

MOUNT ARARAT and NOAH'S ARK

HISTORY, MYTH and LAND

Editors

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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.

Preface

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.

Editors

Prof. Dr. Faruk KAYA

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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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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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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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MOUNT ARARAT AND NOAH'S ARK

History, Myth and Land

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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Gods, Mountains and Temples

Elisabeth LESNES¹

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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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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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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 JONES¹

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. (Wyatt, 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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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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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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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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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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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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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.



Üzengili Site - Candidate for Noah's Ark

Ross PATTERSON¹

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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- (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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CUBIT ROD, WOOD, LIVERPOOL MUSEUM [03/061] Inventory numberM13825 Measurements: Length 523mm
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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."
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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"



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

Mohammad ABBASZADEH¹

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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The Biblical Flood Story

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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 chiasmic 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).

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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”

Andrew JONES¹

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

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