Assist. Prof. Dr. Nimetullah Aldemir, and lecturer Mehmet Mehdi Karakoç for their contributions. We also want to thank Andrews University for printing the book.

We hope that this book will draw you into the mysterious world of Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark and help you to increase your knowledge of this amazing story.

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CONTENTS

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CHAPTER I

The Effects of Noah's Ark Search Studies at Mount Ararat and its Surroundings on Belief Tourism and Regional Development

Faruk KAYA [1]

Introduction

Narratives, legends, and myths about the Flood event have left a profound mark on the collective memory of humanity. It is possible to encounter these stories even in the most isolated societies on Earth. For instance, the presence of flood narratives among Aboriginal Australians, communities living at 3,000 meters altitude in Mexico and Guatemala, and the indigenous people of Ceylon, who have never left their islands, emphasizes the universality of this myth. The Flood event has found its place not only in the Abrahamic religions but also in many cultures across Africa and Asia, excluding several regions. Flood myths can be found in the traditions of various regions such as Palestine, Greece, Assyria, America, Australia, India, Tibet, China, Malaysia, and Lithuania. This indicates that the Flood is not merely a mythological story or a baseless legend but rather a defendable reality considering its prevalence and presence in sacred texts.

The widespread belief in the Noah's Flood narrative is evident across a vast geographical area, encompassing distant regions such as Southeast Asia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. This suggests that the Flood has been ingrained in the collective memory of humanity as a significant event in history. The oldest

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accounts of the Flood and those closest to sacred texts belong to the Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian cultures. It is known that this tradition began with cuneiform documents, and the Babylonian flood story originated from Sumer.

The Quran describes Noah's Ark as a miracle and mentions the Flood as a sign, indicating that it is not merely a mythological tale but rather an accepted divine event. Some of the verses in the Quran that depict Noah's Ark as a divine evidence are as follows: "Indeed, We sent Noah to his people, and he remained among them a thousand years minus fifty years, and the flood seized them while they were wrongdoers. But We saved him and the companions of the ship, and We made it a sign for the worlds." (Quran, 29:14-15). "And We carried him on a [construction of] planks and nails, Sailing under Our observation as reward for he who had been denied." (Quran, 54:13-14).

Information regarding the Flood event in Jewish belief is based on the Torah and the Talmud, which serves as Jewish traditions. While the Quran specifies the Flood as a disaster specific to Noah's people, the Torah speaks of a global flood punishing humanity. Moreover, the information in the Quran provides detailed accounts of those aboard the ark. References to the Flood in the Gospels affirm the events described in the Torah, thus, Christians acknowledge them. The New Testament mentions the Flood lasting for seven days, indicating a discrepancy in the duration compared to the Torah.

These variations in narratives and durations among the Torah, Gospels, and Quran may lead to different perspectives on interpreting and understanding the Flood stories among different cultures. Each sacred text carries its own viewpoint and emphasis, leading to varied interpretations of the Flood's significance. Considering the belief that only Noah and his followers were saved while all other beings perished, and Noah is considered the second ancestor of humanity, it can be speculated that the widespread flood narratives worldwide originate from a single source and have spread across the globe. However, flood narratives present in various cultures differ from the accounts in the Bible and the Quran.

Another significant aspect that believers in the Flood are curious about is where the waters receded on the Earth and how the occupants of the Ark continued their lives. In almost all flood narratives, it is emphasized that the ark rested on top of a mountain. In the Sumerian account, this mountain is named Dilmun, in the Epic of Gilgamesh it is referred to as Nissur or Nisir, while in other traditions, it is mentioned as the mountains of Lubar and Massis.

Some of these mountain names mentioned in historical accounts, despite being associated with different appellations (such as Dilmun, Nissir, and Missir), are sometimes identified with Mount Cudi; however, the exact geographical location and where these mountains are situated are still not entirely known.

After the Flood subsided, the name of the mountain where the ark rested is referred to as the "Mountains of Ararat" in the Torah: "And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat." In the Hebrew text of the Torah, it is stated that Noah's Ark rested upon "Haray Ararat (Mountains of Ararat)," and this name is commonly identified with Mount Ararat in today's popular culture. The expression in the Torah that the ark rested upon the Mountains of Ararat dates back to the fifth century BCE in a priestly text. The author of this text might have been aware of the flood narrative in Mesopotamia and could have been influenced by it. Since it was thought that the first landmass emerging during the recession of the floodwaters was the highest point in that region, the expression "Mountains of Ararat" was later interpreted as Mount Ararat (Tanyu, 1988).

The name Ararat mentioned in the Torah is referred to as Urartu in Assyrian sources. The name "Urartu" was given by the Assyrian Kingdom, the southern neighbor and adversary of this community, and it is actually a geographical term meaning "mountainous country" rather than the name of a specific community. Therefore, it is thought that the expression "Haray Ararat" mentioned in the Torah is not coincidental but stems from the word "Urartu" used by the Assyrian Kingdom for Urartu. In other words, the name "r-r-t" is the Hebrew name of Urartu, which ruled in Eastern Anatolia, the Caucasus, and Northwestern Iran between the 9th and 6th centuries BCE (Belli, 2009;55-56). Thus, the expression "Mountains of Ararat" not only indicates a specific location for the ark but also points to a mountain range located within the Urartian territories. The Urartian Kingdom, which ruled centered around Lake Van between 900-600 BCE, was also a neighboring and rival kingdom to the Assyrians. Therefore, the term "Mountains of Ararat" may refer to a vast mountainous area including Mount Cudi.

In the Quran, it is stated that the ark rested on Cudi. However, what is noteworthy is that while mentioning Cudi, the Quran does not describe it as a mountain. In other words, the Quran only mentions that the ark rested "on Cudi" (Meral, 2014). These explanations are important details showing the

differences and interpretational variances among sacred texts regarding the Flood. There are differing views among scholars regarding which mountain Cudi is. Some scholars suggest that Cudi is not the name of a specific mountain but rather signifies "fertile lands," indicating that Noah and his companions were descended to these fertile lands after the Flood. However, the majority of Islamic sources maintain the view that after the Flood, Noah's Ark rested on Mount Cudi.

However, without conclusive evidence, extensive scientific investigations and archeological research are necessary to discover traces of Noah's Ark. The findings of this investigation could resolve the controversies regarding the location of where the ark came to rest. Otherwise, these discussions are likely to persist. According to scientific research findings, any remnants of Noah's Ark or the ship uncovered will be identified as Cudi or Ararat (Kaya, 2020).

Since the initial translation of the Torah, known as the Septuagint, Jewish sources have interpreted the term Ararat as denoting the hilly areas along the border of present-day Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. The site referred to as the Mountains of Ararat in Jewish texts and as Cudi in Islamic sources are considered to be the same region (Meral, 2014:88-101). According to the Book of Genesis and Zoroastrian beliefs, it is thought that the ark dropped into a trench on the peak of Mount Ararat before Noah's Flood, likely after the Würm glacial period. Nevertheless, this location is currently occupied and concealed by glaciers.

Research regarding the location of Noah's Flood has generally focused on archaeological findings suggesting that it occurred in Mesopotamia, known as the birthplace of the oldest and most advanced civilizations in history. However, the geographical location between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers indicates an environment suitable for a massive flood. Today, many Christians believe that Noah's Flood occurred in this region, particularly considering Mount Ararat, the highest point in the area, as the ultimate resting place of Noah's Ark, which they believe saved Noah, his family, believers, and pairs of every animal species during a divine flood. This belief is supported by a combination of historical and geographical factors.

In research on whether Noah's Ark is on Mount Ararat or Mount Cudi, there are sometimes debates related to the interpretation of expressions in the sacred texts. Foreign scholars conducting such studies, especially when funded by church organizations, raise legitimate concerns among some Muslim scholars.

However, it should be clearly stated that there is no need to worry about the accuracy of the term "Cudi" mentioned in the Quran. Because if the claims that Noah's Ark is on Mount Ararat are scientifically proven with conclusive evidence, it would not pose any concern from the perspective of the Quran, which is the universal and unaltered divine scripture. This is because the Quran only states that "the ship settled on Cudi," without explicitly stating that Cudi is a mountain. Therefore, according to this statement in the Quran, wherever Cudi (whether as a name or an attribute) is definitively determined, that place is its location. Because apart from the truths of the Quran, there cannot be any other truth, as it is the word of Allah (Kaya, 2020).

Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark

Mount Ararat, the highest peak in our country (5,137 m) and synonymous with Ağrı province, holds great potential for both trekking and winter tourism (Figure 1). Despite claims of its being an impossible mountain to climb, as mentioned in Marco Polo's writings until the 1700s, the first recorded ascent took place on October 9, 1829, by F. Parrot and his team. Parrot's primary aim was to reach Noah's Ark, but they managed to climb to the summit from the western side of the mountain and mentioned a possible flat area of about 200 steps where Noah's Ark could be located (Parrot, 1834). Arriving in the region in the early 19th century to conduct exploration and scientific studies on Mount Ararat, Parrot discovered that the surrounding area reflected a multicultural society in terms of race, language, and religion. Additionally, he observed that animal husbandry was prevalent on Mount Ararat, while agriculture was mainly practiced in the fertile plains irrigated by the Aras River.

After the first climb, Western countries and scientists' fascination with Mount Ararat increased steadily. After Parrot and Antonomoff, Otto Wilhelm Hermann Von Abich conducted thorough geological studies in the Caucasus Mountains between 1844 and 1845. His research included the vanished village of Ahuri, destroyed in the 1840 earthquake, and he climbed Mount Ararat's summit. In 1848, M. Vagener, and in 1894, Americans Allen and Sachtleben ascended to the peak of Mount Ararat as part of their extensive expedition from Istanbul to Beijing. Colonel Chodsko ascended Mount Ararat in 1850, followed by Stuart and Monteith in 1856 (Streck, İA, I, 153).

Figure 1. A view of Mount Ararat, which forms Türkiye 's highest point at an elevation of 5137 meters, synonymous with Noah's Ark.

Following Parrot's Russian-supported initial exploration expedition, until the early 20th century, various scientists who climbed Mount Ararat, generally aimed at finding clues related to Noah's Ark, also conducted research focusing on the mountain's scientific recognition, measuring its height, and depicting its various aspects. During this period, geologists such as A. Oswald in 1900 and M. Blumenthal in 1955 climbed the mountain to examine its geological structure (Kaya, 2020).

Since the early 1950s, Noah's Ark has been the focus of numerous research studies and films. The event that propelled this topic was the claim by a Christian eyewitness in 1948 that he saw the ship under the ice of Mount Ararat. From this date onwards, a series of claims were made, and various research projects were initiated based on these claims. Especially in the 1980s, astronaut James Irwin and his team walked up the mountain and examined a large part of it. Despite their efforts, Irwin and his team have not yet provided any compelling evidence.

Another area within the borders of Ağrı province, which is indicated as a trace of Noah's Ark, is a formation located between the villages of Telçeker (Sürbehan) and Üzengili (Meşar) in the southern part of the Gürbulak Basin (Figure 2). This formation, resembling a ship-shaped structure, is situated just 3.5 km southwest

of the Türkiye -Iran transit road and 300 m east of the Üzengili Village. The oldest rock unit in the region is Upper Cretaceous ophiolites, containing various rock types such as altered serpentine, reddish limestone, and conglomeratic sandstones. This unit mainly consists of clay and absorbs water seeping from the colluvial material on top due to this characteristic. Additionally, the sliding surface of the large landslide has formed in this special unit (Avcı, 2001).

Figure 2. Ship-shaped structure located between the villages of Telçeker and Üzengili. (Photo: A. Jones))

Discovered by Captain İlhan Durupınar, a cartographer working at the General Directorate of Mapping, in 1959, this structure emerged during the examination of aerial photographs taken to map the district of Doğubayazıt. Prior to this date, there was little information in the media about this issue beyond religious sources. The incredibly lifelike resemblance of the formation to a ship led to the emergence of various ideas among individuals and groups since

1959. The striking resemblance of the formation to a ship prompted further investigation into the matter, and people continue to hope for the unveiling of unanswered questions regarding the ark conveyed through sacred texts by scientists.

Renowned photographer Ara Güler visited the region in 1961 and photographed the ship-shaped object discovered by Durupınar, introducing it to the world by publishing these photos in Hayat Magazine. It is claimed that the ship grounded after Noah's Flood and Noah's lost city of Naxuan are found in this vicinity. However, no concrete evidence has yet been obtained regarding these claims.

David Fasold, one of the first researchers to work in the Durupınar Site, conducted a significant study using radar equipment and frequency generators to collect findings related to the internal metal structure of the mass. In his study, he reported detecting a regular internal structure in their measurements and noted that the length of this formation was close to the dimensions of Noah's Ark mentioned in the sacred scriptures.

In collaboration with a group of researchers from the United States and academics from Atatürk University, a detailed study was conducted on the mass in 1985. Ground-penetrating radar (GPR), gravity-magnetic profile acquisition, seismic profiles, and signal generators were used to scan the surface of the mass thoroughly. The resulting report indicated the presence of iron-rich (limonite) material at several points in the samples, but doubts remained about whether these materials were of human origin, and no detailed examination had been conducted regarding the texture and shape. It was also noted that no man-made objects were found in the examinations conducted on the formation.

Ron Wyatt, who gained interest in Noah's Ark, used radar and other equipment in the 1980s to scan the formation and conduct chemical analyses. In his book "Discovered, Noah's Ark!" published in 1989, he provided detailed information about the electronic scanning results and related interpretations obtained in this study. According to the information obtained during the field research, despite the limited penetration depth of the radar used, it was stated that the ship-shaped formation in the area known as the Durupınar Site was not a natural formation but exhibited characteristics of a man-made object due to its symmetry and order, as well as vertical wall structures within the body shape. Wyatt's studies suggested that the formation matched the dimensions of Noah's Ark mentioned in the Bible. Additionally, based on the evidence he collected, he proposed that the ark originally resided higher up on the slope than its current

position and was moved down the slope over time by a lava flow, which caused it to be buried in mud and assume its current location. However, some geologists and archaeologists studying the formation rejected these claims, emphasizing that the ship-shaped silhouette found here was just one of the similar geological formations in the region.

Figure 3. Images of Wyatt's scans of the structure using radar and other equipment in the 1980s (https://noahsarkscans.nz)

Search efforts for Noah's Ark have been particularly pursued by Western scientists, and in 2014, New Zealander John Larsen initiated a new study using resistivity imaging technique to scan the buried object located in the area known as the Durupınar Site. In this study, it is claimed that penetration was made to a depth of 34.8 m, showing resistance changes along the ground and indicating a three-dimensional outline of a boat shape seen both on the surface and continuing underground (Figure 4). Additionally, when looking at the three-dimensional body shape from the resistivity images, it is noted that the front part extending beneath the ground resembles a ship design with a symmetrical and deep hull (https://noahsarkscans.nz/).

Undoubtedly, the location where Noah's Ark landed after the flood is one of the most intriguing stories in human history. Both religious scriptures and scientific research confirm this reality, which dates back approximately 5,000 years. Some of the research conducted on the formation known as the Durupınar Site, located in the Telçeker region of Doğubayazıt after attention turned to it following Mount Ararat, suggests that this formation, resembling a ship silhouette in an area prone to landslides, is not a natural formation but rather a ship built by human hands, with dimensions matching those of Noah's Ark as described in the sacred texts. The findings of these research studies, featured in national and international media outlets, are once again drawing attention to Mount Ararat and its surroundings. This situation necessitates action from relevant institutions and organizations in our country, highlighting the imperative need to capitalize on this opportunity.

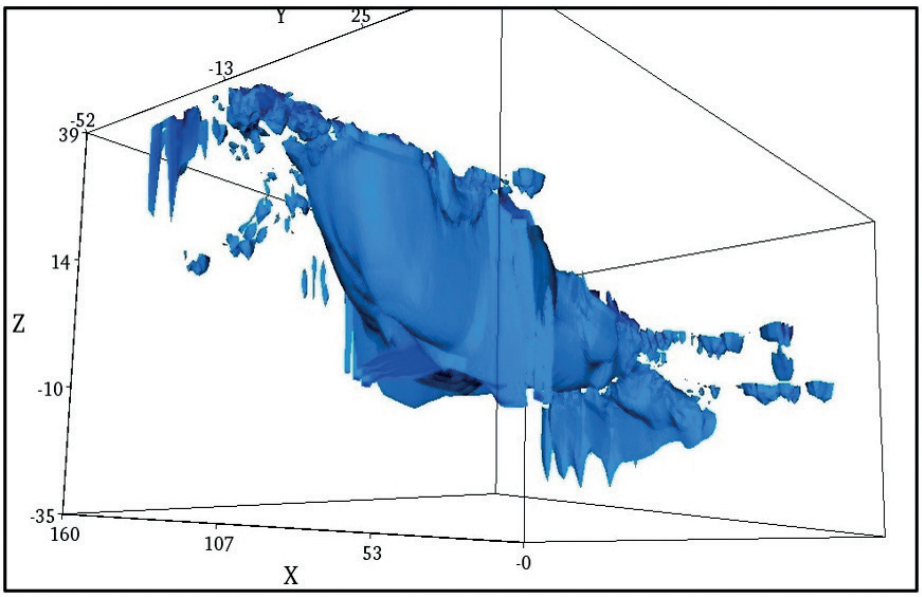

Figure 4. A section from Larsen's 2014 study scanning the ship-shaped structure located at the Durupınar Site using resistivity imaging technique (Photo: https://noahsarkscans.nz/).

Situated at the foothills of the Akyayla Mountains, this formation is located on top of mesoteriic aged rock units. It is believed that this region remained

unaffected by tectonic deformations for a long time. In this context, in 2022, a team of scientists from Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University and Istanbul Technical University initiated fieldwork. One of the initial results from laboratory analysis indicates the possibility of human activity dating back to the Chalcolithic Period (circa 5500-3000 BCE) based on ceramic fragments collected from sections opened during road construction near this formation. After all geological samples are thoroughly examined in ITU laboratories, further analysis and dating studies will be conducted, and the information obtained will be shared with the public. This situation holds significant importance for Türkiye in terms of its considerable tourism potential.

Faith Tourism and Its Effects on Regional Development

Faith tourism is a type of tourism where visitors travel to a region for religious or spiritual reasons. This form of tourism typically encompasses places of religious significance, as well as traditional rituals, cultural festivals, and other areas with religious history. Faith tourism can occur due to visitors' dedication to their personal beliefs and generally appeals to individuals seeking a spiritual experience. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) highlights in its report that faith tourism is a significant tourism type worldwide and can contribute to sustainable development.

Today, faith tourism has become a growing trend worldwide. According to data provided by the World Religious Travel Association (WRTA), approximately 300 million tourists worldwide engage in faith-based travel each year. These travels constitute a market of approximately $20 billion economically. These statistics demonstrate the potential of faith tourism as an alternative source of income for country development. Faith tourism has the potential to enhance tourist potential and contribute to sustainable development (Hussein-Saç, 2008).

The World Tourism Organization has forecasted a 20 % increase in tourism movements, including faith tourism, by the year 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged since the end of 2019 and particularly affected leading countries in tourism activities such as the USA, Europe, Mediterranean countries, China, and Russia, along with decisions to close borders and implement protective measures, hindered the realization of expectations for tourism and economic data.

Türkiye not only strategically occupies a position at the crossroads of Asia and Europe but also stands out as a country with a rich history spanning tens of thousands of years, cultural heritage, and natural beauty. Hosting significant centers of the three major religions - Islam, Christianity, and Judaism - and the long-standing peaceful coexistence of people with different faiths have made Türkiye one of the attractive countries.

This diversity has great potential for faith tourism. The fraction of tourists for religious purposes has not exceeded 0.06% of the total number of visitors in the recent decade, as reported by TUIK in 2022. The findings suggest that the potential for faith tourism in our country has not been completely used. Around 20,000 individuals, primarily international visitors, ascended Mount Ağrı in 2022, a site with substantial potential for religious tourism attributed to the belief in Noah's Ark. In the same year, some 226,000 tourists visited the İshak Paşa Palace and the Ahmed-i Hani Tomb, which are significant sites in the region's spiritual realm.

In this context, with the establishment of necessary tourism infrastructure in the Mount Ararat and surrounding areas, which have the potential to become globally significant pilgrimage sites associated with Noah's Ark, the number of domestic and international tourists can increase day by day, providing significant contributions to both national and regional development. The growing interest in such sacred places can revitalize the local economy, create employment opportunities, and improve infrastructure. Therefore, effectively harnessing this potential can make a significant contribution to regional development.

Indeed, when the photographs of the ship-shaped formation in the region were first published in Hayat Magazine in 1960, one of the most impressed by this image was the American businessman Walt Disney. Disney, who established Disneyland in California in 1955, redirected his route to Doğubayazıt for a different theme park and expressed his intention to invest $50 million in the region in a letter he sent to Durupınar, the discoverer of the formation. In his letter, Disney stated, "Since Prophet Noah is accepted by all religions, your country can be a center of visitation for all humanity." However, it is understood that Disney's offer did not find a response at that time due to the political and social situation in Türkiye. Today, our country's strong socioeconomic status and solid state structure present great potential to realize such dreams. In this context, we should strive to find new Walt Disneys and make Türkiye one of the world's leading centers of faith tourism through the province of Ağrı.

Mount Ararat stands as a symbol associated with Noah's Ark and the flood in the minds of many people. Furthermore, the claims that the ship-shaped structure found between the villages of Telçeker and Üzengili in Doğubayazıt, discovered in 1959 and attracting the attention of many researchers to this day, is Noah's Ark still remain relevant. Taking into account these claims, Ağrı province can become one of the significant destinations for faith tourism in our country, and there can be a significant increase in demand for faith tourism in Türkiye.

Noah's Ark holds great potential for faith tourism. The mystery of Noah's Ark will continue to arouse curiosity about Mount Ararat in the future as it has in the past. However, to fully harness this potential, infrastructure and promotional efforts in Mount Ararat and its surroundings need to be accelerated. Firstly, it is important to establish a museum similar to or more comprehensive than the Noah's Ark Museum in Hong Kong, visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists annually. Such a museum can turn the region into a global focal point for faith tourism by hosting hotels, zoos, park areas, and cultural events.

However, determining the exact location of Noah's Ark will be challenging. Without serious scientific research, it will not be possible to obtain clear information about the point of Noah's Ark's landing and its current location. Scientific studies on this matter are expected to continue for a long time. If one day, as a result of scientific research, the ship or its location is determined, this place will also be a place indicated by the holy books.

The impacts of faith tourism on regional development can be categorized under the following main headings:

» Tourist Expenditure: Faith tourism generates economic vitality in the visited region through expenditures on accommodation, dining, shopping, and tourist attractions by tourists.
» Local Employment: Diversified tourism activities influenced by faith tourism can support local employment. New job opportunities can be created in sectors such as restaurants, hotels, and guiding services.
» Infrastructure Suitable for Tourism Demand: Development of infrastructure and an increase in tourist services can be observed to meet the growing tourist demand in the region.
» Transportation Facilities: Improvements in transportation infrastructure can be made to ensure easy access for tourists to the region.

» Cultural Interaction: Tourists from different faiths can contribute to cultural exchange by interacting with the local community.
» Increase in Tolerance: The arrival of visitors from different faiths can contribute to the promotion of tolerance and understanding within the community.
» Promotion and Marketing: Regions with potential for faith tourism can reach a wider audience with the right promotion and marketing strategy.
» Touristic Diversity: Faith tourism can enhance the diversity of tourism in the region, catering to a wider range of tourist profiles.
» Awareness and Conservation: Visits by tourists to historical and cultural sites in the region provide an opportunity for the preservation of these areas and the promotion of sustainable tourism.
» Community Participation: Faith tourism projects can encourage the involvement of local communities in the planning and management of tourism activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Mount Ararat has attracted significant attention, especially from mountaineers and a select number of individuals engaged in scientific research (about 20,000 people ascended the summit in 2022). To effectively reach the desired audience for tourism activities, it is crucial to include not just climbers and scientists but also a wider range of the populace. By providing infrastructure, different tourism sectors, such as faith tourism, would thrive, not limited to mountaineering and trekking tourism. In this setting, the government's primary responsibility is to assess service quality, define norms explicitly, and enforce them firmly.

Ağrı Province has not adequately utilized the opportunity presented by hosting one of humanity's most major epics. This condition has evolved into a persistent and clearly substantial economic loss problem. Hence, previous passive tourist policies in the region, its industry, and its impact on our country's economy, particularly related to Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark, need to be revised. Given the current state of our country and the changing economic realities, this adjustment is not only appropriate but also necessary.

The mystery of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat will continue to be an important attraction for religion tourism, maintaining its enigmatic allure in the future. To unlock this potential and rejuvenate the area, infrastructure and promotional activities for faith tourism need to be expedited. An establishment akin to the Noah's Ark Museum in Hong Kong, which attracts hundreds of thousands of

tourists each year, should be created in Ağrı. Creating a museum in Ağrı with hotels, a zoo, park areas, exhibition halls, and cultural events can make Mount Ararat a prominent destination for religion tourism globally.

Faith tourism has undeniable positive effects on regional development and has the potential to contribute to sustainable development goals. This form of tourism has a substantial impact on cultural interchange, as well as economic and social aspects. The purpose of this study is to enhance the development of Ağrı, a province with low socioeconomic status, by creating a scientific foundation to identify tourism investments and strategic decisions related to Mount Ararat, and to offer solutions to existing issues.

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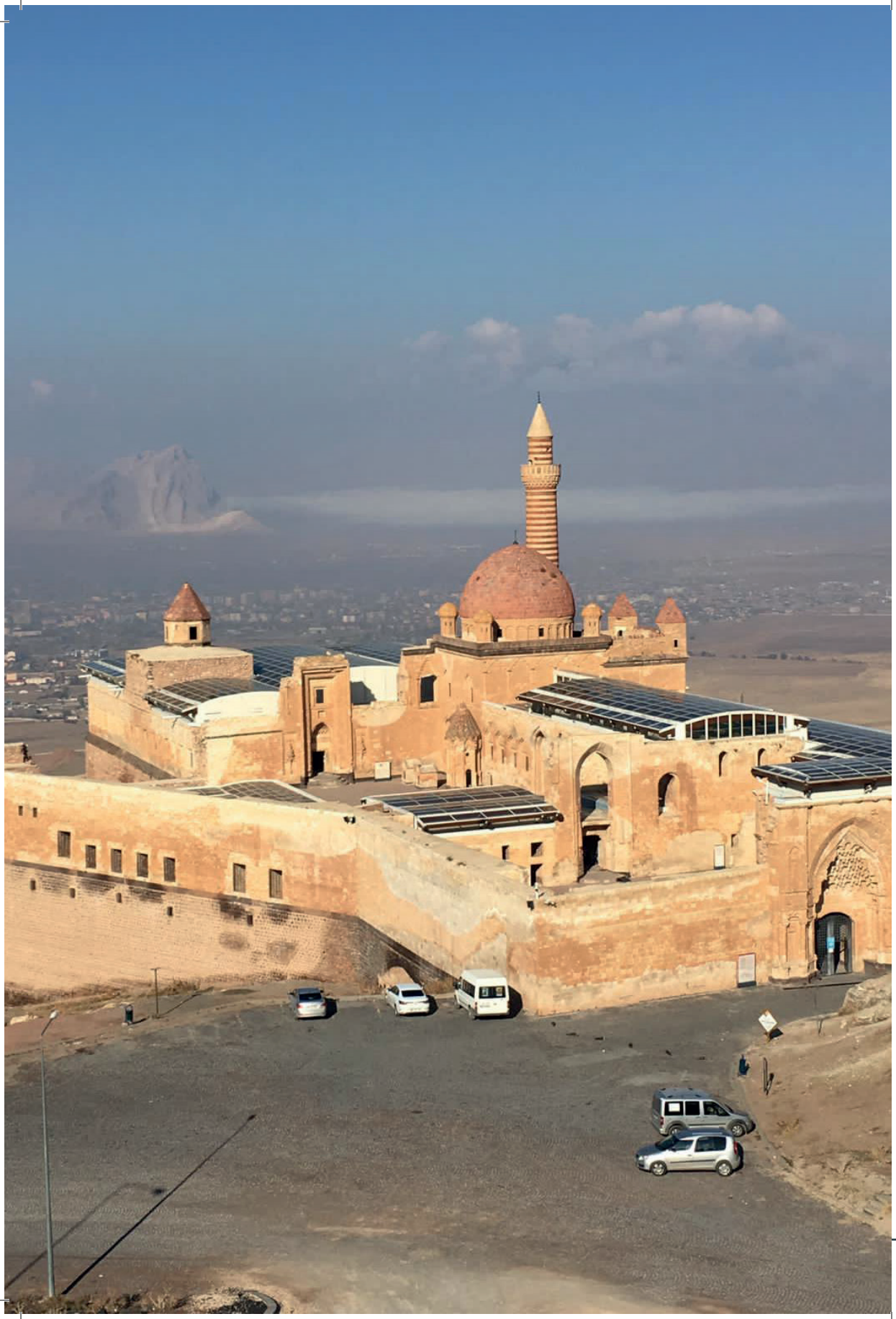

CHAPTER 2

Kalus Castle and the Kurgans

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Introduction

Although we researched it many years ago, we have not had the opportunity to publish the work entitled "Kalus Castle and Kurgans". However, we found it appropriate to evaluate it with a presentation at the recent International Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark Symposium VIII. Another important reason why we feel it is important to share this research with the scientific world at this time is to correct the incomplete and erroneous information that we have seen published so far about Kalus Castle.

Kalus Castle and its kurgans are located approximately 26-27 km northwest of the Doğubayazıt district. The closest settlement to the castle and the kurgans is Kazan Village to the southeast. The most convenient road to reach Kalus Castle in ancient times ran from near Sağlıksuyu (old Arzep) village to the northwest. The remains of the old road are still clearly visible today.

Geographically, Sağlıksuyu and its immediate surroundings reveal a process of increasing salinization of arid lands in some places. However, approximately 5,000 years ago, the surrounding area was covered with rich meadows and lush

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pastures, watered by cold and fresh springs. The immediate surroundings of Kalus Castle, which is at a higher elevation than the Doğubayazıt Plain, have the characteristics of a plateau. Therefore, there are many Early Iron Age castle ruins, kurgans and necropolises in the immediate vicinity. For example, there are scattered large and small kurgans just to the south of Kalus Castle, while Şorik Castle and its necropolis area, dating to the Early Iron Age, are located on the northern skirt of the castle.

Almost all of the kurgans have been excavated illegally by local people hoping to find treasure; thus, the burial chambers have been mostly destroyed and the grave goods have been plundered. Likewise, not only the architectural ruins of Şorik Castle have been mostly destroyed, but also the graves in the necropolis have also been illegally dug by people who, wanting to find treasure and grave goods, have also been ruthlessly plundered. In our book entitled "Early Iron Age Fortresses and Necropolises in East Anatolia", which we published in 2003, we drew the plans and sections of the Early Iron Age tombs of the Sorik necropolis that were plundered and announced them to the scientific world.

Kalus Castle in the Early Iron Age

Built on the cliffs of Kalus Mountain, ca. 2000 m above sea level, the castle displays the characteristics of a typical Early Iron Age defensive structure. Kalus Mountain, which is approximately 400 m higher than the surrounding plains, sits on a sloping plateau surrounded by a magnificent limestone cliff extending roughly in the east-west direction. The southern side of the limestone cliff is steep and flat, as if smoothed by human hands. This magnificent image still greatly impresses people today (Figure 1).

As in other Early Iron Age castles located in Nakhchivan, Northwest Iran, Eastern and Northeastern Anatolia Region, the defense of Kalus Castle was strengthened by building walls only at the weakest defensive parts of the terrain (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Kalus Castle cliff, from the south, (D. Jones)

Figure 2. Kalus Castle defensive walls, (M. Lordoğlu)

The western entrance of the castle is guarded by two monumental towers with a roughly square plan (Figure 3). There is a courtyard, albeit small, between the towers. The height of the tower walls, strongly built of large stones, is over

2.30 m today (Figure 4). Five to six rows of large stones from the tower walls have survived to this day. We have not yet been able to determine the precise height of the defensive wall when it was first built. However, we believe that the wall must have been higher than we see now because of the amount of fallen stones that lay at the base of the wall.

Figure 3. Kalus Castle defensive walls, (M. Lordoğlu)

The defensive wall, which continues from the tower towards the north, ends at a cliff (Figure 5). The defensive wall, which continues in fragments towards the east, also ends at a high cliff. The defensive wall, which continues towards the south, ends at a high rocky hill.

In the courtyard located at the northeastern part of this defensive wall, there are ruins of buildings built adjacent to the city wall. It can be seen that the limestone rocks used in the foundations of the room-shaped buildings are roughly square and rectangular in shape, similar to the limestone rocks used in the construction of city walls. We do not know for sure whether these rooms are temporary defense structures or not (Figure 6).

Figure 4. Kalus Castle defensive walls, (D. Jones)

Figure 5. Kalus Castle defensive wall, detail, (M. Lordoğlu)

Figure 6. Kalus Castle, building ruins (D. Jones)

It should be noted that the meticulous workmanship applied to the tower walls on both sides of the castle entrance is not seen in the construction of the defensive walls (Figure 7). The stones used in the city walls have more than four corners and are not very large. The spaces between the stones were filled with smaller "chink" stones to stabilize the wall. Mud was used as a binding material between the stones; the construction used the "dry wall" technique. However, the mud that was originally used has been exposed to wind, snow, and rainwater for hundreds of years, so it has mostly eroded away. No evidence was detected for the presence of adobe walls on top of the stone walls.

At present, we do not know for sure whether Kalus Castle was affiliated with the "Erikua Kingdom", the most powerful principality of the Ararat Mountain Region, of the Early Iron Age. Parallels for Kalus Castle's strategic location and extraordinary construction technique have not yet been found in the Eastern and the Northeastern Anatolia Region. The closest similarity to the strategic location and extraordinary construction technique of Kalus Castle is Çalhan Castle, located in the east of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

Like other Early Iron Age defensive castles located in Northwest Iran, Nakhchivan, Eastern and the Northeastern Anatolia Region, Kalus Castle is a defensive structure where semi-nomadic people in the surrounding area could take shelter with their animals during any enemy danger.

Figure 7. Kalus Castle defensive walls, (D. Jones)

Today, the question of why such a strong and monumental defensive castle was built comes to mind. However, approximately 3300 years ago, there were many Early Iron Age defensive castles, temporary settlements, kurgans and necropolises on the Doğubayazıt Plain. Castles, kurgans and necropolises belonging to semi-nomadic communities, where small cattle breeding was at the forefront of their economic production, provide clear information about the abundant population on the Doğubayazıt Plain in ancient times.

Kalus Castle During the Period of the Urartu Kingdom

Doğubayazıt plain and its immediate surroundings, came under the rule of the Urartian Kingdom beginning in the first quarter of the 9th century B.C. Before the military expeditions of the Urartian Kings to the South Caucasus, economic and military administrative centers were established in the regions south of the Aras River. The most important of the economic and military management centers were strengthened in the west, with the Çok Hasan Castle and Doğubayazıt Castle, as well as the Kalus Castle, which were established in the Early Iron Age period during the joint rule of King İşpuini and his son Minua, and especially during the rule of King Minua.

When looking to the east from Kalus Castle, Doğubayazıt Plain and Büyük Ararat Mountain can be seen in all their majesty (Figure 8). As we mentioned before, Kalus Castle controls the historical trade routes leading to the Aras Basin and the South Caucasus to the north.

Figure 8. Mount Ararat from Kalus Castle, (M. Lordoğlu)

In addition, Kalus Castle also controls the roads leading to the famous Suluçem Plateau, Fish Lake and Sinek Plateau to the west. It also ensures the security of the famous Ferhat Irrigation Arc, which runs from Lake Balık carrying water to the Doğubayazıt Plain to the east, and the 126 km long Urartian Irrigation Canals, which come from the Zor Osman Pasha Canal and pass near the Gürbulak Border Gate in the east, going to the lands of Northwest Iran. For this reason, a defensive fortress and military administrative center was established in this very strategic location on the Doğubayazıt Plain. Such as strategic center like this, in support of the expansion of the territory of the Urartu Kingdom, has never been encountered until now.

Apart from the city walls of the Kalus Castle, another interesting archaeological remain from the Urartu Kingdom period is the large rock tunnel in the courtyard (Figure 9). Most likely, the mouth and interior of the rock tunnel led down to a cistern, which was opened to meet the water needs of the people living in the castle; this cistern has been filled with stones, rocks and soil layers for hundreds of years. Millions of cubic meters of stone, used in the construction of the walls, were obtained from the rich limestone rocks in the immediate vicinity, conveniently reducing the amount of labor needed for bringing building materials to the construction sites.

Figure 9. Urartian water tunnel, (M. Lordoğlu)

Kalus Mountain is presently being utilized by local people as a limestone quarry due to the abundance and high quality of its limestone rocks. The fact that limestone is of very high quality and possesses considerable economic value has enabled the business to expand greatly. Unfortunately, the production carried out with dynamite and modern machines in the limestone quarry causes great damage to the rocks of Kalus Mountain. Kalus Castle, which is extremely important for the archeology and cultural history of the Doğubayazıt Region, dating back to the Iron Age, needs to be declared a "1st Degree Archaeological Site", in order to be saved from destruction and preserved for tourism.

Urartu Kingdom of Doğubayazıt Region-Importance for the Economy

The famous "Silk Road", which starts from China in Central Asia and passes through Afghanistan-India-Northwestern Iran, passes today's Gürbulak Border Gate on the Turkey-Iran border and reaches the front of Doğubayazıt Castle and city, and on to Kalus Castle after 30 km.

Various items brought by caravans from the Silk Road were of vital importance for the economy of the Urartian Kingdom. These items included tin, metal mirrors, tens of thousands of beads made of precious and semi-precious stones, necklaces, various types of women's jewelry and makeup, perfume, henna, saffron and various spices. In particular, tin, which was not found in the Caucasus, Eastern and Northeastern Anatolia Region, was of great importance for the economy and bronze industry of the Urartian Kingdom.

The "Salt Mountain" in the Nakhchivan Region and the rich rock salt deposits in Kağızman, which were captured during the reign of Işpuini and his son Minua, Urartian Kings, were exploited intensively. Rock salt was, of course, of great importance for the social life and economy of the Urartian Kingdom. Since there was no salt in the Caucasus Region, rock salt was as valuable as gold to the Urartians. Therefore, the profits obtained from the rock salt trade made a great contribution to the Urartian economy.

Kurgans

As noted in the introduction, some of the more than 60 kurgans located in the northeast of the Doğubayazıt Plain have been illegally excavated by treasure hunters; yet some of them have survived until today without being excavated. The largest kurgans of varying diameters are located on the eastern foothills of Mount Kalus. The size of the burial chamber and the diameter of the crypt in the illegally excavated kurgans are clearly visible (Figure 10). However, the construction technique of the side walls of the rectangular burial chamber is unknown. For example, we do not know whether the side walls of the burial chamber were built using the corbelling technique.

In general, the diameters of kurgans vary between 4 and 38 m, and their heights vary between 1 and 4.5 m. Most of the Kalus Kurgans date back to the Early and Middle Bronze Age as well as the Early Iron Age. However, it is understood that the tradition of making kurgans continued in the region even into the Middle Iron Age.

Figure 10. An illegally dug kurgan, (D. Jones)

Conclusion

In ancient times, Kalus Castle and its immediate surroundings had the characteristics of a real plateau with its rich spring waters, mountain meadows and lush pastures. The surroundings of Kalus Castle, with its plateau characteristics, were an invaluable blessing for the semi-nomadic communities, in whose economic life small cattle breeding had an important place.

The numerous castle ruins, kurgans and necropolises around Kalus Castle that have survived until today provide information about the high human population density in the region during the Early Iron Age. It can be seen that very careful and meticulous planning was involved in the establishment of defensive castles on steep and high rocks and buttes on the plateau, as well as in the selection of the location of kurgans and necropolises. In addition, the extraction and transportation of large stone blocks from limestone cliffs, the construction of monumental towers and castle walls, and the creation of large kurgan mounds required the organization of a large number of workers—meaning there was a fairly high population density in the region.

Such comprehensive work that requires such a great organization must be carried out by a strong, centralized administration. It is also evident that

this administration (principality) also provided protection of the freshwater resources, ensured the security of large animal herds and pastures, and resolved disputes between various semi-nomadic communities that occupied the region. For now, we are uncertain whether the local government (principality) can be identified with the "Erikua Kingdom", the most powerful principality in the Ararat Mountain Region.

Kalus Castle and its immediate surroundings began to experience its brightest political and economic period starting during the first quarter of the 9th century BC. The lively trade, which started with the sale of various metals and goods brought from Central Asia in the east via the "Silk Road" to people in the cities in Northeast and Eastern Anatolia, continues until today. Salt production and trade from the rock salt deposits in Tuzluca and Kağızman near Doğubayazıt that began during the time of the Urartu Kingdom continued, without losing any of its importance, until the 1960's.

More than 60 large and small kurgans located around the Kalus Castle and in the northeast of the Doğubayazıt Plain provide information about the burial tradition of the Middle, Late Bronze and Early Iron Age. Kurgans, which adorn nature like pearls, also reflect the characteristic feature of the South Caucasus kurgan culture. Unfortunately, most of the kurgans have been destroyed by illegal digging by treasure hunters. Thus, we do not have the slightest information about the metal objects, weapons, women's jewelry and pottery that were illicitly removed from the burial chambers of the kurgans.

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CHAPTER 3

Gods, Mountains and Temples

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The Mysterious Allure of Mountains

Amazement, fear, curiosity, respect, veneration-mountains have always aroused contrasting sensations in man. Being the highest place on earth and therefore closest to the sky, in all religious cultures the mountain is the place where divinity communicates with humanity and above all the place where it resides. From Mount Olympus in Greece where the gods resided, to the Christian tradition for which sanctuaries are often placed at the top of a hill.

In the theological tradition of the word "Mount", man has always sought its geographical correspondence in order to pray there. They are sacred mountains, mythical or mythologized or even idealized. There is no region of the world that is without one-there is no people that does not have one; some have even more than one. Japan alone has 354.

The categories of arcane mountains are various and not easily comparable: mountains are home to treasures or relics; they host monasteries, sanctuaries, temples, as well as fortresses or abandoned cities; there are cursed mountains and angelic mountains, sacred mountains, holy mountains, hermit mountains, and mountains that symbolize entire countries and populations.

Each mountain has its own story-its own narrative: magnetic powers like Mount Calamita (Elba Island, Italy, 413 m); the place of the transfiguration of

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Jesus on Mount Tabor (Israel, 588 m); the burial place of Moses on Mount Nebo (Jordan, 817 m); the autonomous monastic state like Mount Athos (Greece, 2033 m); the locus of God's revelation on Mount Sinai (Egypt, 2287 m); a biblical border like Mount Hermon (Syria, 2814 m); the home of the gods like Mount Olympus (Greece, 2918 m); a religious symbol and site of sanctuaries like Mount Fuji (Japan 3776 m), a pilgrimage destination like Kailash (Himalaya, Tibet, 6638 m), and a refuge like Mount Ararat (Turkey , 5137 m).

Among the most disparate of mountains, both Mount Fuji and Mount Ararat bring together distinctive geomorphological characteristics and exceptional qualities: the ascent of Fuji up to 3776 m high is done in stages, proceeding between sacred temples and monumental arches; Mount Ararat with its 5137 m height is one of the highest volcanoes in the world.

Among the mountains hosting monasteries, sanctuaries, temples or fortresses, Kailash and Ararat are by far the highest arcane mountains.

Heaven--the Divine Abode

Heaven, or the heavens, is a common religious cosmological or transcendent supernatural place where beings such as deities, angels, souls, saints, or venerated ancestors are said to either originate, be enthroned, or reside or a combination of all three of these understandings. According to the beliefs of some religions, heavenly beings can descend to Earth or incarnate and earthly beings can ascend to Heaven in the afterlife or, in exceptional cases, enter Heaven without dying.

Heaven is often described as a "highest place", the holiest place, a Paradise, in contrast to hell or the Underworld or the "low places" and universally or conditionally accessible by earthly beings according to various standards of divinity, goodness, piety, faith, or other virtues or right beliefs or simply divine will. Some believe in the possibility of a heaven on Earth in a world to come.

Mountain Tops and Ancient Gods

High places in general and tall mountains in particular are the most likely places where humans can contact and interact with the Divine-this is logical because if the abode of the gods or God is in heaven, then mountains are reasonably the place on earth that can be expected to be the closest to the Divine.

Mountains are either understood as penetrating or being a part of heaven—or they are close enough to heaven that when the Divine descends to meet humans it is the mountain tops where this meeting takes place. Thus, mountain tops (or any high place) is where humans go to meet the Divine.

This intersection point between heaven and earth is sometimes referred to as the *axis mundi*. While an *axis mundi* can have a variety of definitions the concept can be more broadly defined as a place of connection between heavenly and the earthly realms (Schuon, 1982) – since mountains (and any elevated site) is closer to heaven - the Divine abode-tall mountains are naturally often regarded as being sacred and holy spaces and will often exhibit shrines or temples erected by humans either at the base-or more preferably (depending on the belief system and how appropriate it is for humans to enter the presence of God-at the summit.(Axis mundi, 2023) Such shrines and/or temples are often understood as an actual dwelling place for the gods or God and are the places where humans (usually priests) undertake special rituals, prayers, etc. by which they interact with the Divine-maybe to seek Divine favor or forgiveness for past transgressions against the Divine.

Since the abstract concept of *axis mundi* is present in many cultural traditions and religious beliefs around the world, it can be thought to exist in any number of locales at once.

Examples of Holy Mountains Around the World

There are many examples of high mountains around the world whose summits are considered holy because of the presence of the Divine-these can be found with or without structures (temples, shrines, etc) (Marcarini, 2022)

Mount Kunlun fills such a role in China. Specifically, during the China's Middle Kingdom, China had a central mountain, Kunlun, known in Taoist literature as "the mountain at the middle of the world". To "go into the mountains" meant to dedicate oneself to a spiritual life.

Mount Kailash i holy to Hinduism and several religions in Tibet. The Pitjantjatjara people in central Australia consider Ulura to be central to both their world and culture. The Teide volcano was for the Canarian aborigines (*Guanches*) a kind of *axis mundi*. Hindu temples in India are often situated on high mountains – e.g., Amarnath, Tirupati, Vaishno Devi etc.

In the "New World" the pre-Columbian residents of Teotihuacán in Mexico erected huge pyramids, featuring staircases leading to heaven. The Amerindian temples were often placed on top of caves or subterranean springs, which were thought to be openings to the underworld.

The ancient Greeks regarded several sites as places of Earth's omphalos (navel) stone, notably the oracle at Delphi, while still maintaining a belief in a cosmic world tree; Mount Olympus was understood to be the abode of the gods.

Mountain-top Temples and Shrines in the Ancient Near East

Turning to the ancient Near East, the locus of the meeting place been humans and the divine can, of course, simply be outside on a high place-any elevated feature of the natural topography. But more often than not the meeting place occurs in a structure. This structure can be on a natural elevated location-hill or mountain top-or it can be at a lower place-even on a flat plain –but in that case, there is a humanmade structure with a chamber of some sort at the top for meeting the god/gods, and this meeting chamber is accessed by climbing stairs. (It has been suggested by Romanian religious historian Mircea Eliade that the architecture of sacred places always represents a mountain: "Every temple or palace – and by extension, every sacred city or royal residence – is a Sacred Mountain, thus becoming a Centre.")

The most obvious examples of such structures that are not on mountains but represent mountains would be the Ziggurats of ancient Mesopotamia used by both the Assyrians and the Babylonians These structures were constructed on the flat river plain between and alongside the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It is understood from Herodotus (c. 484 – c. 425 BC), the famous Greek historian and geographer, that at the top of the ziggurat was a shrine that facilitated interaction with the gods. However, although erosion has destroyed the upper parts of the ziggurat's so there is actually no archaeological evidence for this.

In the hilly country like ancient Palestine, meeting places for the god(s) would be constructed wherever it was convenient-sometimes that would actually be on a high hill or mountain-at other times it would be built in a lower place but the worship area would still be reached by ascending steps so the worshiper was ascending towards God or the gods who are always seen as being above humans.

In the Hebrew Bible (Torah) Jacob's ladder provides an image of an *axis mundi*. A more tangible and institutionalized axis mundi is the Hebrew and Jewish temples constructed on the Temple Mount, alternately known as Mt Zion.

For Christians, the Cross on Mount Calvary expresses this symbol of a connection between heaven and earth. Similarly, Mt Tabor, sometimes identified as the Mount of Transfiguration where Christ and two of his disciples are met by Moses and Elijah who descend from heaven to encourage Christ before the Crucifixion, is such a mountain.

Mount Herman (on the border of Israel and Syria today) was regarded as the *axis mundi* in Canaanite tradition, from where the sons of God are introduced while descending in 1 Enoch 6:6.

The ancient Armenians had a number of holy sites, the most important of which was, of course, Mount Ararat which was thought to be the home of the gods as well as the center of the universe. We will comment on this more below.

The Case of Ağrı Dagi

As noted, shrines or temples atop holy mountains seem to be more common in the ancient Near East (ANE). As we saw, several of the more prominent ANE mountains are noted for their temples. That leaves the question-what about the tallest and, arguably, the most famous of all the holy mountains-Mt Ararat (Ağrı Dagi)? When thinking about Ararat, most people naturally think of the Ark-and not surprisingly, the presence of the Ark is what most people look for.

However, there is a curious-and perhaps significant-description in Gilgamesh tablet 11 in which the Ark appears as a replica of the ziggurat of Babylon, known as Etemenanki, the measurements of which are known from the so-called Esangil Tablet and inscriptions of Esarhaddon.[3] As Parpola asserts, the coincidence of the measurements cannot be accidental, since the dream sent to Utnapishtim before the Flood stresses the significance of the ark's dimensions: The boat that you are going to build, her dimensions should all correspond: her breadth and length should be the same, cover her with a roof, like the Apsû (Gilg. XI 28-31).

Parpola asks "Why would the ark replicate the ziggurat of Babylon?

[3] Gilgamesh Epic, lines 58-63 of Tablet XI describe the extraordinary structure and dimensions of the ark: a perfect cube measuring one iku (= 10 nindan x 10 nindan = 8,100 m^2) in surface area, 10 nindan (= 90 m) in height and 10 nindan each side of its square top, provided with 6 lofts, and divided vertically into 7 and internally into 9 parts.

> *Because the ziggurat, with its seven stages associated with the seven planetary spheres, symbolized the heavenly ladder by which the goddess Ištar, the archetype of the human soul crossed the boundary between heaven and netherworld, and hence the path to heaven for humans seeking salvation in the footsteps of the goddess. This was also the function of the ark that Utnapishtim was told to build: Demolish the house, build a boat! Abandon riches and seek survival, spurn property and save life! Put on board the boat the seed of all living creatures! (Gilg. XI 24-27) The last sentence implies that ark was to offer salvation not just to Utnapishtim and his family but all the people entering it, including their descendants in future times (see below).(Parpola, 2014)*

The last sentence implies that ark was to offer salvation not just to Utnapishtim and his family but all the people entering it, including their descendants in future times (see below). Could it be that in Gilgamesh we have an indication-whether or not it was reconstructed from the Ark-that there was a temple of wood built on Mt. Ararat to perpetuate a cult of salvation-a cult tied to the salvation offered by the Ark-through the ministries of the goddess Ishtar?

Why is the Ark Landing place called Nisir/Nimush?

There is an interesting reference in the Gilgamesh Epic about the landing place of the Ark as the Flood waters began to subside. According to Tablet 11:141a of Gilgamesh, the Ark landed on **Mt. Niṣir**, also called **Mount Nimuš,** thought by many today to be identified with Pir Omar Gudrun today known as Jabal Birah Magrun (elevation 2588 m [8490 ft.]), in northern Iraq (Kurdistan).

Lambert has noted that the correct name is Nimuš, based on the fact that Nimuš appears as a unambiguously spelled theophoric element on a personal name from an individual from this region. Using the name of a Divine Mountain as part of one's name appears to have been a known practice for individuals from this region in the Old Babylonian period. Other individuals used the names of other mountains from this same region as part of their names. The reason for this, Lambert explains, is that in northern Mesopotamia, mountains (and other geographic features) were considered as deities. Thus, Nimuš was the name of a Divine Mountain.

At the same time, Lambert notes that these Divine mountains in northern Mesopotamia did not possess temples (Lambert, 1986) Thus, there was no temple dedicated to Nimuš. Yet, in Gilgamesh, we are told that the ark on top

of Nimuš functioned as a ziggurat—a temple! Did the Sîn-lēqi-unninni—the presumed writer of Gilgamesh-know that there was no temple on Nimuš?

The name of the mountain on which the ark landed is written ambiguously (^{kur}.NI-MUŠ) or KUR^{ú} (^{kur}.NI-MUŠ) and can be read either Niṣir or Nimuš. Royal Inscriptions from Ashur-nasir-pal II regularly write the name of this mountain as (KUR^{e}) ^{kur}.NI-MUŠ. The very existence of ambiguous spellings in ancient sources raises the question as to whether or not people in antiquity were also uncertain as to whether the mountain was pronounced **Niṣir**, or **Nimuš**. Modern scholars were not sure until Lambert discovered the occurrence Nimuš in OB personal names**.** What if ancient writers (like Sîn-lēqi-unninni) were unaware of this unambiguous spelling from the 19th/18th centuries when Gilgamesh was written in the 13th-10th centuries? In any case, Parpola has reasonably proposed that even if the writer was aware, he deliberately took advantage of the ambiguous spelling to draw the reader to the Nisir spelling to take advantage of its meaning as a *hidden* or *secret place*.

In his *editio princeps* (1875, 270), George Smith chose the former reading-a reading that went unchallenged until W. G. Lambert, based on the unambiguous spelling *Ni-mu-uš* in an Old Babylonian personal name-*id-din-ni-mu-uš*, suggested that the correct reading was Nimuš (Lambert 1986). Lambert reminds us that Nimuš was considered a Divine Mountain at least as early as the time of Rim-Sîn I (ca. 1822 BC to 1763 BC (middle chronology) during whose time Nimuš appears as a theophoric element in the personal names of northerners working in the south. Although the evidence is slim, it seems conclusive, and the mountain now appears as Nimuš in Andrew George's recent critical edition (2003) and in all post-1986 translations of the epic. The appearance of Nimuš as a theophoric element in personal names and the fact that Nimuš is identified as a mountain would indicate that the mountain was recognized as a holy mountain-a divine mountain in and of itself or the abode for a god or gods. Of course, this was a common ascription for many great mountains in the ANEA.

That a mountain in northern Assyria possessed this name is clear from the records of Assurnasirpal II's campaign. And the same name appears at the mountain of the Ark's landing in Gilgamesh. However, is it the same mountain? Prior to Lambert's discovery about Nimuš, Lipinski expressed his doubts:

> *However, even if the name is the same, it cannot be inferred from the location of the historical mountain range of Nisir that this was also the traditional landing-place of the ark. The name has been chosen because of its Semitic meaning.*

While it is now Lambert's argument that the proper name for the mountain was Nimuš, Parpola still believes that the "double" reading (Nisir/Nimuš) was deliberate therefore the reading of Nisir is still in play because of its meaning as a secret, hidden place.

> *I suggest therefore that Nimuš was chosen because it was a relatively well-known mountain not far from Assyria (only 100 km from Arbela as the crow flies) and especially because its ambiguous spelling suited the hidden agenda of the poet. It is a double entendre meant at the same time to hide and reveal: on the surface, the ark lands on Nimuš; but on the allegorical level the most important interpretational level of the epic it lands on Nisir, a mountain hidden behind the surface.*

The primacy of the allegorical interpretation, in effect, cancels the need for Nimuš to be understood in any literal historical fashion and we are left, in effect, with an argument similarly put forth by Lipinski-that the name Nisir/Nimuš was chosen because of its meaning (secret/hidden)-which suited the purpose of the poet of the Gilgamesh Epic. This would mean that other candidates, such as Jebel Cudi or Ağrı Dagi could still be viable candidates for where the ancients actually thought the Ark landed.

A Hidden Place for the Presence of God and Divine Salvation?

While Parpola offers some intriguing reasons as to why the location of the Ark's Landing place had to be kept secret, one obvious reason would be (if Parpola is right) that actual location of the Landing of the Ark had to be kept hidden because had become a restricted realm reserved only for those empowered to enter the presence of the Divine as an intermediary between heaven and earth with the purpose of bringing salvation to humankind. Common humans would be forbidden to enter this holy place-only qualified priests (or king-priests) could come forth before the presence of the Divine.

Ararat-Still a Place of Salvation?

A further question can also be asked, does the author of Gilgamesh provide a hint of the real landing place of the ark, by his reference to Masis as the locale where Gilgamesh searched for the hero of the flood-who was thought to possess the secret of salvation (immortality) reside? Is there an unspoken irony that in Gilgamesh's searching for the locus of Salvation by descending into the depths of Masis, while the actual answer for acquiring salvation was right above him-on the summit of Masis-the mountain where the gods resided-and where they blessed Noah's sacrifice upon leaving the ark and award him with eternal life? Was the ark on Ararat-the means of salvation for the ante-diluvial world, turned into a temple that would continue to provide a means of salvation for the post-diluvial world as Parpola suggests? If so, should explorers be looking for a mountain top temple, instead of a boat? As seen above in our introduction, temples on mountain tops to access the Divine are common throughout human history. Maybe future research will resolve these intriguing questions.

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CHAPTER 4

The Quest for Ancient Inscriptions: The Results of a Challenging Exploration of the Turkish-Iranian Border in Search of Ancient inscriptions Possibly Related to Noah's Ark

Andrew JONES [1]

Introduction

In this study, uphill from the Durupinar Noah's Ark formation (Figure 1) near Üzengili village in the Doğubayazıt district we investigate the possibility that stone markers along the international border of Türkiye and Iran (Figure 2) might have ancient inscriptions associated with the story of Noah's Ark. The existence of these inscriptions was first noted by Ron Wyatt in 1984. (Wayt, 1988) Markings on the stones were in three different scripts according to Wyatt.

According to a book about Wyatt's research into the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation in 1984, "As Ron [Wyatt] and Mr. Baser proceeded up the mountainside to the top of the ridge near the Iranian border, they encountered another amazing discovery. Near the top of the ridge, Ron found broken pieces of stone which contained an inscription. (Figure 4 & 5) The pieces were being used in a more recent structure which looked to be a boundary marker. The broken pieces were quite large and most had the side with the inscription exposed which allowed him to see them so he could try to draw a reconstruction. These blocks contained numerous inscriptions in what looked like three different forms of writing, but he didn't recognize any of them except the cuneiform… He believed

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there was only one explanation- that it was erected in historical times to mark the location of the original landfall of the ark," (Wyatt, 2004) (Figure 3 & 6).

Figure 1. The Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation. Image source: Andrew Jones, June 2019.

Yet, Wyatt's claims have not been independently examined onsite until now, and archaeologists have not systematically studied the stones along the border. Due to the sensitive nature of the border area special permits were required to document the border markers especially with a foreigner on the research team. A drone was determined to be the best method due to the possibility of land mines in the area. Close-up drone photos of each side of these border markers revealed Farsi numbers and not ancient inscriptions as Wyatt had believed.

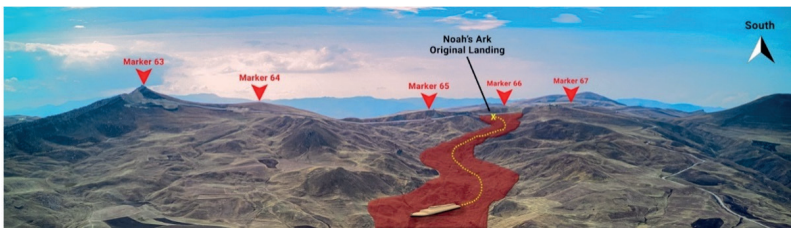


Figure 2. The locations and numbers of the Turkish-Iranian border markers above the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation. Ron Wyatt theorized that Noah's Ark landed at a higher elevation near the current border and later came down the mountainside to its current location. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 3. Wyatt's reconstruction drawing of a carving along the Turkish-Iranian border. The stone pieces of the carving he believed when assembled showed Noah's Ark with 8 figures inside the boat and 2 birds flying overhead. Image Source: Ron Wyatt.

Figure 4. Ron Wyatt in the mid-1980s standing next to border marker number 65 which shows a carving on the Iranian (south) side of the border marker with Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı) in the background to the north. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1984.

Figure 5. Border marker number 63 (Iranian side).Ron Wyatt believed the darkened carved figure on the left was a bird shape. The figure on the right is not explained. The book on Wyatt's research, Doomsday Mountain, wonders why the figures were blackened. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1988.

Figure 6. Ron Wyatt thought that border marker number 65 showed the part of the reconstructed drawing that is circled in red. The partial oval shape he believed represented Noah's Ark with a bird above it. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1984.

Methods

Over the last 17 years, we have been exploring mostly on foot much of the area around and above the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation. (Figure 7) Due to the border being off limits to foreigners and to even most locals we requested the help of a Turkish archaeologist in 2019.

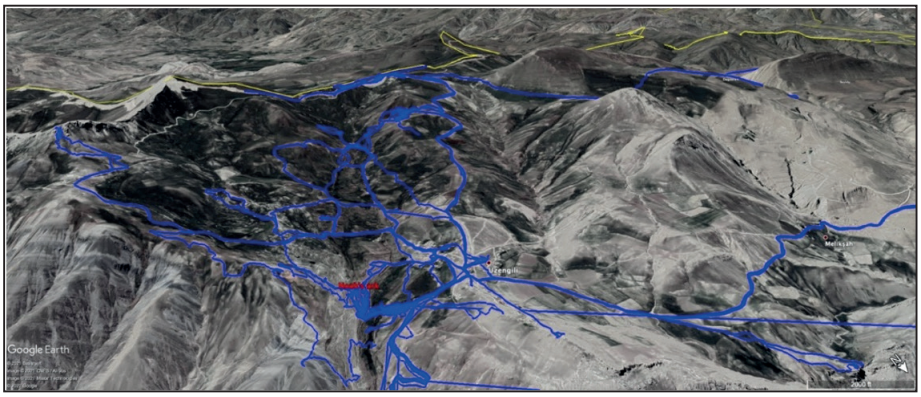


Figure 7. GPS tracks in blue along the Turkish-Iranian border (yellow line) showing all our exploration around and above the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation from April 2014 to July 31, 2021. Image source: Google Earth.

Our research team consisted of three members: one Turkish archaeologist, one official from Türkiye's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and one American researcher who later was the drone operator. The Turkish archaeologist obtained the necessary permits and permissions from the Turkish and Iranian authorities to conduct the research, which took place over three visits on October 10, 2019, July 15, 2021, and July 27, 2021.

We used a DJI Mavic 2 Pro drone, equipped with a 4K camera and a GPS system, to capture high-resolution aerial images of the stone border markers from all sides along with a DSL and iPhone camera. We flew the drone at a low altitude of around 2-3 meters off the ground and maintained a safe distance from the border fences and markers without flying too far into Iran. Before we flew the drone we had already identified and located the stone markers based on Wyatt's descriptions, as well as our own observations from the 2019 and 2021 visits to the area and consultations with a local guide. We recorded the coordinates and photographed all sides of markers 64-67. We also noted the environmental and topographical features of the surrounding border area.

We collected and analyzed the drone data using various software tools, such as Adobe Photoshop and Google Earth. We enhanced and cropped the images to highlight any inscriptions and carvings on the stone markers and compared them with Wyatt's photographs and drawings. We also compared the Farsi numbers to the numbers used by the Turks. We consulted with other scholars in the field to verify and cross-check our interpretations.

April 30, 2014 Visit to The Border

We made our first visit to the Turkish-Iranian border on April 30, 2014 but the Turkish military base commander at that time wouldn't allow us to go out to the stone border markers from the base. He was happy to take a photo with us (Figure 8) and even said we could explore Ron Wyatt's proposed Noah's ark original landing site valley below his base but to beware of the Turkish sheepdogs. We decided it was best to try to explore the landing site another time. We took notice of the topography of the border area.

Figure 8. April 30, 2014 visit to the Turkish-Iranian border. Image source: Debbie Thompson Kippel, 2014.

October 10, 2019 Visit to The Border

On October 10, 2019, we received official permission to visit the border. Our team included a Turkish archaeologist and an official from the Ministry of Cul-

ture and Tourism. We saw that there were several border markers all along the border spaced approximately every 500 meters (Figure 11) and that was when we found that the border markers were behind barbed wire yet still standing and protected from tourists and locals. We were told though that the ground on the other side of the barbed wire was mined so we couldn't yet get to all the sides of the stones in the markers to photograph them. We were able to get close to border marker number 65 (Figure 9 &10) which is the stone marker that Ron Wyatt stood behind in his 1984 photograph. This marker Wyatt claimed had a boat shape carved on it along with a bird.

Figure 9. Andrew Jones standing next to border marker number 65 on the Turkish-Iranian border. The Turkish side of the stone border marker is clearly labeled "65" in black paint. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2019.

Figure 10. Border marker number 65 in black paint. Image source: Nilay İğrek, 2019.

Figure 11. The locations and numbers of the Turkish-Iranian border markers above the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation. The October 2019 clearly documented the border markers' numbering scheme for the Turkish side. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

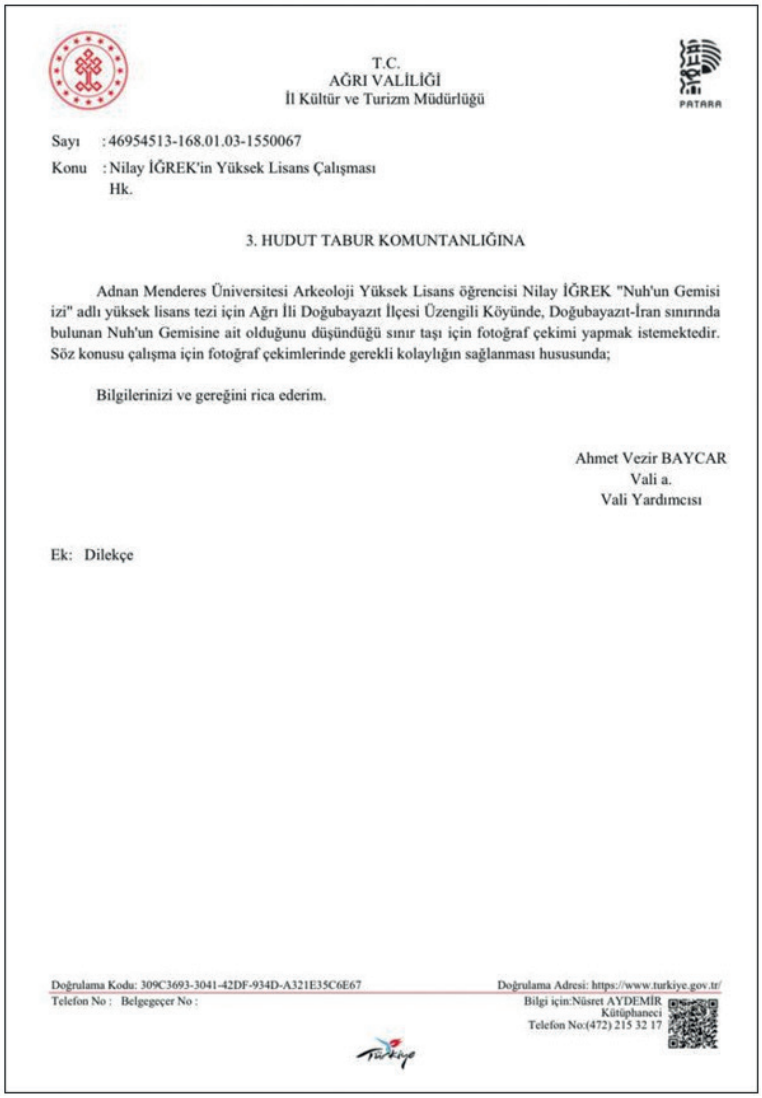
July 15, 2021 Visit to The Border

Finally, permission (Figure 12) was obtained to visit the border markers in the Turkish military zone along the border with Iran with permission from Ankara, the Turkish military, and the Governor of Ağrı province, as well as from the Iranians.

First, on July 15th we visited the border with a Turkish archaeologist and an official again from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to document as many of the stone structures with a DSLR camera. The military border base commander was the same one we had met a month early at Noah's ark. He had come down to the visitor center to set up a photographic display board about Noah's ark for a high-ranking military officer visiting from Ankara. We discussed the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation research and we gave him a quick presentation about the geophysical surveys done at the site and gave him two free books about Noah's Ark. We got as close as we could to border marker number 66 (Figure 14 & 15) and went back to marker number 65 (Figure 13) next to the Turkish military border tower.

We noticed that border marker number 65 had new cement covering a lot of the top and sides. It looked like it was just recently repaired by the military. The commander and his soldiers tried their best to help us and even put a wooden ladder over the barbed wire fence to get to the other side so we could photograph the Iranian side of marker number 65. We did ask the commander if the markers were on Turkish soil or not. He said they marked the exact border with Iran and that the south-facing side of the stone markers was in Iran. We photographed markers 65 and 66 as best we could as they were next to the barbed wire but

the other markers were farther away from the Turkish barbed wire fence and impossible to photograph with the DSLR camera that we had with us. We knew that to better document all the sides of these markers we needed a drone. We briefly discussed all this with the base commander and he was in agreement. We left to get the required permits to fly the drone in this military zone.



T.C.
AĞRI VALİLİĞİ
İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü

PATARA

Sayı : 46954513-168.01.03-1550067
Konu : Nilay İĞREK'in Yüksek Lisans Çalışması Hk.

3. HUDUT TABUR KOMUNTANLIĞINA

Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Arkeoloji Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Nilay İĞREK "Nuh'un Gemisi izi" adlı yüksek lisans tezi için Ağrı İli Doğubayazıt İlçesi Üzengili Köyünde, Doğubayazıt-İran sınırında bulunan Nuh'un Gemisine ait olduğunu düşündüğü sınır taşı için fotoğraf çekimi yapmak istemektedir. Söz konusu çalışma için fotoğraf çekimlerinde gerekli kolaylığın sağlanması hususunda;

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Ahmet Vezir BAYCAR
Vali a.
Vali Yardımcısı

Ek: Dilekçe

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Figure 12. The official permit issued that allowed us to visit the military zone along the border for this archaeological research. Image source: Nilay iğrek, 2021.

Figure 13. A DSLR photo of border marker number 65's eastern side from our second trip to border marker number 65. Image source: Nilay iğrek, 2021.

Figure 14. A DSLR photo of border marker number 66 north (Turkish) and west sides. Image source: Nilay iğrek, 2021.

Figure 15. A DSLR photo of border marker number 66 west and south (Iranian) sides. Notice the black Farsi numbers painted on the south (Iranian) side matching the black painted "66" painted on the north (Turkish) side. Image source: Nilay İğrek, 2021.

July 27, 2021 Visit to the Border

On July 26th we finally received word that we could fly the drone the next day. We were given specific instructions as to what to photograph (the stone border markers only) and what not to photograph (nothing in Iran and no Turkish military installations or personnel), how high I could fly (fly low!) and no video was allowed but only take photographs. The first flight was a little stressful with the base commander and other military personnel and officials watching the drone flights and one of the soldiers always standing near the commander. The base commander even took out his phone and took a few photos of the drone flying. We changed memory cards after each flight to save as much data as possible in case the drone was shot down by the Iranians or crashed in Iranian territory. Also, we told them that we wanted to document border marker number 65 (Figure 16 & 18) first as that is the one that had the "boat" and "bird" symbols carved on it that Wyatt saw in 1984 in case the drone had problems on the other flights for the other three border markers. Thankfully we had no problems with the flights except for losing signal briefly around marker number 64 (Figure 17) which was out of site from the location we were standing controlling the drone from on the border road. Sadly, we didn't capture the southern (Iranian) side of that border marker. We also had no problems with the Iranians guarding the other

side of the border. As we left the base commander came up to us and shook our hands and called the drone operator "patron" (Turkish for "boss"). The Turkish archaeologist told us later that this was a very special request to fly a drone at the border and the permission came "from the very top" to allow an American to fly a drone there. No one has ever done this before-not even Turks at that time.

Figure 16. An aerial drone photo from Iran looking north towards the southern side of border marker number 65. This is the marker Ron Wyatt stood behind in his 1984 photo. Our research group is standing on the Turkish side of the border behind the Turkish barbed wire fence. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 17. An aerial drone photo looking south toward border marker number 64 which is on a hill top further away from the barbed wire fence. We were only able to document 3 sides of this marker due to losing signal with the drone. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 18. A drone close-up photo of the eastern side of border marker number 65. Notice all the cement used to hold the stones together. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Results

Our drone-assisted archaeological survey of the Turkish-Iranian border frontier near the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation resulted in the documentation and analysis of 4 stone border markers (Figure 19, 20, 21 & 22), which bore various modern Turkish inscriptions and blackened carvings of Turkish and Farsi numbers. The markers were all about the same size and some looked to have been recently renovated and covered in cement. They were mostly rectangular in shape and were oriented north-south. They were located at an average distance of about 500 meters apart and were distributed along the border line (Figure 25), with half of each stone border marker on the Turkish side and half on the Iranian side.

The inscriptions and carvings on the stone markers consisted of numbers, letters, and words. The numbers were all double digits and were written in Turkish or Farsi numerals with black paint or carved numbers painted black. The letters and words were mostly abbreviations or names and dates and were written in Turkish script representing the names and enlistment year of Turkish soldiers stationed along the border. Some of the inscriptions and carvings were clear and legible, while others were partially covered in cement or eroded.

Contrary to our initial hypothesis and the prevailing excitement surrounding Wyatt's discoveries, our detailed analysis revealed that these carvings are consistent with modern Farsi numbers (Figure 24, 26, & 27), rather than ancient petroglyphs. The Farsi numbers on the south (Iranian) side corresponded to the numbers on the north (Turkish) side of each stone border marker. We found no evidence of any ancient language or script, such as Urartu or Armenian, on the stone border markers. Nor did we find any evidence of any ancient iconography or symbolism, such as animals, plants, or religious motifs, on the stone markers. Instead, we found that the inscriptions and carvings are most likely related to the modern border military patrols, the border demarcation and administration, such as surveying, mapping, and monitoring. We concluded that the inscriptions and carvings are the products of the 20th or 21st century, not the ancient past.

Figure 19. Drone photos of 3 out of 4 sides of border marker number 64. The drone lost contact with the controller briefly while on the southern (Iranian) side of marker 64 and it did not take any photos of this far side. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 20. Drone photos of all sides of border marker number 65. This is the marker Wyatt believed had a blackened carving of the important boat shape with a bird flying above it. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 21. Drone photos of all sides of border marker number 66. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 22. Drone photos of all sides of border marker number 67. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

Figure 23. Location of border marker number 63 which was not documented with our drone. We didn't realize Ron Wyatt's 1988 photo in Figure 24 was border marker 63. We assumed it was border marker 64. So our permit did not cover going to marker 63 on the top of that ridge. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

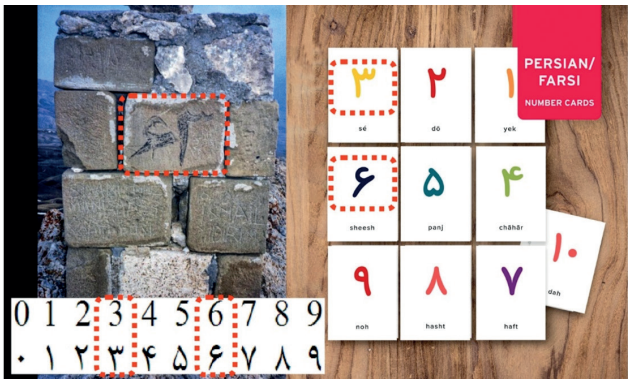

Figure 24. Border marker 63's south (Iranian) side. Blackened carving is the Farsi number "63." Our drone did not document this border marker. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1988.

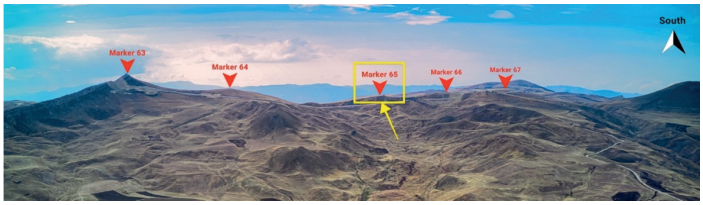

Figure 25. Location of border marker number 65. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2021.

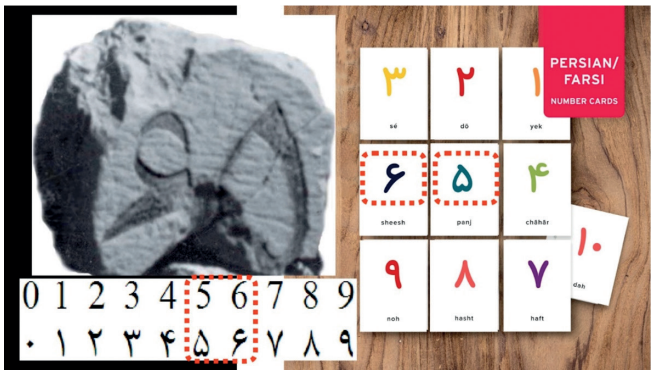

Figure 26. Close-up of a stone in border marker 65's south (Iranian) side. The carving turns out to be the Farsi number 65. Our drone did not see this stone. Restoration work on the border marker after Ron Wyatt's 1984 and 1988 visits covered a lot of the stones in the border marker with cement and older stones were replaced. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1984.

Figure 27. A closer examination of Wyatt's photo of border marker number 65 with the carving shows the Farsi number 5, which looks like a heart upside down and not a boat. The bottom part of the "boat" carving can be seen to curve upward exactly how a Farsi 5 is written. The orientation of the stone sitting in the border marker is correct in how Farsi "65" would be carved. Image source: Ron Wyatt, 1984.

Conclusion

In this paper, we presented a methodical account of our drone-assisted archaeological surface survey of the Turkish-Iranian border frontier near the Durupinar Noah's Ark Formation, and the consequent findings. We examined and documented the purported ancient inscriptions and carvings on the stone border markers, which were hypothesized to commemorate the landfall of Noah's Ark, based on preliminary findings by Ron Wyatt in the mid-1980s. We employed drone technology for aerial documentation, ensuring a thorough and non-invasive examination of the stone markers. We also applied analytical procedures to verify and interpret the inscriptions and carvings, using relevant linguistic and epigraphic sources and methods.

We found that the inscriptions and carvings are consistent with modern Farsi numbers designating each border marker, rather than ancient petroglyphs of Noah's Ark. We concluded that the inscriptions and carvings are most likely related to the modern border demarcation and administration, rather than the ancient Noah's Ark story.

We hope that our paper will contribute to the advancement and understanding of the archaeology and history of the Turkish-Iranian border frontier, and the Noah's Ark tradition. We also hope that our paper will encourage the use of technology in further research and exploration of this fascinating and complex region, and the rich and diverse cultural heritage that it contains.

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CHAPTER 5

The Effects of Ararat Mountain on the Economic and Cultural Structure of Society

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Prologue

Mount Ararat is an extinct volcano on the Ararat Plateaus. The importance of Mount Ararat for the region is not only because it is mentioned in holy books, but also because it has played a fundamental role in the economy of the region throughout history. In fact, throughout history, Mount Ararat is not only a geographically high landform, but also a mountain that has a very important place in terms of economy, politics, religion, culture, history and social change and transformation processes that concern society and people.

In addition to the legends, religious views, and the energy, water and rich vegetation that the mountain adds to people's lives, this mountain and its surroundings reflect, from past to present, various bird species, deer, mountain goats, wolves, partridges, eagles, bears, snakes, thousands of grasshoppers and insect species. It almost constitutes a miniature world model. In this context, it would be appropriate to say that Mount Ararat is Noah's Ark, itself. Anyone who visits the region can easily experience and feel the surviving narratives about Noah's Ark here. In this respect, it stands out as an important symbol, not

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only for the region but for the whole world. In this context, in this paper we try to examine the importance of Mount Ararat from a historical perspective.

Bibliography Review, Method and Research Questions

This study follows a research method based on observation and on-site examination. The theoretical part of the study is based on literature research. The research questions of the study were formulated as follows:

1. Why has Mount Ararat become a center of attention around the world throughout history?
2. How does Mount Ararat affect the region economically, culturally, socially and geographically?

Josephus, around 70 AD, and Marco Polo, around 1300 AD, visited Mount Ararat and mention the presence of Noah's Ark on the mountain, but their accounts are based on the reports of others. It has been seen that the story of Noah's Ark, told in the Old Testament, is also mentioned in the Epic of Gilgamesh. Marco Polo, in his work titled "il millione", states that Mount Ararat is in the shape of a cube and that it takes two days to go around it. Marco Polo also states that the summit of Mount Ararat is covered with snow in all seasons of the year and that it is not possible to climb to the top of this mountain. Thus, it can be said that Mount Ararat was a mountain full of myths and mysteries that could not be climbed until the 1830's. Philosopher and writer Ehmedê Xanî, who lived on Mount Ararat in the 1650's AD, states in his epic work Mem u Zin that Mount Ararat owes its importance to being a source of love and hope, most importantly, it provides people with food and shelter under all circumstances.

Mount Ararat in Terms of Geography and Habitat Area

Mount Ararat can be described as a volcanic mass in the easternmost part of Turkey, overlooking the point where the borders of Turkey, Iran and Armenia meet. The northern and eastern slopes rise from the broad alluvial plain of the Aras River, located approximately 1,000 meters above sea level. The southwestern slopes rise from a plain approximately 1,500 meters above sea level. To the west, a low gorge separates it from a long series of other volcanic ridges that extend westward into the eastern Taurus ranges. The diameter of the Ararat Mountain mass is approximately 40 km (Frymer, Tikva-David, 2007).

Ararat consists of two peaks whose summits are approximately 11 km apart. Reaching an altitude of 5,165 meters above sea level, Greater Ararat or Mount Ararat is the highest peak in Turkey. Lesser Mount Ararat rises 3,896 meters in a smooth, steep and almost perfect cone shape. Both Greater and Lesser Ararat are the product of eruptive volcanic activity. Neither shows any evidence of a crater but are flanked by well-formed cones and fissures. Located approximately 4,300 meters above the adjacent plains, the snow-capped conical peak of Greater Ararat offers a majestic view. The snow limit varies with the season, retreating to altitudes of up to 14,000 feet above sea level in late summer (Ashtor, 2007).

The only true glacier is located on the north side of Greater Ararat, near its summit. The middle region of Ararat, between 1,500 and 3,500 meters, is covered with good pasture grass and some juniper. There the local Kurdish population grazes their sheep. Most of Greater Ararat is treeless, but Lesser Ararat has a few birch groves. Despite abundant snow cover, there is a water shortage in the Ararat region. Because the mountain terrain with high permeability does not retain water, snow and glacier waters flowing in all seasons of the year appear in the Igdir and Bayazıt plains. In this respect, hundreds of villages on the mountain plateaus are still thirsty, and they get their water from the plain, which requires a walking distance of about 75 km due to its rugged structure, with water canisters loaded on horses and donkeys (Ashtor, 2007).

Hundreds of sheep herds exceeding thousands in each of these villages are taken to the water channels connected to Idir center three times a week to provide them with water to drink. Likewise, dozens of wild animal species living on this mountain meet their water needs either from spring water and snow piles on the Ararat peaks, or from ponds and water channels descending into the city. For this reason, there is a constant traffic between the plain and the mountain. However, it is possible to come across many canal ruins showing that water was brought from the higher elevations through artificial water channels in ancient village ruins and caravanserais in the past to alleviate this thirst on Mount Ararat.

Ararat is traditionally associated with the mountain where Noah's Ark landed at the end of the Flood. The name Ararat, as mentioned in the Bible, is the Hebrew equivalent of the word Urardhu or Urartu, the Assyro-Babylonian name of a kingdom that flourished between the Aras and Upper Tigris rivers from the 9th to the 7th centuries BC. In a Med and Persian legend, Ararat is

mentioned as the cradle of humanity. There used to be a village on the slopes of Ararat above the Araxes plain, where, according to local tradition, Noah built an altar and planted the first vineyard. The village located in the north of the mountain is still referred to as the village of Axure, which is buried in the ground. When the village was destroyed and rolled down to the plain, along with that side of the mountain because of an earthquake, it was impossible to find any traces. However, traces of the big break can still be seen (Bamberger, 2007).

Local people believe that Noah's Ark went hundreds of meters under the saddle because of this split. In addition, people living in the region constantly collect dry grass and dry trees as fuel. Therefore, if ship remains ever came to light, they were probably used as fuel and thus burned to ashes. According to the narratives of the villagers, Hassan Sabah, who was widely known as the Hashshashin or the Order of Assassins, first settled in this region in the 1080's and trained his assassins here. However, due to the steepness of the region, the absence of extreme snowstorms in winter, and because the local people did not support him, he moved to the Alamut region in Iran, where in all meanings the living opportunities had become more convenient. In fact, some of the rocks in this region are still referred to as Hassan Sabah Rock or Castle of Hassan Sabah by the local villagers.

Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark in Terms of Ontological Meaning

According to the Old Testament, Noah's Ark landed on this mountain after the Great Flood, and therefore this region is considered the cradle of humanity. The story of Noah's Ark is one of the most famous and intriguing stories of the Old Testament. According to it, God repented of creating humans and punished them with a great flood that would wipe them all off the face of the earth. However, there was one exception: God warned the venerable Noah of the impending disaster and gave him the task of building a huge wooden ark in which he could survive the flood with his family and a pair of each species of animals. This has inspired some people, who understood the biblical text as an account of actual historical events, to search for archaeological traces of the wooden ship (Britannica, 2024).

This mountain is called Ararat in Latin and Hebrew (Edwards, Gadd, Hammond, 1971). The origin of the word Ararat is derived from *arare*, *aro*, *aravi*,

or *aratum*, which means fertile land planted or plowed. In Kurdish, it is called Gli, which means tear drops that have survived from the past to the present. In Armenian, this mountain is called Masis (Bryce, 2009). This word is derived from the Greek word Máios, which means moist or tearful moist in English. This mountain is called "Mount Ağrı" in Turkish, and this name was given after the Turks settled in Anatolia and comes from the name of the province in the region. Its meaning is to cry or shed tears of pain. As can be seen, in all languages and cultures, this mountain has an important place, especially due to its water source or socio-cultural importance. It has a location and is named accordingly.

Noah's Ark being on Mount Ararat is based on the Torah. Although the Quran mentions Noah's flood, the word Ararat is not mentioned as the name of the mountain. In this respect, it is not known exactly what name Arabic, the language of the Quran, gave to the geographical region or mountain-like shapes outside Arabia at that time. In this respect, it is not scientifically possible to deduce the meaning of the word Cudi in the Quran as Mount Cudi. Accordingly, it can be understood that the ship is standing in a high place in the Quran. As a matter of fact, "Cudi" means "high place, hill" in Arabic. The name of Cudi Mountain, located in Şırnak province, may not mean Cudi as in Arabic, but Cuda in Kurdish, meaning mountain folds that complement each other. In this respect, it can be thought that the word Cudi was derived from the Kurdish word Cuda and given to this mountain (Britannica, 2024).

In this respect, the mountain mentioned in the holy books is most likely Mount Ararat. In addition, it is likely that Ararat and its surroundings were productive in terms of hunting, gathering and Ağrıculture at that time, with its water resources and natural shelter against external attacks. For this reason, floods and natural disasters that damaged ağrıcultural land in this region reached their highest-level during Noah's flood. In fact, according to the accounts of the local people, Noah was actually a villager living on this mountain. He had hundreds of kinds of animals and lived as a vegetarian, taking care of his animals, lovingly feeding and protecting them throughout their lives. So Noah was actually a virtuous and wise representative of humanity.

Additionally, there were more animals and creatures living at that time than there are today. According to the narratives that have survived to the present day, Noah took a sample of each living creature, one male and one female, on his ship. Considering that some of these creatures are giant animals such as dinosaurs

and mammoths, it is thought-provoking and suspicious that so many creatures could fit into a ship. Moreover, where and how these creatures were collected or by what means of communication they were organized is a situation that needs explanation. As a result, the reality of Noah's Flood and the justifications and statements presented by the sources do not provide scientifically verifiable or acceptable data. This can only be explained by divine power, religious miracles and supernatural powers.

Ararat as a Threshold Between East and West on the Silk Road

Climbing Mount Ararat is technically easy for the individual with average mountaineering experience but requires Alpine mountaineering equipment and a good level of fitness on summit day to manage an altitude of almost a thousand meters.

Ararat has also served as both a border and a lighthouse between east and west throughout history. As a matter of fact, after the caravans reached Ararat via the Silk Road, they completed their exchange by delivering their cargo. Thus, the Ararat region has been a meeting point between Europe and Asia, a transit route and a socioeconomic and sociocultural center where roads intersect, as it is today. As a result, Ararat is considered a threshold between East and West on the Silk Road.

Moreover, people who have been to the Ararat region have encountered the natural riches and food diversity of the region throughout history and had a unique experience. As a matter of fact, hundreds of first quality fruit and vegetable varieties, especially cotton, tomatoes, apples, pomegranates and apricots, as well as thousands of varieties of fruits and vegetables, are grown in the Iğdır, Yerevan and Bayazıt plains surrounding Mount Ararat and are exported to various regions. Especially the golden yellow apricots grown in these plains have a unique feature in the world in terms of taste and quality. Although Mount Ararat itself is a cold and snowy region, the surrounding plain has a Mediterranean climate and has become a place of refuge where caravans stay for months during the winter period and thus feel safe by avoiding dangerous journeys. Today, it is still possible to see old caravanserais at the foot of the mountain, where tired caravans of the time spent the night with their animals or took shelter from snowstorms. In this respect, the region is still a tourism attraction center.

Ararat and Natural Resources

The Ararat region, with its Aras and Murat rivers, plain and Mount Ararat, forms a representative model of the planet Earth. As a matter of fact, the volcanic lakes and high-altitude land on Mount Ararat, called Cup Lake because it resembles a deep cup, resemble a lunar surface. When you look at the plains from above, you see far away, which makes you feel as if you are watching the world from space. In addition, the waters flowing from Ararat to the plain in summer and winter fertilize the Aras River and the ponds and water channels of the plain. As a matter of fact, the lakes in Idir and Bayazıt offer rest and accommodation opportunities for migratory birds, just like they do for caravans. The birds that stay in these ponds during the spring and autumn months, which is the migration time of migratory birds, inspire poets and bards with their voices and their sequential flights in the sky. Besides that, partridges, which have reached a significant population on the foothills of Mount Ararat, live as a bird species unique to the region. That is why the bards and dengbejs of the region can produce many original works. Thus, just as it was conveyed from Noah's Flood, Ararat still offers shelter and salvation to all plants, animals and people.

Most importantly, the Idir branch of Aras, which is the longest river in the region with a length of 1072 km, becomes more abundant thanks to the waters coming from Ararat and thus can extend to the Caspian Lake. Born in the Mountains, in the Eastern Anatolia region, Aras moves eastward from its source and passes Mount Ararat towards the north.

Teachings from the Legends of Noah's Ark and Mount Ararat

Every story or event, whether religious or social or cultural, tries to give a message to people and aims to make them act within the framework of a certain mindset. Therefore, no narrative is vain or unfounded. It is definitely based on a truth and a basic philosophy of life. In this respect, we made important inferences from the legends of Noah's Ark and Mount Ararat, based on our research and observations both in the source and in the field. First of all, it can be concluded that it would be a more accurate and appropriate approach for people to try to understand what the message is and to try to apply these messages in real life, rather than focusing on the ruins of Noah's Ark or the reality or form of Noah's Flood. In this context, we make the following inferences:

1. The most important message to be emphasized here are the concepts of equality and justice. As a matter of fact, Noah wants to show that every living creature has the right to live by keeping a pair of each living creature on his ship, without making any discrimination.
2. Resources may be scarce and needs endless. However, for the sake of living and surviving, people can live together within the framework of peace and brotherhood and overcome even catastrophic problems.
3. Sometimes people can fall into total heedlessness and misguidance by being caught up in mass psychology. In this case, taking into account the warning of a leader or group, social memory should be trained for a healthy and sustainable life, and education and science should be given importance.

Furthermore, Mount Ararat and Noah's Flood are not only an economic and geographical value, but also a guiding lesson in terms of moral and social responsibility concepts. In this context, when looked at from scientific and social perspectives, Ararat and the period legends around him actually reveal how important it is for groups of people who want to gain superiority in resource sharing by fighting in the vortex of endless needs for scarce resources, to remain in the light of common sense and truth.

Considering the motto that the path of the mind is one, all thinkers and scientists throughout history have defended the same view. It is interesting that Socrates sees excessive consumption habits and the produce-consume approach as an act of waste of resources and destruction of nature. As a matter of fact, one day Socrates stood at the beginning of a marketplace and called out to those around him: "There are so many things I need in this marketplace!" (Gaarder, 1991). When we reflect on this fact in the present day, the world population has acquired many consumption habits that it does not actually need. Basic food, clothing and bar needs have diversified in this process and gained a new dimension with an inflation of needs. When the event is viewed in this context, Noah's Ark gives the message of keeping different cultures and creatures living together without excessive resources. Additionally, Noah teaches people by explaining waste and excessive consumption as bad habits for all humanity.

Conclusion

Throughout history, the material and spiritual impact of geographical shapes such as mountains on people's lives has led to the formation of different legends, myths, stories and lifestyles in every society. People have shaped their lifestyles, economic resources and consumption habits according to the geography they live in. The majesty of that place, the resources it offers, and its strategic location played a fundamental role in this. Since Mount Ararat has all these features, it has become a center of attention for every society and nation around the world throughout history.

Ultimately, Mount Ararat is a lighthouse for humanity. It welcomes people with a natural symphony consisting of bird chirping, insect sounds and the rustle of plant leaves. It cools people off with its pleasant breeze that cools one's face in hot weather and with the cold and clear snow waters on its peaks. Mount Ararat is unique with its unique view and spectacular height.

Appendices

Some Pictures from Our Mount Ararat Research Trip (Note: All images belong to the author Hasan Alpago)

Annex 1. Washing Sheep in Cup Lake

Annex 2. A Family and Their House Made of Goat Hair on Mount Ararat Plateau

Annex 3. Washing Sheep in Cup Lake

Annex 4. With Children Grazing Animals

Annex 5. Mount Ararat Glaciers in Summer and Winter

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CHAPTER 6

Exploring Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Subjective Well-Being Among Afghans in Ağrı

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Introduction

The global landscape has witnessed unprecedented migration waves, with millions of individuals relocating to new countries in search of improved living conditions, economic opportunities, or refuge from adversity. Turkey, positioned at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, stands as a significant host to a diverse immigrant population (Kaya et al., 2023). Immigrants frequently face a myriad of challenges in the process of post-migration, including linguistic and cultural barriers, housing difficulties and job searches, poverty, and the lack of medical insurance (Güler & Yıldırım, 2021; Documet et al., 2019). Immigrant experience constitutes a complex interplay between various socio-psychological factors, including perceived social support, perceived discrimination, religious identity, and subjective well-being. Therefore, understanding the associations between social, psychological, and cultural facets is paramount.

When individuals articulate their ultimate desires in life, the pursuit of happiness is high on the list, if not at the very top. Subjective well-being (SWB) is a broad term encompassing individual's cognitive and affective evaluations

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of their lives (Diener, 2000). Life satisfaction, which refers to the cognitive component of SWB, is enduring and concerns present life as-a-whole positively (Veenhoven, 2015). In the cognitive component, individuals appraise their lives based on personal criteria of desirability. Affective evaluation pertains to an individual's emotional perception of which different things are associated with positive affect for different people. High SWB refers to the frequent and intense feeling of positive emotions such as joy, hope, and pride, while also being characterized by general infrequent negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, and disappointment (Tov & Diener, 2013). Literature showed that perceived social support, perceived discrimination, religious identity, and SWB are interconnected concepts that can influence each other. Research consistently showed that SWB is influenced by a multitude of factors, including perceived social support, perceived discrimination, and religious identity (Güler & Yıldırım, 2022; Hashemi et al., 2020; Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2013).

Perceived social support, defined as an individual's beliefs about the availability of social resources (Taylor, 2011), serves as a crucial determinant in an individual's adaptation to a new cultural milieu (Güler, 2021). Moreover, perceived social support concerns the personal assessment of how individuals perceive the availability of friends and family members to help, both in terms of material resources, psychological support, and general help during times of need (Eagle et al., 2019) and plays a pivotal role in buffering the stressors associated with migration (Güler, 2016). A sizeable body of studies has consistently highlighted that greater perceived social support had a positive association with positive emotions and life satisfaction and protection against negative emotions, depression, stress, and adversity (Klainin-Yobas et al., 2016; Guruge et al., 2015). However, the extent to which perceived social support influences SWB within the immigrant in the Turkish context remains an area warranting comprehensive investigation.

Conversely, the experience of perceived discrimination represents a significant challenge for immigrants, potentially eroding their SWB. Perceived discrimination refers to the perception of being treated unfairly or unequally due to one's social group membership, such as race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation (Williams et al., 2003). Perceived discrimination, whether subtle or overt, can detrimentally impact immigrants' overall SWB (Güler, 2022; Güler, 2021; Vedder et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2003). Understanding

the implications of perceived discrimination on immigrants' SWB in Turkey requires an exploration of the various forms and contexts in which perceived discrimination manifests among immigrants.

Religious identity refers to how an individual or group understands, experiences, shapes, and is influenced by the psychological, social, political, and devotional aspects of religious belonging or affiliation (Werbner, 2009). Religious identity stands as a salient aspect of an individual's cultural framework and may serve as a source of strength, providing coping mechanisms and social support networks for immigrants (Lim & Putnam, 2010). Studies showed that religious identity also can provide a sense of meaning, purpose, and belonging, which can contribute to SWB (Davis III & Kiang, 2016). However, in some other studies, religious identity found that not all religious people are in better SWB (Kwon & Kim, 2014), yet a negative factor for well-being among immigrants (Dimitrova & Aydinli-Karakulak, 2016). Given these conflicting results, the intricate association between religious identity and SWB among immigrants in Turkey remains a subject ripe for exploration, and how religious identity affects subjective wellbeing warrants closer examination within this context.

Despite existing studies on perceived social support, discrimination, religious identity, and SWB individually, there's a distinct need to investigate how these factors interrelate specifically within the context of Afghan immigrants in Turkey. This paper seeks to fill existing gaps in the literature by investigating these associations. This study also endeavors to illuminate these complex relationships, fostering a deeper understanding that can pave the way for targeted interventions and supportive measures to enhance the well-being of immigrants in Turkey.

Method

Procedure

To collect data, a face-to-face survey method was utilized. A composite questionnaire of ten independent measurement instruments was used to examine the study variables, classified into three categories: (a) demographic characteristics, (b) independent variables, and (c) dependent variables. Demographic variables were measured using the demographic instrument. Independent variables, comprising religious identity, perceived social support,

and perceived discrimination, were examined using three independent measurements. Dependent variables, consisting of subjective well-being variables, were measured using three independent instruments that measured cognitive and affective aspects of subjective well-being.

Before data collection, each participant was fully informed about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the information, and agreement to participate in the study was obtained verbally from all participants. Interested and eligible participants were then provided an introductory letter with an overview of the study, and an information sheet outlining the aims of the study, consent and confidentiality, what participation would entail, and the researchers' contact details.

A face-to-face approach was used to recruit study participants. The survey was administered in English but, if necessary, a translator was provided to assist participants in the completion of the survey. Ethics approval for this study was obtained from Ağrı Ibrahim Cecen University Human Research Ethics Committee. Verbal consent was obtained from each respondent before enrollment.

Participants

The study was conducted among immigrants in Ağrı. A total of 314 immigrants were recruited for this study. Participants ranged in age between 18 to 65 years with an average age of 29.23 (SD=9.13). Most of the participants (65.6%) were male and 34.4% were female, with 66.7% being married and 33.3% being single, widowed, or divorced. Regarding education attainment, the majority of the participants (83.6%) had completed elementary school or no formal education with 21.7% illiterate, followed by 31.6% secondary or high school, and only 16.5% held a university degree. Most of the participants (93.5%) identified their socioeconomic status as low, and the rest as middle.

Measures

Perceived Social Support. The Brief Perceived Social Support Questionnaire is a scale developed by Kliem and colleagues (2015) to assess perceived social support at a broad level. The scale has a 6-item measure, and the sample item is "I experience a lot of understanding and security from others." Participants responded to each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not true

at all) to 5 (very true). To determine the final score, all the scores for each item are added together. Higher scores indicate higher, lower scores and lower levels of perceived social support. The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.75$).

Religious Identity. Religious identification, developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) is a scale to measure the cognitive components of religiosity, which was further expanded by Çoymak (2009). The scale involves using 14 statements, such as "I am proud of my religious identity", to assess one's religious identity. Participants rate each statement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and the scores are then added up to give a total score that indicates the strength of their religious identification. A higher average score indicates a stronger commitment to their religious identity. The internal consistency of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which yielded a high value of $\alpha = 0.95$.

Perceived Discrimination, developed by Ruggiero and Taylor in 1995, was utilized in the study. This scale consisted of six statements that asked participants how often they felt their ethnic group was discriminated against in certain situations over the past year. The sample item is "How often does your ethnic group experience discrimination while looking for a job?" Participants responded to each statement on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The total score was calculated by adding up the scores for each item, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived discrimination. The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The SWLS, developed by Diener and associates (1985), is a 5-item self-report measure of how an individual evaluates his/her life in general. Items are rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores refer to greater satisfaction with life. An example of the item from this scale is "I am satisfied with my life." The SWLS has been proven to have good reliability and validity for the Turkish population (Durak et al., 2010). The internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.83$).

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule-Short Form (PANAS-SF). The original PANAS is a 20-item self-report with 10-item Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA) subscales (Watson et al., 1988). PANAS-SF was used by

Thompson (2007), which assesses PA and NA. The subscales include 5 items: PA (e.g., inspired, and alert) and NA (e.g., afraid and upset). Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The PANAS-SF was translated by Güler and Yıldırım (2020) and has been proven to have good reliability and validity. The higher scores on both PA and NA items indicate the tendency to experience a positive and negative mood. The internal consistency of the PA and NA was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.86$, $\alpha = 0.82$, respectively).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values were computed. The skewness values ranged from -0.86 to 1.15, and the kurtosis scores ranged from ---0.87 to 1.91. These numbers indicate that all variables have an approximately normal distribution since they fall within the criterion of skewness and kurtosis values $\leq |2|$ (Kline, 2015). Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlational analysis were conducted using IBM SPSS 25.0 to examine the relationships between the variables.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlational results are presented in Table 1. The results indicated that perceived social support was significantly positively correlated with participants' religious identity ($r = .21$, $p < .000$), life satisfaction ($r = .29$, $p < .000$), and significantly negatively correlated with perceived discrimination ($r = -.17$, $p < .000$). The religious identity was significantly negatively correlated with perceived discrimination ($r = -.27$, $p < .000$) but significantly positively correlated with life satisfaction ($r = .24$, $p < .000$) and positive affect ($r = .14$, $p < .005$). The perceived discrimination had a significant negative correlation with life satisfaction ($r = .29$, $p < .000$) but a significant positive correlation with negative affect ($r = -.18$, $p < .000$). Life satisfaction also had a significant negative correlation with negative affect ($r = -.31$, $p < .000$).

Before computing regression analyses for the variables explaining subjective well-being, analysis assumptions were tested. It determined that the variance inflation factor (VIF) is less than 2.5 and the tolerance value is not less than 0.2 which shows that assumptions of multicollinearity are not violated for the analysis (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). To test the hypotheses of the study, three

hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. In each analysis, the components of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect were treated as the dependent variables and perceived social support, religious identity, and perceived discrimination were treated as independent variables while demographic characteristics including gender, age, and length of residence in Turkey as control variables. Regarding the inclusion of variables in the model, demographic characteristics were included in Step 1, while perceived social support, religious identity, and perceived discrimination into Step 2 for each component. The result is displayed in Table 2.

Table 1. Bivariate correlations between study variables (N=314)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Perceived social support	-					
Religious identity	.210**	-				
Perceived discrimination	-.173**	-.270**	-			
Satisfaction with Life Scale	.288**	.239**	-.278**	-		
Positive Affect	-.005	.136*	-.019	.045	-	
Negative Affect	.065	-.002	.184**	-.309**	-.189**	-
M	18.71	55.87	10.17	13.06	19.52	13.71
SD	5.95	14.55	6.22	4.58	3.99	5.15

* P < 0.05 ** P < 0.01.

In the initial hierarchical analysis, Model 1 included gender, age, and length of residence in Turkey as covariates. The demographic variables did not show a significant association with life satisfaction ($F(3, 286) = 0.65$, $p > 0.05$), explaining less than 1 percent of the variance. In Model 2, the association between perceived social support and perceived discrimination and life satisfaction was shown to be statistically significant ($F(6, 283) = 10.02$, $p < 0.001$), even after accounting for demographic factors. Religious identity did not have a substantial impact on life satisfaction. Model 2 accounted for an additional 16.8% of the variance in life satisfaction.

In the second hierarchical analysis, Model 1 included gender, age, and period of residence in Turkey as covariates once more. Apart from the length of residency in Turkey, these demographic characteristics were not found to

have a significant association with positive affect. The statistical analysis yielded an $F(3, 286) = 2.57$, $p = 0.054$, together explaining 2.6% of the variance. In Model 2, the only variable that showed a significant association with positive affect was religious identity. This association was observed after accounting for demographic factors, with a statistical significance of $F(6, 283) = 2.23$, $p < 0.05$. Model 2 accounted for an extra 1.9% of the variance in positive affect. There was no significant relationship between perceived social support and felt discrimination in predicting pleasant affect.

Table 2 Summary of hierarchical multiple regression for components of subjective wellbeing

	Life Satisfaction				Positive Affect				Negative Affect			
	B	β	t	p	B	β	t	p	B	β	t	p
Model 1	F (3, 286) = .65, R2 = .007, p > 0.05				F (3, 286) = 2.57, R2 = .026, p = 0.054				F (3, 286) = 9.30, R2 = .089, p < 0.001			
Gender (Male=1)	-.68	-.07	-1.24	.22	-.88	-.01	-.84	.85	2.94	.27	4.80	.00
Age	-.00	-.01	-.09	.93	-.02	-.06	-.92	.36	-.04	-.07	-1.16	.25
LOR	-.04	-.03	-.52	.61	-.15	-.14	-2.33	.02	.14	-.10	1.73	.09
Model 2	F (6, 283) = 10.02, R2 = .175, p < 0.001				F (6, 283) = 2.23, R2 = .045, p = 0.135				F (6, 283) = 6.38, R2 = .119, p < 0.05			
Gender (male=1)	-.28	-.03	-.55	.59	-.21	-.03	-.44	.66	2.79	.26	4.52	.00
Age	-.02	-.04	-.64	.53	-.03	-.07	-1.14	.26	-.02	-.04	-.70	.48
LOR	-.01	-.01	-.19	.85	-.12	-.12	-1.97	.05	.10	.07	1.27	.20
Social Support	.17	.23	4.13	.00	-.03	-.04	-.66	.51	.09	.11	1.81	.07
Religious Identity	.04	.14	2.38	.01	.04	.15	2.36	.01	.00	.00	.05	.96
Discrimi-nation	-.16	-.22	-3.87	.00	.01	.02	.34	.74	.13	.16	2.75	.00

LOR=Length of Residence in Turkey

In the last hierarchical analysis, Model 1 included gender, age, and length of residency in Turkey as covariates. The demographic variable of gender was shown to have a significant association with negative affect ($F(3, 286) = 9.30$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 8.9% of the variation. In Model 2, the only factor that showed a significant association with positive affect was perceived discrimination ($F(6, 283) = 6.38$, $p < 0.05$), even after accounting for demographic variables. Model 2 accounted for an extra 3% of the variance in negative affect. Positive affect was not substantially predicted by perceived social support and religious identity.

Discussion

The research focused on understanding the relationships between perceived social support, religious identity, perceived discrimination, life satisfaction, and affective states among Afghan immigrants in Turkey. This investigation aimed to explore the pivotal role of these factors in shaping life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect within this specific immigrant population. Firstly, the findings emphasize the significance of perceived social support in line with prior literature (Güler & Yıldırım, 2022; Hashemi et al., 2020; Klainin-Yobas et al., 2016). The positive correlations between perceived social support, religious identity, and life satisfaction align with existing research indicating that social support acts as a crucial determinant in immigrants' adaptation to new cultural environments (Güler, 2021). Notably, this reinforces the initial premise that perceived social support serves as a pivotal factor influencing well-being among immigrants.

Moreover, the link between religious identity and other variables reveals interesting patterns. A negative correlation between religious identity and perceived discrimination suggests that a stronger religious identity might act as a buffer against discriminatory experiences (Lim & Putnam, 2010). This highlights the intricate relationship between religious identity and discrimination experiences, shedding light on its potential as a protective factor in the face of adversity. The findings underscore the negative impact of perceived discrimination on life satisfaction and positive affect, aligning with the premise that discriminatory experiences detrimentally affect immigrants' overall subjective well-being (Dimitrova & Aydinli-Karakulak, 2016). The negative correlation emphasizes the emotional toll of discrimination on

individuals' subjective evaluations of their lives (Güler, 2022; Vedder et al., 2006). Additionally, the positive correlation between perceived discrimination and negative affects suggests that discrimination experiences are associated with heightened negative emotions.

The research findings present a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted influences on life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect within the context of Afghan immigrants residing in Turkey. The results showed that demographic variables did not significantly predict life satisfaction. The findings also showed emphasizing role of perceived social support and perceived discrimination in predicting life satisfaction among immigrants in this context. The findings suggest that when individuals feel supported by friends, family, or community, they often experience higher life satisfaction (Davis III & Kiang, 2016). This support provides a safety net, enhancing a sense of belonging, comfort, and stability, which contribute positively to one's overall evaluation of life circumstances.

Shifting focus to positive affect, length of residency in Turkey and religious identity are significantly associated with positive affect. This suggests that the impact of religious identity on positive affect transcends the influence of demographic variables considered in this study. Notably, perceived social support and perceived discrimination did not significantly contribute to predicting positive affect, indicating that other unexplored factors may play a more dominant role in shaping positive affect among this population. The findings showed that male immigrants significantly experience more negative affect than their counterparts. Perceived discrimination was the only factor significantly predicting negative affect above and beyond demographic variables.

Overall, these findings underscore the differential impacts of perceived social support, perceived discrimination, and religious identity on various facets of subjective well-being among Afghans in Turkey. While perceived social support and perceived discrimination play pivotal roles in life satisfaction and negative affect, religious identity emerges as a significant factor influencing positive affect. The results suggest having a support system helps individuals cope with stressors, reducing negative emotions and emotional connection and encouragement from social networks foster positive emotions like joy, hope, and happiness, while spiritual beliefs, rituals, and practices often generate feelings of hope, peace, and contentment, promoting positive emotional experiences. The

findings are in line with existing literature (Güler, 2022; Güler & Yıldırım, 2022; Hashemi et al., 2020; Guruge et al., 2015; Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2013).

There are some limitations of the study that should be acknowledged. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study cannot establish causal relationships between perceived social support, perceived discrimination, religious identity, and subjective well-being. Secondly, the reliance on self-reported measures introduces the potential for response biases such as social desirability or recall biases. Moreover, the generalizability of findings may be limited due to the specific demographics of the sample and the context in which the study was conducted. Such findings require future longitudinal studies to be drawn. As a result of the convenient sampling method, selection bias could not be avoided. Additionally, while efforts were made to control for demographic variables, there might be other unaccounted confounding variables that could influence the relationships between perceived social support, religious identity, perceived discrimination, and subjective well-being.

In sum, perceived social support acts as a buffer against stressors, fostering a positive evaluation of life and affective well-being. Conversely, perceived discrimination creates stress and negativity, diminishing life satisfaction and fostering negative emotions. Religious identity, through its communal and spiritual aspects, can enhance life satisfaction and positive affect, providing a sense of purpose and emotional resilience.

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CHAPTER 7

The Origin of the Idea of 'Deep Time' in Geology

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The idea of 'deep time' can be summarized as follows: The Earth has a long history of physical, environmental and biological changes spanning millions of years. The expression 'deep time' is not a formal geological term; writers use it informally to indicate a long time. The opposite of deep time is short time, which may have two main conceptions: one is that the Earth as a planet and life on it has had a short history, and the other meaning is that the planet Earth is ancient, perhaps millions of years, but life is recent only a few thousand years.

The ancient Greek philosophers and naturalists had noticed fossils in the rocks, and many believed that they were the remains of former organisms turned to stone. Chinese naturalists in the 4th century AD, Arabs in the 13th century and the Papuans of New Guinea later studied fossils to ascertain the history of the Earth (Teresi, 2002). Western writers in the first centuries AD, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Augustine and others, asserted that fossils were petrified organisms buried in the Genesis Flood. However, they disagreed on whether those organisms resulted from God's creative work or Satan's deceptions.

Interest in geology and the natural sciences arose significantly in the 17th and 18th centuries, with some naturalists in Western Europe doing field observations and speculating about the nature of minerals and the origin of strata and fossils. Danish naturalist-bishop Nicolas Steno (1638-1686) asserted that the sedimentary layers and the fossils within were caused by the global flood of Noah. The origin of the geologic layers, fossils and the age of the Earth was of

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particular interest among British naturalists of the 16th century onwards. The British early naturalists William Whiston (1667-1752), Alexander Catcott (1725-1779) and John Lehmann (1719-1767) all believed in a young-earth, global-Flood viewpoint.

Not all naturalists accepted a short age for the Earth. In the latter decades of the 18th century, several European naturalists rejected the biblical story of the Flood, instead attributing the origin of the rocks and fossils to natural processes. Comte de Buffon (1707-1788), the French naturalist and writer of the fifteen volumes of *Histoire Naturelle* and other books, outlined a history of the Earth outside the biblical framework, claiming that the planet's age is more than 75,000 years based on the rate of cooling of iron spheres from a furnace and assuming that the planet Earth originated from a molted ball from the Sun (Zalasiewicz, 2018). The German professor of mineralogy Abraham Werner (1749-1817) suggested that the crust of the Earth was formed by chemical precipitation in a slowly receding global ocean over a million years. Werner based his idea on speculation and assumptions by studying only the sedimentary rocks near his home. In Scotland, James Hutton (1726-1797) observed that the continents were being slowly eroded with the sediments transported to the oceans. The deposits were gradually hardened into the sea by the Earth's internal heat, emerged to form continents and deteriorated again. Thus, Hutton had a view of cyclical processes on the surface of the Earth and an indefinite time.

Some naturalists discussed the early modern views of the age of the Earth and ideas about biological diversity's origin. At that time, several naturalists were already proposing theories of evolution, which then was called 'transmutation.' The French naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) was the first to suggest a coherent theory of evolution over long ages. The idea of biological evolution was rejected by the eminent French biologist George Cuvier (1768-1832), who held a catastrophic view of the earth's history. Cuvier believed that multiple catastrophes had occurred over the history of the Earth before the creation of humans. Those catastrophes destroyed large areas and buried the existing organisms, which became fossils. After each disaster, the devastated areas were repopulated with animals and plants from other places. Cuvier believed that Noah's Flood was the most recent and dramatic catastrophe.

The age of the Earth was a topic of interest among many British naturalists in the last decades of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century. William

Smith (1769-1839), a surveyor and canal engineer, had extensive knowledge of England's strata and realized that rock layers across England occurred in a predictable succession and could connected (correlated) to rock strata occurring in distant outcrops based on the fossils they held. He called this idea the principle of fossil succession: the rock formations' order, relative sequence, and chronology using index fossils. Smith had an old-earth catastrophist view of Earth's history, although he rejected biological evolution.

One of the most influential British naturalists of that time was William Buckland (1784-1856), professor of geology at Oxford University. Initially, he followed Cuvier's view of multiple catastrophes. Still, he later asserted that geology was consistent with the account in the book of Genesis and that the geologic record proved beyond refutation that the global Noachian flood had occurred. According to Buckland, the succession of sedimentary strata formed thousands of years before the Flood. However, geological evidence for the Flood was only in the superficial formations of sands and gravel and the topography of the continents, and to harmonize geology with Genesis; he favored the gap theory (a time gap between Genesis 1:1-2 and 1:3; a time between the creation of the universe and the creation of life on the Earth).

Cambridge University geology professor Adam Sedgwick (1785-1873) believed that old-Earth geology did not contradict the Bible but never attempted to show how geology and the Bible can be harmonized. He was a catastrophist during his initial years but later turned uniformitarian and trained Darwin in the old-Earth geology view. In 1865, he signed a declaration, along with 616 other signatories, "casting doubt upon the Truth and Authenticity of the Holy Scriptures." (Sedgwick, 1865) His teaching of old-earth geology paved the way for Darwin to undermine Scripture through biology.

Through the influence of Buckland and Sedgwick, old-Earth catastrophist geology was widely accepted in the first two decades of the 19th century, and many naturalists, clergy and theologians in Britain and North America took the idea. In the 19th century, all sciences were undergoing significant advances. After the legacy of Isaac Newton (1643-1727) and Michael Faraday (1791-1867), scientists showed that natural laws governed the natural world and that different kinds of energy— light, electricity, etc.—were subject to the same rules. Organic chemists showed that molecules were organized in exact and predictable arrangements. Physicists were unifying the laws of electricity and

magnetism, laying the foundations of electromagnetism and thermodynamics. Astronomers showed that the universe seemed to work autonomously following Newton's unchangeable laws. Those findings prompted the interest in finding a universal force in biology and geology.

Biology was also undergoing a shift in its foundations in the first decades of the 19th century. Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), the grandfather of Charles Darwin, had already suggested the idea of evolution in his two-volume book *Zoonomia* (1794, 1796). This book was soon translated into French, German, Russian, and Italian. He was the first person to suggest that all living things were descended from a common ancestor.

One of the people discussing the age of the Earth and the effect of geological processes was Charles Lyell (1797-1875). A former student of William Buckland, he was educated as a lawyer and, 1830-1833, published the book *Principles of Geology. An attempt to explain the former changes of the Earth's surface, by reference to causes now in operation*, (1830-1833). Highly influenced by Hutton's ideas, his theory of geology is based on *uniformitarianism*: Geological processes of change have been uniform throughout Earth's history. Lyell believed that there was no need to invoke supernatural intervention for events that happened in the past because natural and physical processes on Earth could be explained by universal natural laws, just like in the other sciences. Given enough time, the gradual processes of sedimentation, erosion and volcanic activity could explain the present landscape on the surface of the Earth. Therefore, "the present is the key to the past."

Traditionally, Lyell, James Hutton and William Smith have been held as the "Founders of modern geology." Now, some historians of science are questioning this idea. For example, Martin Rudwick counters the Anglocentric idea that James Hutton, William Smith and Charles Lyell were the founders of modern geology who helped turn the European intellectual darkness with the new models of the Earth's history. Rudwick argues that the reverse was the case (Rudwick, 2008). In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, about a dozen "Scriptural Geologists" defended the view that the geological record could be interpreted in the light of the Genesis Flood. Some of those geologists had equal academic credentials and more field experience than Lyell, but Lyell and his colleagues had little interest in listening to them. Lyell had a program to advocate a naturalistic, uniformitarian approach to investigation and interpretation.

Lyell titled his book *Principles of Geology* after Isaac Newton's *Principia*, which had been fundamental in establishing scientific thought in the 18th century. Just as Newton had done for physics, Lyell's goal was to resettle geology on firm foundations. He used the understanding of present-day causes to interpret the deep past—a principle termed *actualism* or *uniformitarianism*.

Lyell applied his actualistic method to geology, claiming that the complex past geological changes occurred through the gradual action of small-scale actions still in operation. In doing so, he also prescribed a methodology for reasoning about past and present processes. Rudwick asserts that though Lyell appealed to evidence, his significant influence defined how geologists should maintain and interpret what they saw. Lyell's view faced strong opposition then but gradually became dominant in Britain's and continental Europe's scientific and theological circles. Baker states, "the geological facts themselves seemed contrary to Lyell's vision of uniform action by small-scale processes operating over a long time." (Baker, 2008) "Lyell's critics held that one should inquire into nature through evidence, rather than through privileged reasoning." The Scriptural Geologists were rejected not because of the alleged weakness of their arguments or evidence but because they were considered "anti-scientific" according to the new notions of geological processes operating on Earth. Therefore, catastrophism became an unconventional idea and almost entirely rejected, and within a decade of Lyell's book publication, most scientists had stopped considering Noah's Flood. Lyell's book became the textbook and solution for young Charles Darwin, who needed a long life span for life to evolve on Earth.

In the first half of the 19th century, a few writers (the Scriptural Geologists) in Great Britain raised biblical and scientific arguments against the ideas of evolution and the long age for the Earth. Some writers were clergy, some were scientists, and some were both. Although they believed that Noah's Flood was a better scenario to explain the geological features than the theories of old age, other writers quickly embraced the idea of millions of years of evolution of life on Earth[2]. The gradual conviction of theologians and naturalists that the rock

[2] For example, in 1804 Presbyterian Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) began to preach that Christians should accept millions of years for the age of the Earth. Although many Christians now accept that idea, it was surprising back then. Evangelical theologian George Stanley Faber (1773-1854) advocated the day-age theory, in which the days of creation were not literal but figurative of long ages and rejected Noah's Flood. Presbyterian minister John Fleming (1785-1857) rejected the catastrophic nature of Noah's Flood, which was so peaceful it left no lasting evidence on the surface of the Earth. Congregational theologian John Pye Smith (1774-1851) suggested that Noah's Flood was a local inundation in the Mesopotamian valley, what is modern-day Irak. Interestingly, this idea

record indicated long ages led to the abandonment of the biblical chronology and the global Flood. By the time Darwin's Origin of Species was published, the young-Earth view had essentially disappeared from the Church and the mainline scientific community. At the end of the 19th century, most geologists believed the age of the Earth to be in the hundreds of millions of years. Radiometric dating techniques began to be developed in 1905 (Boltwood, 1907), and the age of the Earth expanded to 4.5 billion years.

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was later accepted by most who still believed that Noah's Flood was catastrophic, a way to harmonize some geological rock with the account in Genesis.

CHAPTER 8

Üzengili Site - Candidate for Noah's Ark

Ross PATTERSON[1]

Overview

Of all the claimed sightings and proposed locations for Noah's Ark, one specific site has constantly drawn interest – the site at Uzengili village. The official Visitors Centre there, which is being expanded this year with the construction of a new museum, has received a steady stream of visitors from around the world ever since the site was officially opened.

If we consider the general region around this site, it fits the criteria for the landing site of the legendary Ark of Noah. Place names, geography and historical accounts lend weight to this location. If we consider the site itself, we find the site matches what we'd expect for the remains of the Ark of Noah. It is the right length according to ancient writings; it is in the right place; it's in the condition one would expect of such a wooden vessel after more than 4000 years.

But is the site the actual remains of Noah's Ark? Even before an excavation has been carried out, the site has provided much compelling evidence. In the past different types of scans have carried out by individuals and groups, samples have tested and even core drillings have been done. When the overall results are examined, there is a compelling case that this site houses the remains of an ancient man-made structure.

In summary, taking into account all the evidence found at this site, it is by far the best candidate for the remains of Noah's Ark. It meets all the criteria

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of archaeology to be considered the most likely place where Noah's ship finally came to rest. Is it now the time to resolve the question once and for all by undertaking a proper excavation of the site?

Details

The site first attracted official attention in 1959, when Captain Ilhan Durupinar spotted a boat-shaped outline in the high-altitude aerial photographs he was examining. This boat-like structure, over 500 feet long, was at an altitude of about 2000m in the mountains of the Ararat region. News soon spread, and an expedition from the United States, accompanied by Captain Durupinar, went to investigate the site.

"LIFE" magazine of September 5, 1960, published an article under the heading "*Noah's Ark? Boatlike form is seen near Ararat*", which included the photo of the outline. The article explained how the expedition had visited the site, but a quick two-day surface investigation didn't find anything promising. Many on the team concluded that perhaps it was an anomaly of nature, but a scientist on the team stated that nothing in nature could create such a symmetrical shape, and that it needed a more thorough investigation.

Nothing more was done for 17 years later, until in 1977 Ron Wyatt relocated the site. Convinced it wasn't natural, he began a decade of serious investigation, helped by a 1978 earthquake that dropped the soil from around the sides of the structure, making investigations much easier.

In the 1980s, other interested individuals and groups became involved, and helped enable more detailed research into what lay beneath the surface of the site. The methods employed included subsurface radar scans, metal detection surveys, core-drilling and sample testing. The results were compelling. Buried in the ground was the remains of a man-made structure, an enormous boat, the size of a battleship.

Official Recognition

Results from these independent studies led to the Turkish government setting up a project authorized by the Prime Minister's office, operating from Ataturk University at Erzurum and including Los Alamos National Laboratory at the University of California, to further investigate the site.

The positive conclusions from all this research led Sevket Ekinci, Governor of Ağrı and Chairman of the Noah's Ark Commission, to officially declare the

site a national park. As official endorsement of the site, a Visitors' Centre was built overlooking the Ark, and the dedication ceremony was held on June 20, 1987. Ron Wyatt was invited to be guest of honour at the opening of the visitors centre, acknowledging his pioneering research as being instrumental in the site being recognized for what it is.

Sadly, Ron Wyatt passed away in 1999, but since that time others have confirmed Ron's findings through further scans and other non-invasive techniques. Subsequent studies of the site consistently give the same results; beneath the surface is a large man-made structure.

Does this site represent the remains of the ship built by Noah, and which landed in these mountains as the flood waters receded? Let us consider some of the evidence that points to this indeed being the case.

Is It a Natural Object?

Not everyone believes the account of Noah and the flood is true. These sceptics have described the site as a "geological" formation, or a "rock" formation, but is this correct? At least three, quite different explanations have been given for what the site represents: (1) A eroded syncline, (2) A mudflow around an obstruction, and (3) A slab of rock that slid from higher up. Each of these explanations are mutually exclusive, and are speculative, having no basis in any actual site study, and each explanation fails to explain the scan results and other evidences obtained from the site.

For example, examination of the site reveals a complete lack of geological characteristics one would expect to find were it a syncline. A syncline would consist of layers of strata which are dished or dipped towards its middle section. Where such layers are exposed in the outside walls they would form quasi-horizontal bands around the formation. However, the site has no such horizontal bands or bedding but has in fact vertical columns, believed to be the remains of rib-timbers. These reveal that the structure is not a syncline.

Likewise, the site does not fit it being the result of a mudflow around an obstruction. No one has demonstrated, either by excavation or by scanning, that there is any 'obstruction' around which mud has flowed. In the same mudflow, and in fact in the entire region, there is no other shape like this. That is why it stood out in the aerial photographs when it was discovered.

Even if we consider that somehow the mudflow was responsible for creating the shape, we encounter a problem because fluid dynamics dictates that an obstruction in a mudflow creates a blunt shape on the uphill end, and a tapered shape at the downhill end. However, the site at Uzengili is the opposite, with a tapered end uphill, and a rounded end at the bottom. This shape is literally upside-down for being the result of mud flowing around an obstruction.

The third (3) suggestion above, i.e., that the formation is simply a slab of rock, has been disproven repeatedly by different types of scans, e.g., subsurface radar and resistivity. The site cannot be merely a slab of rock.

Petrified Laminated Wood

An example of the evidence showing the site contains remains which are human-engineered is the petrified wood recovered. This sample proved to be laminated wood. It was retrieved from the site on the day the visitors centre was opened, at the request of the Governor of Ağrı. In the presence of the Turkish Military, and filmed by the Turkish Media, this remarkable piece was dug from the site.

Tests by Galbraith Labs in Knoxville, Tennessee, showed this sample contained over 0.7% organic carbon, consistent with fossilized wood. The specimen was once living matter.

In addition, analysis showed that the specimen contained 13.04% iron, consistent with the item having been fossilized in conditions where the groundwater contains dissolved iron from fittings used in the construction of the ship. Indeed, fossilized iron artifacts have been found on the site. It's apparent that since the vessel was buried, iron from these metal fittings has thoroughly permeated the site. An excavation promises to reveal fascinating aspects of the Ark's construction.

Thin sections from the sample revealed the wood consisted of three layers. It was once laminated wood. Nowhere else has petrified wood been found that was laminated. This sample is totally unique in the world, and reveals human engineering.

How Long Was Noah's Ark?

The book of Genesis specifies the length of the Ark as 300 cubits (see Genesis 6:15). How long is this cubit? Throughout history, varying cubit lengths have

been used by different cultures. Which cubit was Genesis 6:15 referring to? Some commentators have supposed the cubit referred to in Genesis was an 18-inch Hebrew cubit, which would make the Ark 450 feet (137 meters) long.

However, if we investigate deeper, we discover that the Bible itself refers to more than one cubit. In Ezekiel 41:8, the Bible mentions a cubit called a "*GREAT cubit*". Some Bible versions translate this as "*LONG cubit*" (e.g., the NIV, ESV, NASB, BSB). Also in Ezekiel, we read about a longer cubit that was "*a cubit and an hand breadth*" (see Ezekiel 40:5 and 43:13).

In 2 Chronicles 3:3 it describes "cubits after the first measure" (KJV). Other translations render this phrase thus:

"...cubits of the old standard" (ESV)

"...using the old cubit." (ERV)

"...by the older measure" (BBE)

"...cubits after the ancient measure" (JPS)

"...the former standard measurements" (ISV)

"...according to the old standard." (BSB)

The book of Chronicles was written about the 5th century BC, by (it is believed) Ezra the scribe (see Ezra 7:6). At the time when these books of Chronicles were written, a different, and apparently shorter, unit of linear measurement had been adopted compared to earlier times. The "older" cubit measure had been replaced by a shorter unit.

There is good evidence that the older unit was the equivalent of the Egyptian cubit. The Genesis account, giving the length of the Ark as 300 cubits, was penned by Moses. Moses, we are told, was "*...learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*" (Acts 7:22). Could it be when he wrote Genesis, the cubit he referred to was the Egyptian cubit?

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol 19, page 728, states "*The Egyptian cubit is generally recognized as having been the most ubiquitous standard of linear measurement in the very ancient world... and was standardized by a royal master cubit of black granite, against which all the cubit sticks or rules in use in Egypt were measured at regular intervals.*" "The royal cubit = 524 millimetres, or 20.62 inches" (see www.britannica.com/science/measurement-system).

Archaeology reveals that the Egyptian cubit was typically about 525mm or 20.62 inches in length. The Pyramids of the 3rd and 4th Dynasties seem to be

measured in integer multiples of this cubit. At the end of document are several examples where Egyptian cubit measuring sticks have been found, all in a range of 523 to 525 mm (20.6 to 20.67 inches).

Notice that Britannica says the Egyptian cubit was the *"ubiquitous standard of linear measurement"* in the *"very ancient world"*. How was it that the Egyptian Cubit was the universal standard at one point in time? It is because the cubit we now call the "Royal Egyptian" cubit predated Egypt as we know it, and was adopted by the early Egyptian culture, becoming the "Royal Egyptian" cubit in the earliest times.

This can be seen by the fact that Egypt was known in ancient Biblical times as "the land of Ham" (see Psalms 78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22). Ham was one of the sons of Noah, and the name of Ham's son, Mizraim, became synonymous with "Egypt". It is evident that the cubit measurement which Ham was familiar with, which he himself had used when helping construct the ark, became the only cubit measurement known in the very ancient world after the flood. When Ham settled in Egypt, this unit was incorporated into Egyptian culture.

When the site in question is measured using this longer cubit, it is evident the site is exactly the right length for being the remains of Noah's Ark, i.e., 300 of these cubits. The site has been measured a number of ways. For example, using the GPS coordinates for each end, the distance can be measured using the formula for the distance between two points on a sphere. The coordinates for each end are N39° 26.475, E44° 14.108 and N39° 26.395, E 44° 14.071. Using these coordinates, the ark site is exactly 300 Egyptian cubits long. This can be confirmed using Google Earth.

In each of these methods, the length of the site is consistent with the length of the Ark given in the Biblical account.

Subsurface Radar and Resistivity Scans

Initial radar scans of site were carried out in 1986-1987. These scans, using an SIR-3 made by GSSI Systems, revealed the same basic structure as revealed by the metal scans, only in more detail. Bulkheads, internal supports, clearly defined chambers, etc., all showed up on the radar. When he was shown these results, the Vice President of Geo Survey Systems at the time, Joe Rosetta, stated *"These lines are too periodic to be random natural type interfaces. It must be a man-made structure"*.

The site has been scanned by ground penetrating radar several times since then. I was personally involved in scans carried out in September 2012, which confirmed the periodic lines within the site.

In 2014, John Larsen of New Zealand undertook a resistivity scan of the site, using a "Super Sting R1 IP" from Advanced Geosciences Inc (AGI). 13 scans were done over several days. The details of these scans can be seen at https://noahsarkscans.nz.

The initial 2D images gave an indication of the depth of the structure, and this was consistent with the expected results given the dimensions in the Biblical record. The Bible states that the Ark was 30 cubits high (see Genesis 6:15) and contained 3 levels (see Genesis 6:16). While portions of the structure appear to be collapsed, other areas look to be intact, and these contain three decks, or levels. The lowest deck from the floor to the ceiling, measures 7.8 metres, which is exactly 15 Egyptian cubits, the middle deck from floor to ceiling is 4.7 metres, which is 9 Egyptian cubits, and the uppermost deck measures 3.2 metres, which is 6 Egyptian cubits.

The combined height of the three decks (3.2m + 4.7m + 7.8m) gives a total vertical height of 15.7 metres, which is 30 cubits, exactly the height given in the Biblical record. The resistivity scans also indicated structure such as ribs and joists, and ramps within the structure. Later 3D modelling of the resistivity data also revealed a clear "hull" shape in the ground encompassing this structure.

In 2019 further GPR scans were conducted. Both 1987 and 2019 GPR data show at 1-2 meters below a consistent pattern of reflection at a uniform depth over almost the entire site. The 1987 GPR data show at approximately 7 meters below a double reflection at the lower end of the boat formation. At this same depth and area, the 2019 GPR data show angular structures.

In 2021 the Governor of Ağrı arranged for complete GPR scans to be carried out, but this data has not been released yet. We look forward to seeing the results of these scans when the data is released.

Metal-Detectors

The first metal-detector investigation was carried out in June 1985 by a team consisting of Ron Wyatt, David Fasold and geologist Dr John Baumgardner, who was later to work with the Turkish/US Project team formed officially to

investigate the formation. These showed a pattern of lines within the site, also indicating this is not simply a natural formation, but a man-made structure.

An article published in The New American, 17 Dec 1990, tells of how, when the detector scanned the area outside the perimeter of the formation, no iron was found; but when the area inside it was scanned, some 5,400 separate spots, averaging one to every 8.16 sq ft of surface area, were located. Each was found to be on one of 14 longitudinal lines (from bow to stern) or else on one of 9 transverse lines (from starboard to port).

Another metal-detector scan was carried out again a few months later and once again, as stated by one of the researchers, this 'resulted in the amazing pattern of lines.'

That these pieces of metal might be joining mechanisms of the sort one might expect to find in a large boat seems to be a reasonable possibility. The Bible records that prior to the flood, Tubalcain (Genesis 4:22) was an instructor in brass and iron work, therefore metal structure comes as no surprise.

The detector indicated the lines of metal in the site were in an organised pattern, with longitudinal as well as transverse lines. The longitudinal lines converged to points at either end of the site. The team discovered that the longitudinal lines were distorted and bunched up as if on impact where the rock outcrop juts into the formation. This is consistent with the ark having been distorted on this rock at the time it was buried.

These well-documented regular patterns of 'iron lines', along with other features, certainly appear to be quite inconsistent with anything one would expect to find in a 'natural' geological formation. Rather, they are indicative of man-made structure and design.

What Can We Expect to Find When the Site Is Excavated?

The Ark's remains appear to have slid to this location from somewhere higher up the valley, then were buried by a mudflow or slip some time in antiquity. Being buried has, in effect, preserved the remains until this time. Scans have revealed the presence of structure consistent with walls, bulkheads, floors, ramps, etc. We know the Ark was designed to contain different rooms for each type of animal and bird, as is explained clearly in the book of Genesis (see Genesis 6:14). Core drills carried out in the 1990s indicate the presence of animal hair and petrified droppings within the site. Therefore, a careful excavation would reveal which

animals were kept within which spaces, based on the remains of hairs and droppings found within each space. As the remains are carefully examined, a "zoo-plan" of the Ark could be built up, based on the forensic evidence remaining in each 'room'.

The next logical step is excavation, to document once and for all the exact internal structure and composition of the boat. What would be the best approach to accomplish this? Here is a proposed plan to carry out this important next step:

Outline of Proposed Ark Excavation Steps

The remains are in the condition one would expect after being buried for centuries. To correctly assess such remains requires careful evaluation, as they will likely be very fragile. This is not a stone building, but the remains of a wooden vessel which at some time period in the past was probably buried in a landslip, filled with soil and then slowly deteriorated to the condition it is in today. Scanning indicates the remains are buried under about 1 meter of earth. Anything on or near the surface has deteriorated over many years by exposure to rain and snow, and the action of freezing and thawing during winter. In many places, the presence of the remains of a wooden beam (for example) might be identified only by a different colour or "kind" of soil. Once the soil has been removed, information is lost.

Therefore, obviously the site must be approached very carefully, step by step. Ideally any soil removed should be catalogued and stored, for potential microscopic examination later, to find (for example) animal hairs and other forensic evidence present. Therefore, I propose the following steps:

(1) First, the entire site must be thoroughly scanned. There are several types that can be considered, e.g., Resistivity, Acoustic Array (Seismic), IR, nuclear techniques, etc.
(2) Select a specific spot identified by the scans as being the most interesting or 'anomalous', and at this spot undertake a small excavation, perhaps 4m x 4m, to document what the scans are revealing, and answer the big question: Is there a man-made structure underneath?
(3) Using the evidence revealed from this small excavation, fundraising will be more effective. The next major goal is to erect a temporary but sturdy structure over as much of the site as funding will allow. This will protect both the site and workers from the weather.

(4) Once the site is protected from the weather, then systematic excavations can begin.
(5) As these excavations proceed, application can be made to make it a UNESCO World Heritage site. And planning and fundraising can begin for a permanent museum structure over the entire site, which will involve geological and engineering assessments because of the instability of the site.

NOTE: As each of these steps are carried out, it would be essential to document and film all parts of this process.

What other site in the world has such universal significance as the Ark of Noah? As the site is revealed to the world, it will draw global interest and attention.

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https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/inscribed-cubit-rod
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https://egypt-museum.com/folding-cubit-rod-of-the-architect-kha/
Shows 2 examples of cubits, including a folding wooden one and a gold leaf decorated one. It states the cubit was "about 52.5 cm"
Royal cubit rod of Amenemope (see https://egypt-museum.com/royal-cubit-rod-of-amenemope/)
"This ruler corresponds to the main Egyptian linear unit of measure, the "royal cubit" (ca. 52.5 cm)"
http://www.egyptian-architecture.com/JAEA1/JAEA1_Monnier_Petit_Tardy
"When accurately made, they employ a sleek section in the form of a long parallelepiped rectangle and are 0.523 m long. This is the exact length of a royal cubit."
From www.theglobaleducationproject.org/egypt/studyguide/gpmath.php
DIMENSIONS AND MATHEMATICS OF THE GREAT PYRAMID - The King's Chamber was built according to this cubit:
Length: 20 cubits - 34.38 ft = 1047.9024cm = 20 cubits of 20.628 inches or 523.95mm
Width: 10 cubits - 17.19 ft = 523.9512 cm = 10 cubits of 20.628 inches or 523.95mm https://www.academia.edu/45977243/units_and_geography_of_ancient_egypt_1
Page 5: "The most commonly found length of the royal cubit in ancient Egypt is the English/Greek cubit of 1½ English feet plus its seventh part, this is
1.714285ft, or 52.25cm. Shown below are just two of the preserved specimens of this length:
See also https://www.hindawi.com/journals/janthro/2014/489757/ "The royal cubit was 523 to 525 mm (20.6 to 20.64 inches) in length"

CHAPTER 9

Understanding the Traces of Sociological Themes in the Poem "Aghri" by Bahman Nasirzadeh

Mohammad ABBASZADEH[1]

Introduction

Poetry is the intellectual product of a poet, a poet whose intellectual outpouring in the form of order is a result of his lived experience in a field site, understanding the poem requires understanding that field site, and understanding the field site is the work of sociology and especially the sociology of literature. Sociology of literature focuses on the content of the work and its social essence and the mutual relations between literature and society. In this approach, the time and place of art and the artist in the construction of society and social relations, the environment of the artist and the time and place of life, as well as the social class and stratum that the artist is among them and according to them or in connection with them to create the work of art. This has been discussed and investigated (Hashmi, 2017: 13). Since poetry is an artistic work created in a field site experienced by the poet, it is necessary to address the concept of poetry. "Poetry in the Greek language comes from the root of poiesis, which means to make. In the belief of most ancient cultures and peoples, making and creating was done with the inspiration of supernatural forces, as in ancient Greece Muse, the goddess of poetry, music and inspiration. It was the giver of poets, and the ignorant Arabs considered poetry to be the result of the inspiration of demons to the poet's mind" (Barati, Emami, 2014: 104).

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This article intends to interpret Aghri Bahman Nasirzadeh's poetry from a sociological perspective, "If the sociology of art studies a specific field of social life, the sociology of literature follows this task of investigation in a more specific and specialized scope." And the researcher of this knowledge examines literature not as a trivial matter, but as a very important part of the consciousness of society and a reflection worthy of attention of cultures and subcultures" (Torabi, 2015: 4). When poets show social realities and cultures in the form of poems, the poems are considered as mirrors that show the state of society and perhaps the factors that create that state to others by using different and melodious words. So far, many researches have been conducted in which the social situation, popular culture and society issues have been investigated in various poems. For example, Muslimi and Shahbazi (2013) researched local customs from the book of Heydar Babaye Salam Shahriar. In Tahmasabi's study (2011), Hafez's stances in his poems have a critical aspect. Saadi also "paid special attention to social stratification as a social reality in the Islamic era" (Ahmadi and Nikdar Asl, 2012: 15). Hashemi (2017) has examined the role of social structures affecting Nosrat Rahmani's poetry from a sociological perspective and has shown the signs of the effects of such structures and the atmosphere of society on his poems.

According to the stated content, philosophers and writers can be considered as social thinkers who built a bridge between fantasy and ideal society, beauty and objective reality, which is mainly related to earthly, troubles, everyday life and human concerns. They connect the elements together. This is why the words and phrases depict rough and harsh topics with a certain tenderness.

In today's era, dangers such as poverty, insecurity, political and social riots and dozens of other issues attract the mind and language of poets and make them commit to poetry and make poetry and art purely artistic. It goes further and leads to the field of society and sometimes politics (Mohammadi, 2015: 388). For this reason, the selected poem can be used to express practical solutions for the social vitality of the inhabitants of this earthen planet. Now, the basic question is, how can examples of risky society, which is a warning of the state of society and is associated with concepts such as erosion of social capital, social unrest, and things like that, be inferred from the selected poem?

Introducing the Aghri Mountain

Mount Ararat is one of the most important mountains in Turkey, which is called Masis or Ararat in Armenian and Mount Aghri in Turkish. Ararat

is located in the northeast of Turkey, near the borders of Iran, Armenia and Nakhchivan. It is a mountain consisting of two volcanic peaks, one of which is called Big Ararat and the other is called Little Ararat[2]. The peak of Aghri mountain, which is around 130 km, is covered with glaciers in four seasons of the year. Aghri mountain, which is the highest point in Turkey, is therefore known as "roof of Turkey"[3].

In the Old Testament book of Genesis, it is said that Mount Ararat was the place where Noah's ark landed after the flood. Mount Ararat is mentioned in the Qur'an as Mount Judi. Mount Ararat, like many other important mountains in the world, has witnessed very important historical events. Among these events, we can mention the war between the Sumerians and Urartu in the third millennium BC, Alexander's attack, Nader Shah's invasion, the Treaty of Sur, the Armenian Genocide, etc.[4]

The important point is that according to the popular belief, during the time of Prophet Noah when evil covers the whole earth, God ordered Noah to build an ark in order to teach people a lesson. After this ark is built, Noah and his wife, his sons and their wives board the ark along with a pair of any kind of animal and enough water and food. Noah built the ark according to God's instructions and boarded it with all kinds of animals. After the storm that lasts for 40 days and nights, all the creatures that were outside the ship perish. When the waters recede, the ship sits on the mountain and the creatures that were in the ship are scattered around the earth. This very special religious feature of the mountain, with its magnificent view that rises to the sky in flat lands and its peaks that are covered with snow even in summer, and with its vegetation and different types of animal species, is one of the most impressive wonders of nature[5].

Conceptual Framework

The people living on this planet, by conquering nature, through the discovery of emerging tools, brought their world to the industrial revolution station, after this historical station, the industry at a high speed guided the human train towards the destination of the Utopia of progress and development. Kurdish

[2] https://decovel.com/page/ararat-peak

[3] https://www.trt.net.tr/persian/brnmh-h/2022/12/29/chhrchwb-syst-khrjy-trkhyh-dr-sl-2023-1925391

[4] https://decovel.com/page/ararat-peak

[5] https://safardoustan.com/%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%B1-%D8%A2%D8%BA%D8%B1%DB%8C

and the passengers of this train of happiness, happy and confident of a happy future, enjoyed the journey and the few bumps of the sharp modernity train were attractive to them and they did not pay any attention to its dangers, but these happy passengers had forgotten that sometimes This train of happiness gets out of their control and turns into Giddenzi's negative modernity trailer and crushes everything in front of it, like an Indian juggernaut, and by creating crises, it creates a risk society of Ulrich Becky. It shows that the people inside it all suffer from Giddenzi's ontological insecurity. What is certain is that such risks should be prevented. In the theoretical literature, perhaps one of the basic concepts for securing the insecure world is social capital, which according to Bourdieu is the actual and potential resources that come with the ownership of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of familiarity and recognition. It is mutually and bilaterally connected, which provides the possibility of people's participation in collective actions in order to gain mutual benefit (Tajbakhsh, 2003: 156) and its erosion can endanger the social order and bring many issues. ; To the extent that according to Fukuyama, the erosion of social capital can fuel the formation of corruption in society and from Putnam's point of view, the increase of crimes (Firouzjaian, 2012: 1360-133) etc. From another point of view, social capital, social networks and concepts of this kind can create important opportunities in terms of knowledge accumulation in various fields, including investment and such things (Lindstrand and Melén, 2017), the mentioned case It is so important that in Putnam's literature, social capital can increase the scope of social sustainability by having indicators such as social trust, networks and norms (Ni, et al, 2023). In line with the completion of the above, it can be said that in the modern era, we are faced with the growth of enlightenment, rationalism and humanism, which has been accompanied by despair, ruin and destruction, dogmatism, one-dimensionality, and claims of racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural superiority; What we see in the form of postmodern literature in recent times is the rejection of grand narratives in various fields, the rejection of modernist tendencies to believe in boundaries, cynicism towards meta-narratives, and such things that the poet, referring to the failure of the Berlin siege, With the project of depopulation, while strengthening national solidarity in countries in terms of strengthening social capital, solidarity between countries at the international level with the support of international social capital is reminded in the direction of multilateral and multi-level development. The key point of the aforementioned discussions is the interaction

of agency and structure in strengthening social capital; The meaning of agency is the effective power of human factors in strengthening the structure, and the meaning of structure, rules and supporting resources that can have a dialectical relationship with each other; The result of the dialectical relationship between structure and agency is associated with the ability of structure and social agents, which Giddens believes that if the mentioned relationship is established, many meanings and concepts suppressed in the shadow of modernity can be reconstructed; A case that has been repeatedly raised as a social concern in selected poems from different literatures; The words of the poet in Aghri's poetry are a soft criticism of the current state of society, whose traces can be clearly seen in the proposed theories.

Methodology

The method used in this research is hermeneutic. Attention to hermeneutic methods, especially in literary and artistic works, comes from the fact that these methods help us more than other methods in understanding the meanings hidden in the works. (Abbaszadeh, 2012: 108) Regarding the discussion of the method of understanding the text and analyzing the findings, the author's theory is used, and the world view and the historical and social conditions of the poet's time are involved in the interpretation of the text, and therefore, compared to The type of poet's view has been judged in verses and relating to sociological theories (Ekoui, 2022: 228). In the discussion of validity and reliability, it has been tried to validate part of the validity of the interpretations in the articles and the proximity of the paradigmatic assumptions, and confirming sources have also been used in the form of the trinity technique in the form of sociological theories confirming the concepts of the texts. In order to ensure the reliability, the correctness of the processes followed, the comprehensibility and the use of sufficient documentation were repeatedly examined and monitored during the research, and the concepts obtained were also compared with the results of similar research. Validity and reliability in qualitative research, which includes the method of hermeneutic analysis, has major differences with the quantitative method. Considering the measurement and indexing of human behaviors, ensuring the accuracy and correctness of the results, led to the emergence of various types of validity and reliability in human research. This was developed and developed in quantitative researches under accurate statistical tests, but with the emergence of qualitative research methods and considering different

perceptions and its emphasis on the qualitative aspect of human behavior, the validity and reliability of statistical tests in the field it changed a little towards more relativistic and interpretative concepts (Abbaszadeh, 2009: 21).

Findings

The fact is that modernity has acted as a double-edged, single-edged sword, and its negative consequences have generally outweighed the positive; one of its important consequences is the erosion of social capital

Components of National Social Capital

» One of the components of social capital is social sobriety as a symbol of social stability. Social capital can act as a potential catalyst to achieve the sustainability of societies. Social sustainability also implies social security and safety, social networks, justice, solidarity and social cohesion, the preservation of local and indigenous characteristics and the indigenous cultural system, in which the positive cultural values of minorities are respected and the positive aspects of different cultures are respected and preserved (Toklenia et al., 2019: 138).

Yüce Ağrı

Başı karlı

Ey vukarlı

» Religious capital and belief in God is the source of social capital, another component of social capital that has been inferred. Religious capital, which includes belonging to a religious culture and honoring it in a society, has important functions and creates a network of religious trust, creates social convergence, increases beliefs and beliefs, controls bad and deviant habits and behaviors, and creates social adjustments (Sapidnameh et al., 2017).

Tanrı türkün dayağı

Seni sonunda yetirdi deli tufan bana birdən

Söylesek bin böyle dert vardır azizler

» Another component of social capital is social tolerance. Tolerance and social tolerance, which is a kind of social virtue that allows individuals and groups to coexist peacefully with different views, is emphasized in the sociological approach to the effective role of institutions and social structures in tolerant behaviors (Qadirzadeh and Nasralahi, 2018).

O na tek sevmiri incitsin o karı

Sikkenin ağrı, olacak bir tarafı

Söylesek bin böyle dert vardır azizler

» Chivalry is also one of the dimensions of social capital that has a high position in the selected poem, it is an act between personal and social that prevents situations that have a negative charge and reduces its impact.

Oğulun gayreti olsa, gül- çiçek

Konça'da solmaz

» Social honesty is an important component that can be understood from the text and can be traced within the structure of social capital. "Honesty" is the fundamental element of trust and social relations, and it is the guarantee of the survival of social capital and is a vital necessity for the survival of society.

Hak sözü mert danan olmaz

» The early modern period and its consequences is another component that can be understood from the text of the poem.Düzdü, kar yağdı ezel'de yüce dağlar başına

Şahteni payladı o, komşuduna-yoldaşına

» The function of the interaction of structure and agency with the support of social capital is one of the other concepts that can be reached in most of the verses of the poem. In this regard, Giddens in the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1999), Archer in the theory of formation of form (Archer, 1995) and Bourdieu in the theory of habit and field (Inghilleri, 2003) tried to create interaction and integration between agency and structure.

Sel gücü arkı temizler

Okaşayırdın, eli herden

Gün kızarsın yanağından

Böyle çıksın dudağından

Yıkacaktır

Görürüm ben, deşilir küllü ocaklar

Açılır isti kucaklar

Az kalıpdır

Giyeceksin yaşıl elvanlı donun sen

Görürüm ben

Oturur heeeey dalı düşman.
Ne kadar kar yağı yağsın
Yüceli -şanlı başında ne kadar çen akır aksın
Ne kadar dondaracaktır
Ne kadar yol kesecektir
Akar àhır'da bulutlar,
Gün vurar Ken, eriyip çeşmelerin
Koy ARAZ olsun
Kükreyib aksın ARAZ'ım
Kurugöl'de suya doysun
Dikelip göy HAZER olsun
Gün, bulut'tan işarar Ken, vuracak dağ başına
Zer güneş'ten sepecektir, zirveye_ taşkaşına

» Deconstruction and emergence of signs of postmodern society and criticism of the consequences of modernity are important concepts that the poet has addressed in some way in his poetry. Jacques Derrida has chosen deconstruction for the transition from structuralism to put an end to it (Katz, 2023).

Aparak töhfe baharı
Paylayan bùse nubarı
Andımızdır şu defa bir ulu tarı
Gün, bulut'tan işarar Ken, vuracak dağ başına
Zer güneş'ten sepecektir, zirveye_ taşkaşına
BERLİN'Ə benzerler hasarı

» Invitation to social capital was also one of the other concepts that the poet tried to address in his poem.

Gel atam kaedeşim ağrı
Gel günül sırdaşım ağrı
Gel sızır göz yaşım ağrı,
gel kurut göz yaşım ağrı
Beşik öz màlikine yadlanan olmaz
Vereğin dal-dala bizler

Components of International Social Capital

» Solidarity between the countries of Armenia, Iran and Turkey can come to the fore in the form of international social capital. Mentioning Sahand and Sablan mountains in Iran and Agra on the border between the three mentioned countries is an attempt to unite the countries of Iran, Armenia and Turkey, which is considered among the concerns of the poet.

Gel apar köore düzelt cüt kolumu
De SEHEND okşasın ağlar bulağından
De: şu yandan SAVALAN gelsin haray'e

» Another negative consequence of modernity are insecurities and social concerns and a sense of danger. Habermas is worried about the shrinking of the world of life and proposes to create a world of life and a system that enrich each other (Ritzer, 2017: 753).

Çekdiğin vayla derinden
Ağlayırdın kan yürekden
Çok sıkıldım eserinden
Ben gözü ağlar görürem
Sine dağlar görürem
Şu sayak istemirem,
Koyma kalksın
El içinde köge her Gün ayrılık nàle və zàri
Dayanıp zülm katarı
Hicran gitti bazàri

Conclusion

The reality is that today's world is full of risks, and in such a risky society, people's concerns about natural disasters (famines and earthquakes) have shifted to the risks caused by human activities, which are mostly global in nature (Ghasemi, 2008:33-34). According to Beck (1992), global risks lead to a wide recognition of the adverse consequences of modernity on the living environment and leave certain effects. Sociologically, common concepts of safety and security are degraded, and psychologically, anxiety and insecurity become a complete

part of modern conditions, that is why in a risky society, huge investments should be made to study understanding. Risk and crisis analysis should be done. One of the investments is the investment to improve the national and international social capital.

For this reason, according to the title of the article, the main purpose of which was to derive sociological themes from Aghri's poetry, themes such as social risks and the role of national and international social capital in reducing the aforementioned risks in order to form and strengthen life expectancy among the residents. Earth globes were extracted; the cases that, in the form of criticism of modernity, show favor to postmodern deconstruction; because if in modern literature more emphasis was placed on linearity and in other words structure-oriented, in the postmodern period the main approach is to pay attention to non-linearity, paying attention to equal voices in a polyphonic world. Of course, in the selected poem, both were placed in the form of interaction between structure and agency; it has been believed that combining structure and agency can empower both. Based on the content of the analyzed poem, the interaction of the structure with the agency and generation of social capital can have positive consequences as follows:

Social Self-Actualization

Actualizing one's potential abilities, in line with personal development, is one of the implicit concepts of self-fulfillment (Schoofs, etal, 2022); A case that somehow leads to creativity (Runco, 2020).

Oğulun gayreti olsa, gül- çiçek
Konça'da solmaz

Social Vitality

Enjoying the quality of life, adapting to the environment, reducing social risks and in some way factors related to survival are somehow within the concept of social vitality (Zang Zarin, et al, 2015).

Ben gözü ağlar görürem
Sine dağlar görürem
Şu sayak istemirem

Resistance to Foreigners and Aggressors

Since the time of human existence on this earth, countries have always aimed at plundering countries in the form of old and new colonialism in line with their goals; The lack of solidarity and social unity, and in a word, the lack of social capital, has helped the colonial countries to achieve their goals, of course, the mentioned case is also true at the micro level and the national level. What emerges from the content of the selected poem is that in case of birth of social capital and strengthening it can overcome various transgressions at the micro and macro caste levels, Zain's poems are also related to this.

Oğulun gayreti olsa, gül- çiçek

Konça'da solmaz

Toprağı düşman kalmaz

Köklü güller ne kadar kalsa kar altda

Koymarık biz geleckler ola, hiç vakt kötü günler sayağı

Social hope

The concept of social hope is mainly related to the improvement of social conditions. Rorty, with the project of social hope, seeks the honorable life of human agents (Amiri Esfarjani et al., 2018).

Uçulup hem uçacak

Hicran gitti bazàri

BERLİN'Ə benzerler hasarı

Görürem

Hiss edirem

Gözleyirler yolumu

Bir gün evi, ben bacı kardeşli görem,

evi sırdaşlı görem

Andımızdır şu defa bir ulu tarı

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CHAPTER 10

The Biblical Flood Story

Jiří MOSKALA[1]

The purpose of this article is to briefly summarize the literary, exegetical, and theological meaning of the Flood account from the point of view of the Torah which is part of the Christian Bible. The Biblical Flood narrative is a unique and unrepeatable event in earth history (Genesis 6–9).[2] It is presented as a historical, catastrophic event with global proportions and sudden consequences (Davidson, 2000). God and Noah are the main characters in that account. The Scriptural passage of the Flood story is written in a chiastic structure (Shea, 1979) and focuses on God who

1. provides His grace to Noah (Gen 6:8);
2. calls people to repent and return to Him (Gen 6:3);
3. judges and punishes the violence and total wickedness of people (Gen 6:5, 11–13; 8:21);
4. is grieved and in pain when He needs to send a flood to preserve life (Gen 6:6);

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[2] The following are outstanding contributions for understanding of the Biblical Flood narrative: Harry Baerg, Creation and Catastrophe: The Story of Our Father's World (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing, 1972); John Templeton Baldwin, ed., Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary: Why a Global Flood Is Vital to the Doctrine of Atonement (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 2000); Leonard Brand, Faith, Reason, and Earth History: A Paradigm of Earth and Biological Origins by Intelligent Design, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009); Harold Coffin, Origin by Design, rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 2005); Daniel Hämmerly-Dupuy, "Some Observations on the Assyro-Babylonian and Sumerian Flood Stories," Andrews University Seminary Studies 6, no. 1 (1968): 1–18; Chun Sik Park, "Theology of Judgment in Genesis 6–9" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2005); Ariel A. Roth, Origins: Linking Science and Scripture (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 1998).

5. commands to Noah to build an arch to save faithful humanity and animals (Gen 6:14–21);
6. establishes the covenant between Himself and Noah and his posterity not to send Flood again (Gen 9:8–11); and
7. forms a rainbow as the sign of His mercy and faithfulness (Gen 9:12–17).

The heart of the Flood story is the statement that "God remembered Noah" (Gen 8:1) meaning that He intervenes in favor of Noah, his family and the entire animal world to save them. The Flood is a worldwide deluge which is described by a specific Hebrew term *mabul* (Greek: *kataklusmos*) used only for the description of this cataclysmic event, and is employed 12 times in the Genesis account (Gen 6:17; 7:6, 7, 10, 17; 9:11 [twice], 15, 28; 10:1, 32; 11:10), plus once in Ps 29:10. The Flood was not a catastrophe caused by natural factors but is described as God's judgment upon the wickedness and violence of humanity because not only their actions were wrong, but also their thinking and intentions of their hearts were "evil all the time" (Gen 6:5; 8:21).

It is significant to observe that for the first-time the term "grace" is used in the Holy Scriptures, the Bible, in connection with the Flood which is provided in the context of a terrible calamity. God shows His mercy because He is a loving Lord. Before God sent the Flood, He gave humanity a period of 120 years of additional grace to repent and come back to Him (Gen 6:3). It needs to be underlined that God did not want to destroy but He was reacting to the corruption and destructive activities of the antediluvian world. God is the Author of life, so when He needs to act like a heavenly Surgeon to stop the avalanche of sin and remove a deadly cancer of evil, it is for Him a strange and alien task (Isa 28:21; Ezek 18:23, 32), as He wants everyone to repent and live (2 Pet 3:9).

The biblical text plays with the key Hebrew word *shachat* which has two meanings in English: (1) to corrupt, and (2) to destroy. Carefully consider the following text: "Now the earth was corrupt [*shachat*] in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt [*shachat*] the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted [*shachat*] their ways. So God said to Noah, 'I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy [*shachat*] both them and the earth'" (Gen 6:11–13 NIV). It means that God is going to *shachat* what was already *shachat*, He is going to destroy what people have already destroyed. God is not coming to destroy what was good, meaningful, and beautiful. In His mercy, He can no longer endure the violence, exploitation, wickedness, and evil, so as the loving

and holy Lord, He intervenes to "destroy those who destroy the earth" (Rev 11:18 NAS), and thus He preserves genuine life.

The Flood story begins with the report of the damaging intermarriage between those faithful to the Lord and the wicked. The godly line of the Sethites were marrying the beautiful daughters from the ungodly line of the Cainites, and the result was the corruption and destruction of genuine religion (Gen 6:1–4).

God is behind the Flood, but He did not send the Flood because He was angry: "The LORD regretted making human beings on the earth, and his heart was grieved" (Gen 6:6 NAB). This anthropomorphic language underlines that God's heart was broken and full of pain when He had to decide to destroy the antediluvian world because of their stubborn stay in sin and destructive behavior. Thus, the reason behind the Flood was not a capricious decision of God but the reason was deeply rooted in the moral depravity, corruption, and wicked behavior of unrepentant humanity.

The other motif behind God's intervention of sending the Flood besides stopping the avalanche of evil was the preservation of God's promise given in the Garden of Eden that the Seed, the Messiah, the Redeemer would come to save humanity from sin, defeat Satan, and bring the solution to the problem of evil thus doing for us what we are not able to do for ourselves (Gen 3:15). If God did not act, there would be no lineage for the Messiah to be born into a devoted family by a godly woman because the wave of evil would destroy everything; thus God's promise of redemption would be annihilated.

God was delaying His judgment to the last moment, and it is reported that only 8 people were willing to faithfully follow God at that time. According to God's instruction, Noah, his wife, and their three sons with their wives together with the chosen living creatures entered the ark seven days before the Flood began (Gen 7:4, 7, 10). Different kinds of animals and birds were preserved: seven pairs of clean animals, two pairs of unclean animals, different kinds of birds and all kinds of creatures that move along the ground (Gen 7:2-3, 8, 14–15).

Then, "all the springs of the great deep burst forth" and a heavy rain fell upon the earth for 40 days and nights (Gen 7:11–12). All humans and animals perished except those which were in the Noah's ark which had been built according to God's direct command (Gen 6:14-22). The huge storm began to diminish after 150 days (Gen 7:24). The Flood lasted one year and 10 days (Gen 7:11; 8:14–19).

The Noahic Flood is considered as the cosmic **undoing or reversal of creation** (Genesis 7) (Frymer-Kensky, 1964). Then, chapters eight and nine describe God's intervention and the process of the **re-creation of life** on the earth with the new order climaxing with God's promise that He will never again destroy all living creatures by the flood (Gen 8:21–22; 9:9–11). This Noahic covenant was sealed with the sign of the rainbow (Gen 9:12–17) which should always remind us when seeing a rainbow that God is faithful, He keeps His word, His promises. The Flood was an act of judgment coming from the loving and righteous Judge of the whole Universe who knows perfectly human hearts.

The process of Re-Creation is transparent because this cosmic restoration is similar and parallels the seven days of Creation: (1) The wind over the earth and waters (8:1a; cf. 1:2); (2) division of waters (8:1b–5; cf. 1:6–8); (3) appearance of plants (8:6–12; 1:9–13); (4) appearance of light (8:13–14; 1:14–19); (5) deliverance of animals (8:15–17; 1:20–23); (6) animals are together with human beings, blessing for humans given, food for human beings is described, reminded that we were created in the image of God (8:18–9:7; 1:24–31); and (7) sign of covenant is given—the rainbow (9:8–17; cf. 2:1–3) (Clines, 1972).

The Flood was universal, and different phrases and language used in the biblical narrative attest to this fact. Let me mention only 5 of them:

A. All mountains were completely covered and submerged by water (7:19-20);
B. every living creature—birds, livestock, wild animals, swarmers, and all mankind died (7:21-23a);
C. only Noah, his family and animals in the ark survived (7:23b);
D. the specific vocabulary is used like "the earth" (used 46 times), "all flesh" (occurs 12 times), "every" (employed 25 times), and "under the whole heaven" (appears 6 times);
E. the length of the Flood (more than one year).

In the biblical account, we read that at the end of the flood "the ark came to rest **on the mountains of Ararat**" (Gen 8:4). Note the plural "mountains" of Ararat which does not point to a specific mountain, but to a region. Ağri University according to reliable research where I presented this study is located in this mountainous geographic region (Younker, 2021).

The Biblical Flood narrative is an unparalleled story even though there are similarities with extra-biblical flood stories. Ancient flood narratives are common across a wide variety of cultures (e.g., Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece,

and Rome). These extra-biblical stories resemble some aspect of the Biblical Flood account of Genesis 6–9. Particularly three of them became famous due to their connotations to the Biblical Flood motifs. These three mythological stories of Mesopotamian provenience are most elaborate, and in comparison, none of the others can match them.

The first record of these three extra-biblical flood myths is preserved in the *Eridu Genesis* dated from approximately 1600 B.C. The single fragmentary tablet was excavated in Nippur, discovered in 1914, and written in the Sumerian language. The story tells that the gods decided to wipe out humanity for an unknown reason, but the water-god Enki insisted on saving mankind. He informed Ziusudra, a pious and humble king, of the dreadful decision of the gods and advised him to save himself by building a very large boat (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010).

The second narrative is the Old Babylonian *Atrahasis Epic* written on various Akkadian tablets around 1600 B.C. and found in 1956. The story reports that humans multiplied and began to make too much noise so the gods could not sleep. Consequently, the god of Earth, Enlil, decided to destroy noisy humanity. Enlil proposed to flood the world. No god was to warn Atrahasis, and they were not to be influenced by human's sacrifices. Nevertheless, Enki delivered the plan to Atrahasis who built a giant boat for himself, his family, and the animals. The entire earth was flooded for seven days and nights and only those in the boat survived. After seven days the flood ceased and Atrahasis offered sacrifices to the gods (Lambert&Millard, 1999).

The third extra-biblical flood account is a very famous story captured in *the Epic of Gilgamesh* which was discovered in 1872. This narrative from ancient Babylonia is no doubt one of the greatest literary achievements of the ancient world. The hero in the epic is Gilgamesh, a mighty king of Uruk, who is distressed by the death of his friend Enkidu, so he searches for immortality. He looked for his ancestor Utnapishtim, resembling the biblical Noah, at Mount Mashu/Masis/Agri which is undoubtedly Mount Ararat. Utnapishtim was commissioned by Enki to build a colossal ship called Preserver of Life to survive with his family and baby animals. After the water receded, he frees animals and sacrifices to the gods (Sandars, 1966).

There are significant differences between the Biblical Flood narrative and the Near Eastern mythological flood accounts. I will name only a few of them:

1. The Biblical story speaks about the One living God, the Lord who is the Creator, but the mythological accounts are polytheistic, mentioning many gods.
2. Second, the motivation is different. For example, in the Atrahasis account an arbitrary reason is given for the flood: the gods were disturbed by the noisy humans, so they decided to destroy them, whereas the Biblical rational is related to the wickedness of people who violently destroy everything good, beautiful, and meaningful. Because they were the source of the destruction, God in His mercy intervened in order to preserve life and His promises.
3. The mythological narratives present angry gods who need to be appeased by sacrifices, but the biblical story pictures a loving and caring God who feels deep pain in His heart when He is forced to destroy those who are agents of destruction.
4. Fourth, the length of rain and duration of the flood do not match.
5. Fifth, names of main heroes in extra-biblical narratives significantly differ from the name of Noah.
6. Sixth, in the non-biblical accounts, there is nothing about the covenant between God and humanity.
7. Seventh, God Himself openly and willingly makes provisions for the deliverance and salvation of humanity and animal world in collaboration with Noah.

Conclusion

The Biblical Flood narrative is a crucial story explaining God's judgment upon human's wickedness, corruption, and violence. After the Flood, God establishes on Earth a new creation order for humanity. However, God established with humans His covenant of love: "I will never again destroy all living creatures as I have done" (Gen 8:21). God is depicted as the ultimate Judge who will judge everyone in His love and justice. His mercy is with us, and the rainbow in the sky is a sign of God's faithfulness.

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CHAPTER II

Integration of Ground-Penetrating Radar, LiDAR, and Empirical Field Studies: A Multifaceted Analysis Comparing 1987 and 2019 field studies of the Durupinar Boat Formation known as "Noah's ark"

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Introduction

This paper summarizes the ToPa 3D research team's challenging field expedition from October 14-17, 2019, at the Durupinar Noah's Ark site, located just south of Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı) near the village of Üzengili in Türkiye's Ağrı Province. Next a comparison between the 1985-1987 geophysical survey results and the geophysical data obtained during the 2019 survey is made. The comparison suggests there are similar subterranean reflections seen below the ground in both surveys and that new angular reflections suggesting possible man-made structure was discovered during the 2019 survey.

October 2019 Survey Expedition

In early October 2019, ToPa 3D, a provider of 3D mapping services for architecture, engineering & construction (AEC), geospatial mapping, and historic projects out of Bend, Oregon, USA (topa3d.com, 2024) was contracted to survey the Durupinar Noah's Ark site with LiDAR, ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and thermography (Figure 1). The Durupinar Noah's Ark site has elicited a lot of controversy between Noah's Ark researchers, religious leaders, and scientists. Its size and rugged terrain and regional geopolitics meant it was

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indeed a surveying challenge, but during this expedition Topa 3D successfully surveyed the site with the needed geophysical equipment and provided preliminary analysis (Tise, 2024a). Among a range of technologies used, it was ground-penetrating radar (GPR) that had the most successful results.

Figure 1. The Topa 3D survey team along with a Science Channel video crew, local military personnel, and Turkish citizens. Image source: Zafer Önay, October 16, 2019.

Over a period of 4 days between October 14 and 17, 2019, the ToPa 3D team collected the GPR data using both a 100 MHz and a 250 MHz antenna (Figure 2) (Tice, 2024b). These two frequencies meant the team could possibly obtain results up to 12 meters down in wet clay soil for example (Peace, 2022). The survey covered the whole boat formation with both antennas along with a detailed z-pattern survey in three locations on the site using the 250 MHz antenna.

Figure 2. ToPa 3D GPR expert on the Durupinar Noah's Ark site being interviewed by the Science Channel. Image Source: Andrew Jones, October 16, 2019.

The team, also, collected LiDAR data (Figure 3) using "a FARO terrestrial laser scanner at ¼ resolution and x3 noise compression and processed in FARO Scene V2019.1 software. 111 scans were collected and registered (stitched) together creating a complete 3D model (point cloud) that is measurable within approximately 1". The point cloud data was aligned to survey control, established by a local Turkish surveying firm using a GPS unit (+/-1" precision) without base station. This ½ billion point cloud data will be used for archaeological grid layout for future analysis." (topa3d.com, 2020)

For visualization purposes, a photogrammetry model was created of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site (Figure 4). Using a DJI Mavic 2 Pro drone 1,835 aerial photographs were collect a month before the Topa 3D team arrived and during the expedition the imagery "was stitched photogrammetrically with Pix4D software depicting in detail, the rugged topography of the project site. Data was not aligned to control points. Geotagged images from the internal GPS unit provided. Typical precision expected with this internal unit without ground control points range from 1-2 meters horizonal, and 1-3 meters vertical." (topa3d.com, 2020)

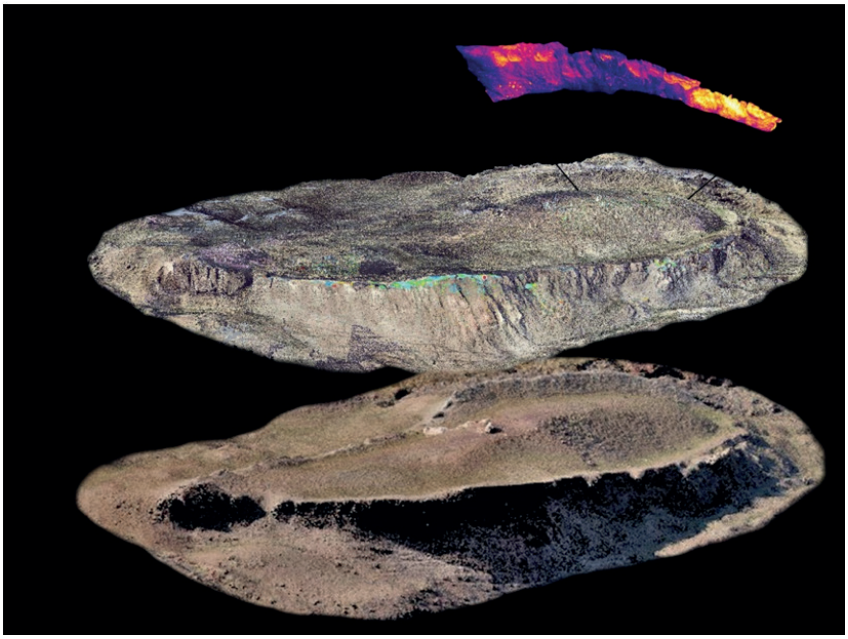

Figure 3. Photogrammetry model, LiDAR model with thermography section of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

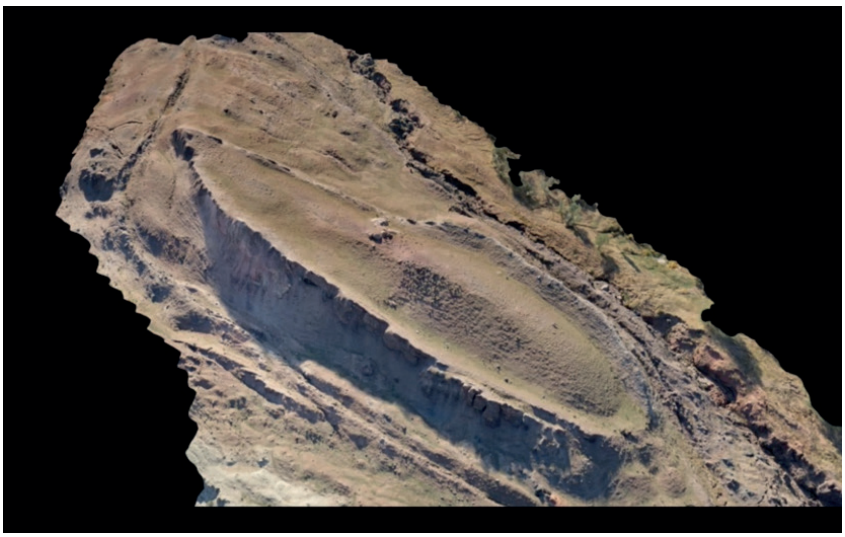

Figure 4. Photogrammetry 3D model of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

October 2019 Survey Results

Dr. Dan Bigman of Bigman Geophysical located in Norcross, Georgia, USA processed and interpreted the GPR data. "All data were processes using GPR-Slice v.7 software. A vertical correction for data drift was first applied to all wiggle traces using a batch-wobble minus gain function. Then a time-zero correction was applied to data to adjust data lines to correspond with the ground surface reflection. Next a bandpass and background filter were applied to remove high and low frequency noise and remove horizontal banding from data profiles. Amplitudes were adjusted using an AGC automated gain function. A hyperbola fit was conducted, and data were migrated to account for signal distortion during data acquisition. Finally, a Hilbert transform was applied to generate absolute amplitudes for reflection responses." (topa3d.com, 2020)

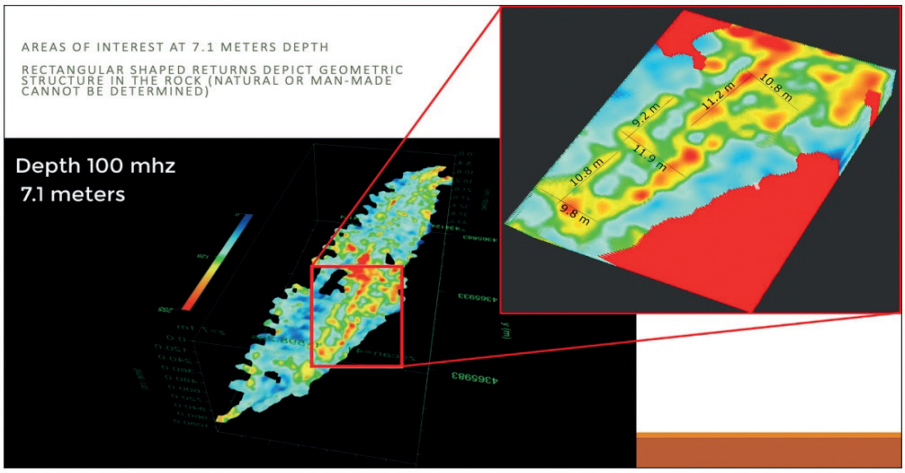

Figure 5. Geometric rectangular pattern of reflections seen at 7.1 meters down. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

Several areas of interests were identified in the GPR data. First at approximately 7 meters down on the northwest interior of the boat formation's lower end a pattern of rectangular shaped reflections was seen in the 100 MHz data (Figure 5 & 6) (topa3d.com, 2020). While an excavation or core samples would be needed to determine the true nature of the reflections the 100 MHz data was nonetheless interesting. An analysis of the geometric structure's point cloud data revealed the structure had depth to it and was not a shallow feature (Figure 7).

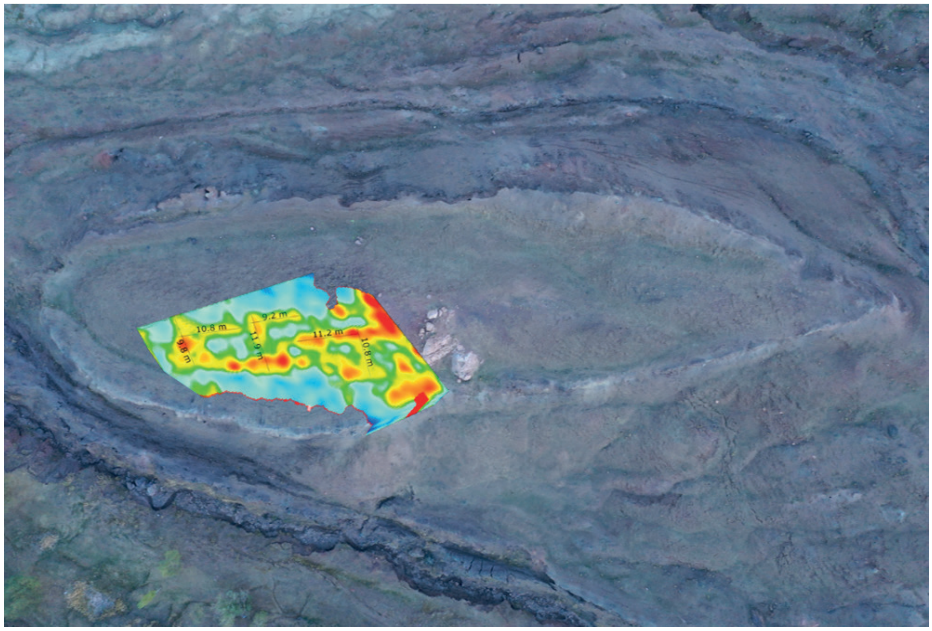

Figure 6. Location of the rectangular reflections on the Durupinar Noah's Ark site. Image source: Topa 3D & Andrew Jones, 2020.

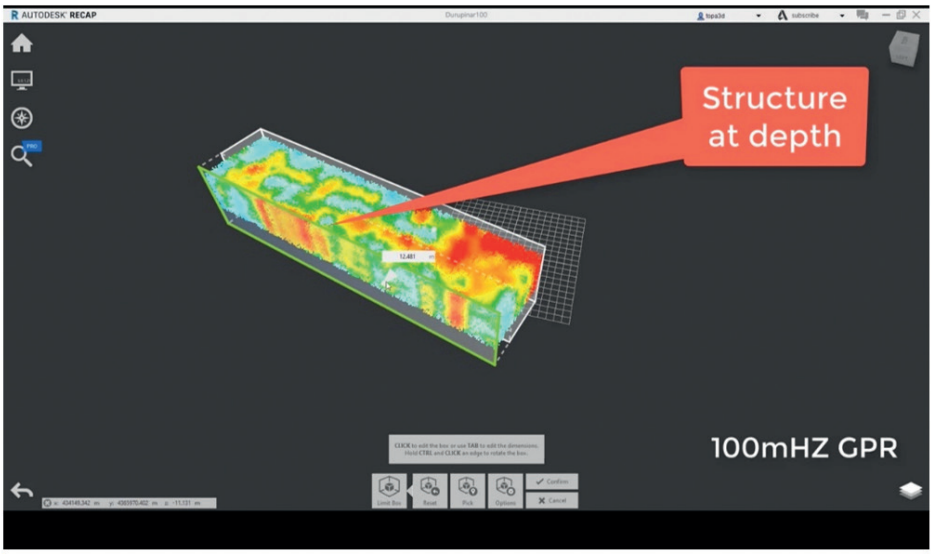

Figure 7. Rectangular geometric structure at depth. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

In addition, linear features were detected at approximately 3 meters down on the eastern side of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site with the 250 MHz antenna (Figure 8 & 9).

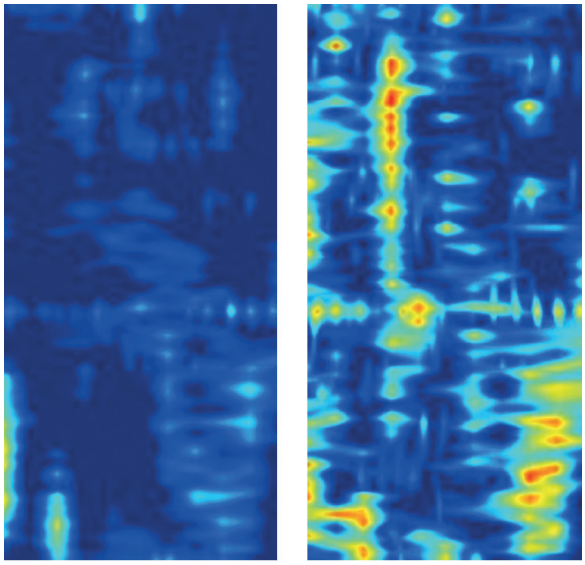

Figure 8. Linear reflections in the 250 MHz data approx. 3 meters below the surface. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

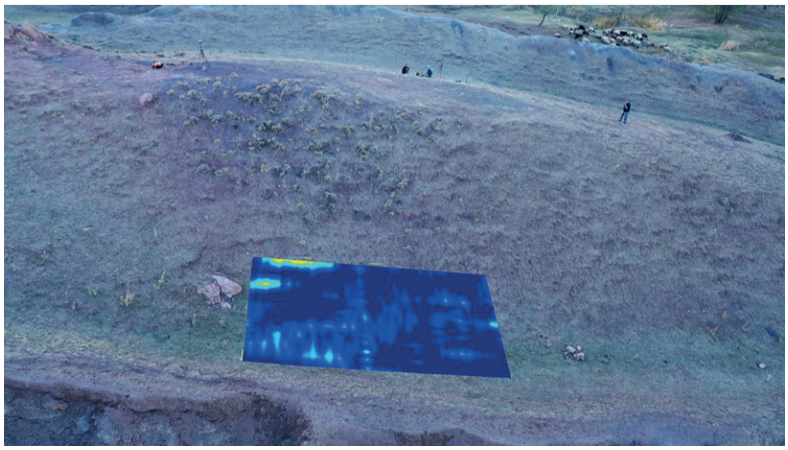

Figure 9. Location of linear reflections on the eastern side below the middle hump. Image source: Topa 3D, February 2020.

July 1987 Survey Expedition

Between 1985 and 1987 a number of geophysical studies were done by Turkish and American scientists on the Durupinar Noah's Ark site. In July 1987 Assist. Prof. Dr. M. Salih Bayraktutan with Atatürk University in Erzurum, Turkey along with Dr. John Baumgardner with Los Alamos National Laboratory in the USA co-sponsored a number of geophysical surveys of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site (Figure 10). In addition to ground penetrating radar the team did a magnetometer survey and seismograph investigations. The results were released in an unpublished report in November 1987 (Baumgardner & Bayraktutan, 1987).

Figure 10. July 1987 Research Team. Image Source: Dr. John Baumgardner, 1987.

July 1987 GPR Survey Results

Seventy-one GPR scans were completed across the site from July 19-23 and were spaced every 2 meters along east/west profiles (Figure 11). A 120 MHz antenna was used to "achieve the maximum possible penetration." (Baumgardner & Bayraktutan, 1987)

The GPR survey picked up an "almost planar" feature 4-8 meters below the surface across the lower end of the boat formation between 18 meters and 62 meters downhill from the exposed rock outcrop (Figure 12) (Baumgardner & Bayraktutan, 1987). An additional radar reflection was seen almost across the

whole site around 1-1.5 meters below the surface (Baumgardner & Bayraktutan, 1987; Bayraktutan, 1985).

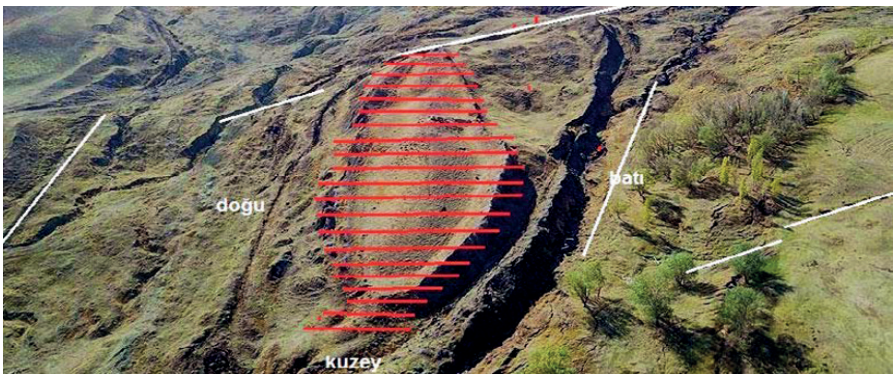

Figure 11. The July 1987 GPR survey pattern. Image source: Dr. M. Salih. Bayraktutan, 2019.

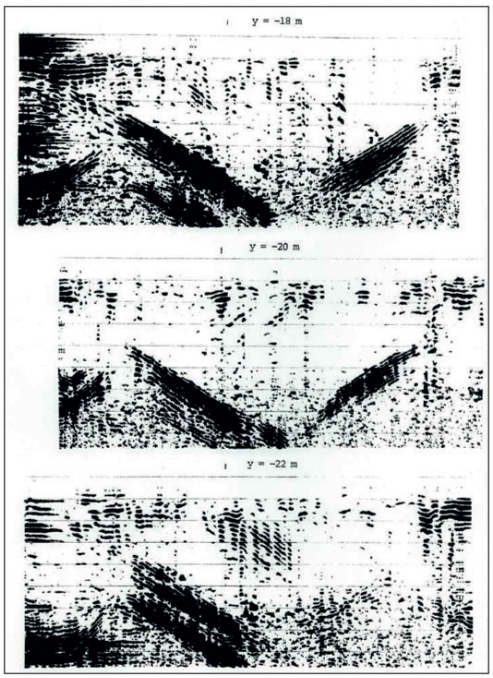

Figure 12. An example of the double V-shaped reflection in the GPR data. Topographical correction of the data creates a planar feature that is 4-8 meters below the surface. Image Source: Baumgardner and Bayraktutan, 1987, 26.

Comparison of the 1987 and 2019 GPR Survey Results

Although varying radar technologies (analog versus digital) and frequencies (120 MHz in 1987 and 100 MHz as well as 250 MHz in 2019) were employed for the antennas, several features were consistently detected at nearly identical depths in the radar data from the two surveys that were 32 years apart.

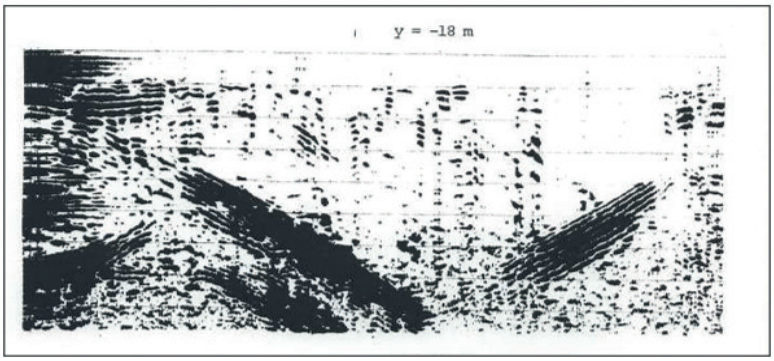

Figure 13. V-shaped double reflection between 4-8 meters below the surface and approximately 24 meters downhill from the rock outcrop. Image Source: Baumgardner and Bayraktutan, 1987.

The 120 MHz GPR data obtained in the 1987 survey detected a planar reflection 4-8 meters down in the lower northern half of the Durupinar Noah's Ark site (Figure 13). In this same lower end of the boat formation the 2019 geophysical survey detected in the 100 MHz dataset a pattern of rectangular geometric reflections around 7 meters below the surface (Figure 14). Without obtaining samples of the material via core drilling one could speculate as to how the angular features integrate with the planar layer.

Finally, both the 1987 and 2019 GPR surveys showed a consistent pattern of reflections at a uniform depth over almost the entire site around 1-2 meters below. The 2019 survey's 250 MHz dataset had a strong reflection across the site between 1.6-1.9 meters in depth (Figure 15) (topa3d.com, 2020). While the 1987 report mentioned a slightly shallower reflection at 1-1.5 meter in depth across the ship-shape formation (Baumgardner & Bayraktutan, 1987). Several layers in the soil can be seen on the exposed eastern side of the boat formation (Figure 16). Are any of these visible layers producing the radar reflections seen in the GPR survey? More research is needed.

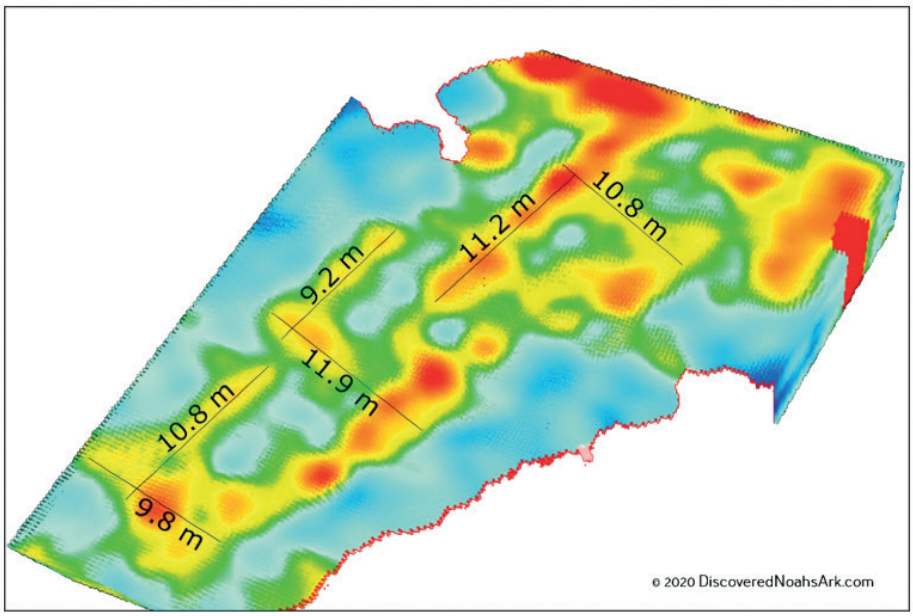

Figure 14. Angular patterns around 7 meters below the surface in the northwest depression inside the Durupinar site. Image source: Topa 3D, 2020.

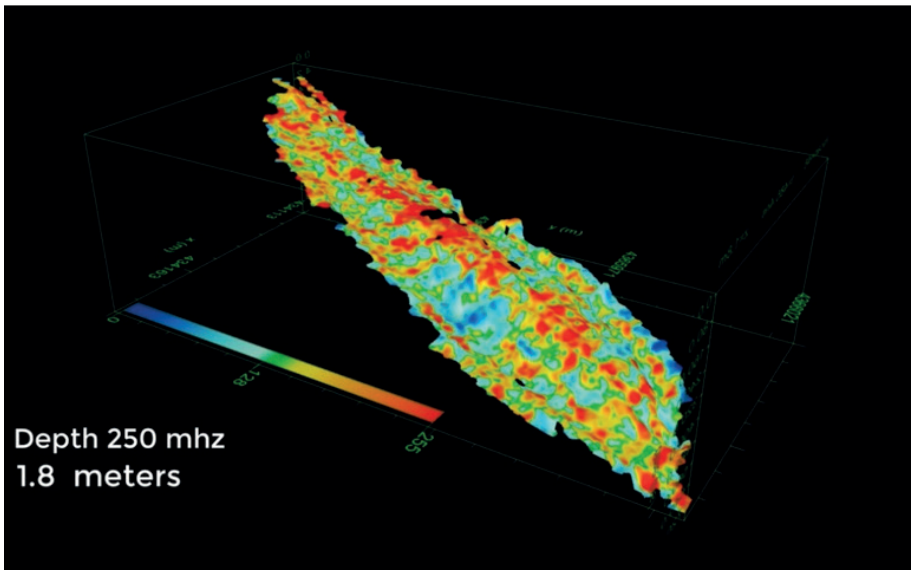

Figure 15. A consistent pattern of reflection seen across the site in the 2019 250 MHz GPR data at around 1.8 meters down. Image source: Topa 3D, 2020.

Figure 16. Below the highlighted lines are seen a number of layers of soil exposed on the eastern "wall" of the ship formation. Image source: Andrew Jones, 2023.

Summary

The different geophysical surveys done at the Durupinar Noah's Ark site only furthers the mystery as to what is below the surface in the ship shape and what is holding the site together since its first discovery in 1959. The 2019 expedition produced interesting angular and linear reflections deep in the structure. When compared to the previous geophysical work done in the 1980s more questions are raised as to how these features relate to each other and if they're man-made or natural. More scientific research is needed at the site. As the "father of Turkish archaeology", Professor Dr. Ekrem Akurgal, once stated on camera after reviewing the preliminary data about the Durupinar site in March 1985, "At any rate, it is a ship, an ancient ship, and it must be preserved." (Wyatt, 2004) Nearly four decades on, this assertion not only remains valid but has gained increased urgency.

Figure 17. The Durupinar Noah's Ark site. Image source: Andrew Jones, June 5, 2020.

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