

THE OLDEST CULTURAL AND
TRADE CITY OF THE MOUNT
ARARAT REGION:
DOĞUBAYAZIT



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Page and Cover Design

Yusuf OKÇU

Editors

Prof. Dr. Oktay BELLİ
ORCID İD: 0000-0002-5681-2003

Prof. Dr. Randall W. YOUNKER
ORCID İD: 0000-0003-1153-465X

Vedat Evren BELLİ
ORCID İD: 0000-0002-5339-6921

Publishing Coordinator

Yasin DİLMEN

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**THE OLDEST CULTURAL
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Prof. Dr. RANDALL W. YOUNKER
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PREFACE

The city of Doğubayazıt is located in eastern Anatolia, near the present-day Turkey-Iran border. Situated just 30 km west of the Gürbulak Customs Gate on the Turkey-Iran border, Doğubayazıt is distinguished not only by its historical and cultural identity but also by its role in international trade, which has significantly shaped the region's economic structure.

The city's advantageous geographical location has been a key factor in the historical, cultural, and commercial development of the region. The growth of Doğubayazıt as a center of trade and economy has continued from antiquity to the present day. Indeed, it is rare to find another example along the Turkey-Iran border that has developed as extensively in terms of history, culture, and commerce as Doğubayazıt.

Doğubayazıt, established where the famous "Silk Road" from Central Asia and Iran entered the northeastern Anatolian lands, has benefited greatly from its strategic position throughout history. It has been one of the most prominent settlement centers in Northeastern Anatolia during Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Ottoman Empire.

In addition to its role as a conduit for various trade goods from Central Asia and Iran, Doğubayazıt has also been a site of cultural exchange. Situated at the crossroads where the cultures of Central Asia and Iran converged with Anatolia, the city reflects a synthesis of these influences, which can be observed in the monumental architectural works that are part of its immovable cultural heritage. One of the most outstanding examples of this synthesis is the renowned İshak Pasha Palace and its complex.

Another significant feature of Doğubayazıt is its location at the southwestern foothills of Mount Ararat. In antiquity, the region around Mount Ararat was home to various cultural elements such as fortresses, settlements, mounds, rock tombs, kurgans, necropolises, dams, ponds, irrigation canals, and monumental rock carvings, many of which are found in and around Doğubayazıt. These important archaeological sites reflect the characteristic features of the Mount Ararat region's culture.

Approximately 3,500 years ago, the Doğubayazıt region boasted far more abundant water resources, rich meadows, and pasturelands. For the semi-nomadic communities engaged in sheep farming, the region was an invaluable resource. Though the geographical and climatic advantages of the Doğubayazıt region seem to have diminished over time, its historical significance endures.

Mount Ararat, rising majestically like a cone from the Doğubayazıt Plateau, possesses a beauty that is easy on the eye. Poets have compared the mountain to a bride adorned with her veil. From the plateau, one has the impression that they could reach out and touch Mount Ararat. As a result, the region surrounding Doğubayazıt is the source of numerous poems, stories, legends, proverbs, folk songs, blessings, curses, riddles, and idioms related to Mount Ararat.

The book titled “**The Oldest Cultural and Trade City of the Mount Ararat Region: Doğubayazıt**” is the product of 35 years of research. The numerous intriguing and original articles presented at the many International Mount Ararat and Noah’s Ark Symposiums, as well as the archaeological surveys we have conducted in the Mount Ararat region over the years, have been reassessed from a fresh perspective in this book.

We saw fit to reissue some important articles from the book *Mount Ararat and Noah’s Ark Researches* in order that the Mount Ararat Region’s cultural geography and archaeology in darkness should be better understood.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our esteemed colleague, Prof. Dr. Randall W. Younker, Director of the Institute of Archaeology at Andrews University, for arranging support for the publication of this book.

Editors

Prof. Dr. Oktay BELLİ - Prof. Dr. Randall W. YOUNKER - Vedat Evren BELLİ

THE DOĞUBAYAZIT REGION IN ANTIQUITY

Oktay BELLİ*
Randall W. YOUNKER**
Vedat Evren BELLİ***

Animal husbandary became more common than cultivation since Antiquity up to the present, because meadows and pastures constitute 64% of the land in Eastern Anatolia. Meadows and pastures are situated in the broad mountain plains between the valleys and the lower confines of forests, in valleys and river basins. Pastures leaf out in April and begins to dry at the end of July. They are common throughout the region. Although grain is cultivated at the valleys end river basins, the basic characteristic of Eastern Anatolia flora is the pastures and meadows on the high plateaus and mountain plains.

Tall meadows, which is important for plateau animal husbandary, grow on these 2000-2600 m high volcanic plateaus. Broad mountain plains are important for semi-nomadic societies relying on animal husbandary. As the snow melts in May, mountain plains,

where water springs, pastures, and tall meadows lie, begin to get green. Animals are put out to graze until winter starts again. Plateaus of Tendürek, Nemrut, Süphan, Aladağ, Ararat Mountain and Doğubayazıt plateaus have the best meadows, pastures, and they are also rich in water springs.

Almost all archaeologists agree that the mounds in Eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and Northwestern Iran began to become desolated in the end of Late Bronze Age. It was as if people quit cultivating the land and migrated to the high plateaus rich in water and meadow. People got so adapted to the profitable conditions of the plateaus that a semi-nomadic life style relying on animal husbandary almost became a characteristic feature of the 2nd Millennium BC.

A drier climate is claimed to be the reason why people began migrating

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,

e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

** Prof. Randall W. YOUNKER, Institute of Archaeology Andrews University, U.S.A.

e-mail: younker@andrews.edu

*** Vedat Evren BELLİ (M.A.), Education Officer, Bitlis Eren University, Ahlat Vocational High School, Ahlat - Bitlis / TURKEY, e-mail: evrenbelli@gmail.com - evrenbelli@hotmail.de

sources, and livestock but also against larger enemy attacks from other regions. A similar common threat applies to the Early Iron Age fortresses in the Nakhchivan region.

Some of the fortresses, established in connection with one another, also served to ensure the safe transportation of various trade goods brought from Central Asian countries via the “*Silk Road*” to the settlements in the region.

The locations of the interconnected defensive fortresses in the Doğubayazıt region during the Early Iron Age were so strategic that the Urartian Kingdom, which conquered the region at the end of the 9th century BCE, continued to use these fortresses by expanding and strengthening them without altering their positions.

Some of the important fortresses used by the Urartian Kingdom as economic and military administrative centers include: Kalus Fortress, Doğubayazıt Fortress, Hasanbey Fortress, Akçukur Fortress, Bozkurt Fortress, Ömerağa Fortress, Aşağı Erhacı Fortress, Karakoyunlu Fortress (Minuahinili), and Luhiuni Fortress.

In the late 7th century BCE, the Scythians, who swept into Eastern Anatolia from the Caucasus like a swarm of locusts, burned, destroyed, and ruthlessly plundered the fortresses, palaces, temples, and cities established by the Urartians. As a result, the Urartian Kingdom, which had brought a golden age to the Eastern Anatolia Region in antiquity, was erased from history.

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KALUS CASTLE AND THE KURGANS

Oktay BELLİ*
Randall W. YOUNKER**
Vedat Evren BELLİ***

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 Sağlıkşuyu (old Arzep) village

to the northwest. The remains of the old road are still clearly visible today.

Geographically, Sağlıkşuyu 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 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

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,

e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

** Prof. Randall W. YOUNKER, Institute of Archaeology Andrews University, U.S.A.

e-mail: younker@andrews.edu

*** Vedat Evren BELLİ (M.A.), Education Officer, Bitlis Eren University, Ahlat Vocational High School, Ahlat - Bitlis / TURKEY, e-mail: evrenbelli@gmail.com - evrenbelli@hotmail.de

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GODS, MOUNTAINS AND TEMPLES

Elisabeth LESNES*
Randall W. YOUNKER**

The Mysterious Allure of Mountains

Azement, 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 re- sides. 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 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).

* Prof. Elisabeth LESNES, Andrews University, *elesnes@libero.it*, ORCID iD: 0009-0004-9533-806X

** Prof. Randall W. YOUNKER, Institute of Archaeology Andrews University, U.S.A.
e-mail: younker@andrews.edu

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FOOTNOTES

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- 1 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 m²) 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.

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*

Introduction

In this study, uphill from the Durupinar Noah's Ark formation (Fig. 1) near Üzengili village in the Doğubayazıt district we investigate the possibility that stone markers along the international border of Türkiye and Iran (Fig. 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. (Fig. 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 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) (Fig. 3 & 6).

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.

* Researcher, NoahsArkScans.com, andrewmarkjones@gmail.com, United States of America

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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MOUNT ARARAT THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Oktaý BELLİ*

Mount Ararat is the highest and the greatest mountain in Anatolia with a height of 5137 m. What makes it the greatest is not only its height, but also its holiness, which has become a subject of myth and religious books. Mount Ararat played an important role in the “Noah Myth” in the monotheistic books of the Holy Koran, the Old Testament and the New Testament as well as the polytheistic religions of Antiquity.

Mount Ararat is considered as a sacred mountain not only in Anatolia, but also by Georgia, Russia, Armenia, Nakhichevan, Azerbaijan and Iran. Ararat lives in the social lives and myths of millions of people living within a wide geography. It is not possible to come across a similar mountain in a different part of the world.

According to the archaeological finds, Mount Ararat and its vicinity was conquered by the Hurrians, who were active in Caucasia and Eastern Anatolia, beginning from the 3rd Millenium B.C. Living a semi-nomadic life, the Hurrians provided “Cultural Unity” in Caucasia and Eastern Anatolia for the first time in history.

The first and profound information concerning Mount Ararat and its

vicinity comes from the cuneiform tablets recorded by the Urartian kings, who made military campaigns in the region. Mount Ararat and its vicinity was named as “*Erikua*” or “*Erekuahi*” in the cuneiform tablets.

Many historical myths are focused on the holy Mount Ararat, known as the most famous mountain in all Middle Eastern countries and Anatolia. For example, the name of this famous mountain is cited as “*r-r-t*” and named as “*Hari Ararat*” in the Bible.

The name “*r-r-t*” in the Old Testament is the name of the Urartu that established a powerful kingdom mainly in Eastern Anatolia, Caucasia and Northwestern Iran between 9th-6th centuries B.C.

The Armenians have called Mount Ararat (Ağrı) “*Masis*”, meaning “High Mountain”. The Iranians have called it “*Kuh-i Nuh*”, meaning “the Mountain of Noah”. The Arabs, on the other hand, have called Greater Ararat “*Cebelu’l Haris*” and Lesser Ararat “*Cebelu’l Huveyris*”. All western travellers, expeditors, and geographers have called Mount Ararat, “*Ararat*”.

* Prof. Oktaý BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com - www.oktaybelli.com

ÜZENGİLİ SITE - CANDIDATE FOR NOAH'S ARK

Ross PATTERSON*

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 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 İlhan Durupınar 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 Durupınar, went to investigate the site.

* *Researcher, ross@discoverynews.net*

- (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.

Examples of Egyptian Cubit lengths

<https://egyptfwd.org/Article/6/478/In-Pics-The-Oldest-Ruler-In-The-World-Cubit-rod>

New Kingdom, Dynasty XVIII. Wood cubit rod (rule) of Maya, royal treasurer of Tutankhamen. The cubit measuring stick is labelled as “52.3 cm” long in the Paris, Musée Du Louvre. <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/inscribed-cubit-rod>

CUBIT ROD, WOOD, LIVERPOOL MUSEUM [03/061] Inventory number M13825

Measurements: Length 523mm

<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](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:

Figure 1. Cubit rod of Maya, steward
of Tutankhamen, Louvre Museum,
Paris Figure 2. Cubit rod of Hormheb,
Egyptian Museum, Turin

See also [https://www.hindawi.com/
journals/janthro/2014/489757/](https://www.hindawi.com/journals/janthro/2014/489757/) "The
royal cubit was 523 to 525 mm (20.6 to
20.64 inches) in length"

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 JONES*

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 (Fig. 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 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.

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 (Fig. 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.

* Researcher, NoahsArkScans.com, andrewmarkjones@gmail.com

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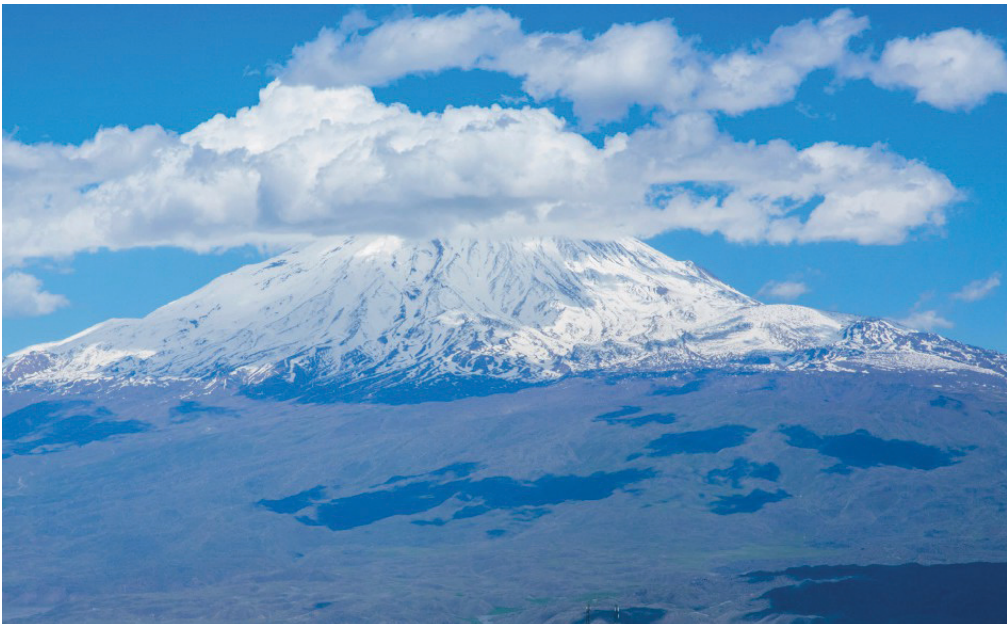
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THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE NAME ARARAT

Oktaý BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

At a height of 5137 m, Mount Ararat is Anatolia's highest and most majestic mountain. However, as we have frequently stated in our previous work, it is not only its height that makes it magnificent but also its sacredness, the subject of legends and religious books.

For example, Ararat has also become legendary to this day as the subject of the phenomenon of the *Story of Noah* in the Koran, the Torah and the Bible, the sacred books of monotheistic religions, as well as in the polytheistic religions of antiquity.

Mount Ararat is a volcanic mountain covering an area of 1200 km² with a circumference of about 135 km and a ground diameter of more than 35 km, within the present provincial boundaries of Ağrı and Iğdır. Rising suddenly in the shape of a broad cone from the Doğubayazıt Plain which is on average 1500m above sea level, Mount Ararat seems near enough to touch. The view of Ararat from the Iğdır plain, an average of 950 m above sea-level and to the north of the mountain, is much more impressive and magnificent.

Mount Ararat is regarded as a sacred mountain, not only in Anatolia but in Georgia, Russia, Armenia, Nahkchivan, Azerbaijan and Iran, countries neighbouring Turkey. In short, it is impossible to encounter a similar, such magnificent, sacred mountain, the subject of the social life, religious belief and legends of millions of people living in such a wide geographical region.

MOUNT ARARAT IN THE HURRIAN PERIOD IN ANCIENT TIMES

In the light of archaeological material and cuneiform documents, at present our first most important data relating to Mount Ararat belongs to five thousand years ago. No other mountain in history and in other geographical regions except Mount Ararat has come under the domination of dozens of civilisations, kingdoms and states. The fact that Ararat has been under the domination of various civilisations, kingdoms and states, and also the subject of religious books and legends for thousands of years, has caused the fame of this mighty mountain to increase and have an immortal quality.

* Prof. Oktaý BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,
e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

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THE FORMATION AND MECHANISMS OF THE GREAT TELÇEKER EARTHFLOW WHICH ALSO MOVED NOAH'S ARK!, MOUNT ARARAT, EASTERN TURKEY

Murat AVCI*

I-INTRODUCTION

The Telçeker earthflow is located in the province of Dogubeyazit, 3 km to the Southwest of the Turco-Iranian highway; reachable from the Telçeker village, which is approximately 300m East of Üzengili village, at the foot of Mount Ararat, one of the magnificent young volcanic mountains of Eastern Anatolia. However, the Telçeker earthflow is not located in the volcanic part of the mountain, but rather in the flanking Cretaceous formations into which Mount Ararat was intruded (Fig.1).

This study aims to describe the development and formation of the Telçeker earthflow which is a great

earthflow when measured and compared with the other great landslides in the world. However, it is not only worthy studying it because of its size but also for a special feature that it carries on its shoulders. This feature resembles a ship and is assumed by some to be the Noah's Ark, symbolizing a story mentioned in the world's three major sacred religion books. For this reason, it has attracted both religious and non-religious professionals who have visited the area and proposed views on this **Natural Monument** (sometimes called the Durupinar site) since the beginning of the 19th century. However, except confidential technical reports of MTA, Turkey, the first significant research around Mount Ararat was carried out by Blumental(1959). But the area became more well-known after the publication of an aerial photograph in a local weekly magazine (Life Magazine) in 1959 in Turkey which contained the great earthflow and the ship-like feature on it.

The primary purpose of this study is to make a comprehensive analysis of Telçeker earthflow; a secondary aim

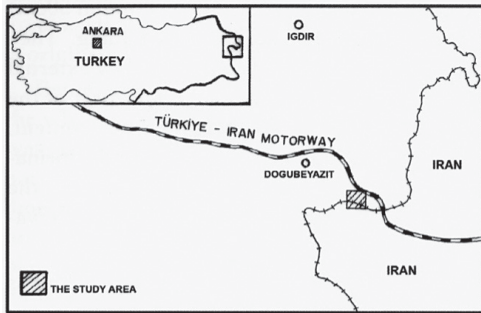


Figure 1. Location map of the study area

* Associate Prof. Murat AVCI, Saygınlr Sitesi Blok A, No. 93, Batıkent Ankara-TURKEY,
e-mail: muratavcı4@tnn.net, egitibilim@tnn.net

While the melting continued, the edge of the glacier retreated towards the centre and the drainage line around the glacier from dripping water also moved toward the centre. During this long, slow retreat, these areas were diagenesed by physical and chemical dissolution, and by the process of condensation and compaction. In this way, the areas between the centre and edges were worn down and subsided. Why then the centre remained raised? These slow processes might have taken hundred of years, continuing until the glacier became very small and thin, about the size of the current raised area. This small piece of ice would then melt quickly and dissappear in a short period of time: because of this, the centre was not exposed to water action long enough to be diagenesed like the subsided sections and it thus remained higher.

The outcome of all these processes was the formation of this near perfect **Natural Monument**, this ship-like feature, or **Noah's Ark** as it is commonly known.

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SEISMIC ACTIVITY OF AĞRI CITY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Tekin YEKEN*

1. INTRODUCTION

Many studies have been carried out on the seismotectonics of the Northeastern Anatolia Region, including Ağrı (Ararat) and its surroundings. The research region has been analyzed by many researchers. However, it has been determined that the Northeastern Anatolia region has a complex tectonics. (Nowroozi,1971; Philip at all.,1989; Kazmin,1991). These are mostly studies examining important reverse faulting and lateral-slip faulting. Detailed studies have been carried out on the tectonic features of Eastern Anatolia and its surroundings; (Allen,1969; McKenzie, 1972; Balavadze and Mindelli,1975; Gamkrelidze,1977; Jackson,1992; Philip, at all.,1992; Triep at all., 1995).

Since the neotectonic period, Arabian continental collision tectonics has been continuing northward. Accordingly, the Northeastern Anatolia region has a complex tectonic structure and seismic activity. Due to its geological and tectonic characteristics, Ağrı and its surroundings have been exposed to devastating earthquakes in historical and instrumental periods. During historical

periods, an active tectonic movement occurred in the region. These tectonic events.

As a result, some fault systems were formed. Approximate lengths of these faults; Balık Gölü Fault is 90 km, Çaldıran Fault is 55 km, Doğubayazıt Fault is 50 km, Tutak Fault is 50 km, Karayazı Fault is 85 km. Each of these fault systems has the potential to produce an earthquake of approximately $M \geq 7.0$ magnitude, depending on physical parameters. They also continue their current seismic activities.

As a result of seismological analysis, it is important to determine the source mechanism of earthquakes in the region. These studies are important for determining tectonic models in the region. The information obtained brings new interpretations to many problems of structural geology and seismology. The elastic deformation energy that causes faulting occurs as a result of long-term relative movements between plates. The geometry of the force system formed by the discharge of this energy is the target of seismological research. This information is used successfully in

* Kocaeli University, Hereke Asım Kocabıyık Vocational School, Construction, Construction Technology Programme, Hereke, Kocaeli, Türkiye (tyeken@kocaeli.edu.tr) ORCID:0000-0003-3456-8801

According to a general evaluation of the study, the results and recommendations are given below:

1. Earthquakes occurring in the region are generally shallow focused and have deformation characteristics.
2. The research area is very active in terms of seismicity and is capable of producing large earthquakes ($M > 6.5$). However, according to the relationship between the number of earthquakes occurring in a hundred-year period and their magnitude; 80% of the earthquakes occurring in the region by numerical weight vary between $4.0 > M > 4.8$ (Figure.6 and Figure.7).
3. Destructive earthquakes in the Eastern Anatolia region have strike-slip and reverse-slip fault mechanisms. In this regard, small-scale and very detailed seismotectonic studies need to be carried out in this region. (Figure 10).
4. "Seismic gap" areas with the potential to produce earthquakes have been identified in the study region. These risk areas are generally tectonically unbroken areas and show microseismic activity before the main rupture.
5. The national station network should be increased in the region. Earthquake prediction studies should be carried out.

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THE CASE FOR AĞRI DAĞI/MASIS AS BIBLICAL MT. ARARAT

Randall W. YOUNKER*

INTRODUCTION

The Mountains of Ararat vs. Mount Ararat

One of the great stories of western civilization is the story of the Great Flood and how Noah and his family survived the flood in a large vessel known as the Ark. The story appears in Genesis chapters 6-8 in the Hebrew Torah, known by Christians as the Old Testament. According to this sacred text, the ark came to rest on the mountains (Heb. *hārê*) of Ararat (Heb. *ārārāt*). In Hebrew, the word *hārê* has been interpreted either as a plural noun, (“mountains”) or an adjective (“mountainous”).¹ Technically, here is a common masculine noun in plural construct so “mountains” is the more common translation. Speiser translates it as the “Ararat range”² which would still support the idea of a plurality of mountains named Ararat.

However, some scholars believe that *hārê* *ārārāt* may be a nuanced expression that still points to a particular mountain. For example, Keil and Delitzsch understood the plural form

“mountains of Ararat”-to refer the two peaks of today’s Ağrı Dağı /Masis in eastern Turkey-often referred to as Greater Ararat and Lesser Ararat.³ If they are correct in their proposal, then the candidates for the Ark’s landing place (below, next section) are greatly reduced with Ağrı Dağı and its dominate double peaks being the most obvious choice.

Victor Hamilton is another commentator who sees the expression *hārê* *ārārāt* as referring to a single mountain. Hamilton acknowledges that the straightforward, literal reading of the Hebrew *hārê* *ārārāt* is commonly understood as “the mountains of Ararat”⁴-a point that is regularly emphasized by most commentators.⁵ However, Hamilton argues that it is possible that the expression could be understood as a distributive plural, such as found in 21:7, where “sons” refers to only one son, Isaac. If so, then the plural could be used as an indefinite singular which would read, “[one of] the mountains of Ararat.”⁶ This would still not provide the proper name of the mountain but could indicate the Hebrew author was aware that other

* Prof. Randall W. YOUNKER, Institute of Archaeology Andrews University, U.S.A.
e-mail: younker@andrews.edu

Hebrew account in tandem, it can be seen that while not naming the specific location, the Hebrews understood the ark to have landed in the vicinity of Ağrı Dağı /Masis Māšu –not in the region of Mt. Judi (or other proposed sites). Third, the fact that the Hebrew term “mountains of Ararat” pre-date the rise of the Kingdom of Urartu with its expanded borders, means that the writer of the Hebrew account of the landing of the ark envisioned the region of Ararat to correspond with the more limited boundaries of Urartu as they were before

the rise of the Urartu Kingdom; that is, Biblical Ararat was more restricted to the northeast of Lake Van. This, therefore, precludes other candidates for Ararat because they lay outside the boundaries of what the Hebrews understood to be the mountains of Ararat. This leaves Ağrı Dağı /Masis/Māšu, with its flood related traditions as depicted in the Atrahasis and Gilgamesh epics as the most viable candidate for the Biblical Landing place of the Ark.

FOOTNOTES

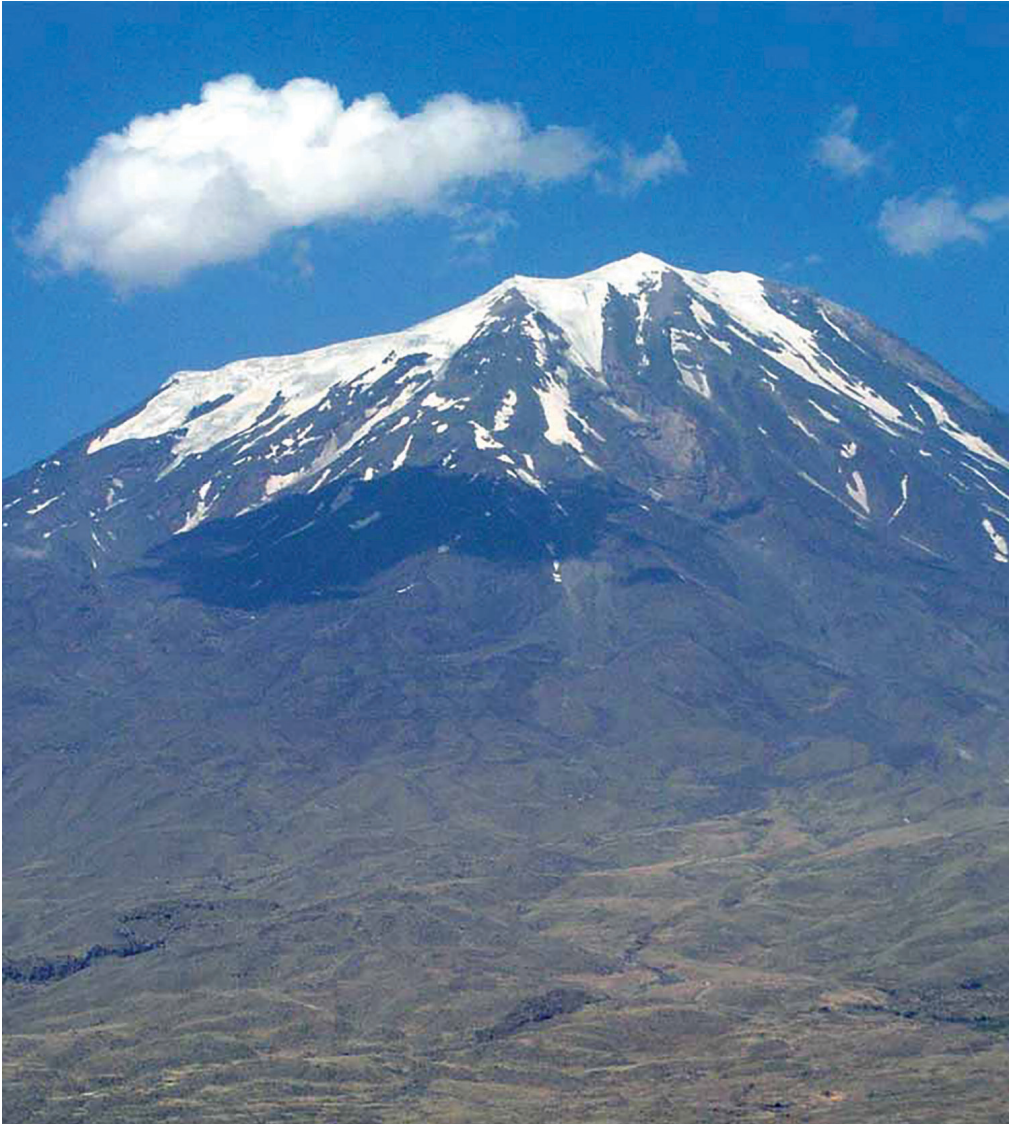
- 1 There are some scholars believe that the Akkadian cognate for Ararat, itself, may mean “mountains,” which would heighten the emphasis on mountainous characteristic of these particular mountains-perhaps suggestive of their dramatic appearance and height.
- 2 It is interesting that a similar interpretation (of mountain range) was made for Mt. Māšu/Masis in the Gilgamesh Epic by Hildegard and Julius Lewy. They take as a plural rather than dual (twin) and thus translate Tablet IX line 38 as the Māšu mountain range. Most scholars understand this not to be mountains plural, but twin mountains or the two peaks of Mt. Ararat (see George, Andrew R., trans. & edit. (1999), *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (reprinted with corrections 2003 ed., Penguin Books, p.71.).
- 3 C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch, Vol. 1*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans (1973) p. 148.
- 4 Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, (1990) p. 301. (Claus Westermann attributes the reading of the distributive plural in Genesis 8:4 to the tendency of interpreters and commentators through the centuries of wanting to name or identify a particular mountain as the place where the ark landed, Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, Minneapolis: Fortress (1994), p. 443.
- 5 E.g. E.A. Speiser, *Genesis*, Doubleday, NY: Anchor, (1964) p. 55. J. Doukhan, *Genesis: SDA International Bible Commentary*, Pacific Press (2016), p. 152.
- 6 Ibid. For additional support Hamilton cites M. Greenberg (Ezekiel 1-20, p. 68) on Ezek. 3:6 as an illustration: “not to [one of] many peoples . . .” versus “not too many peoples” (RSV).
- 7 For various candidates for Mt. Ararat see Lloyd R. Bailey, *Noah: The Person and the Story in History and Tradition*, University of South Carolina Press: Columbia: South Carolina (1989), pp. 53-81.
- 8 Mt. Judi, sometimes called Qardu [from the Aramaic], is a peak near the town of Jazirat ibn Umar (modern Cizre), at the headwaters of the Tigris, near the modern Syrian–Turkish border. According to the 18th century English scholar George Sale, “This mountain [al-Judi] is one of those that divide Armenia on the south, from Mesopotamia, and that part of Assyria which is inhabited by the Curds, from whom the mountains took the name

- Cardu, or Gardu, by the Greeks turned into Gordyae, and other names. ... Mount Al-Judi (which seems to be a corruption, though it be constantly so written by the Arabs, for Jordi, or Giordi) is also called Thamanin ..., probably from a town at the foot of it” *The Koran*, translated into English, with explanatory notes from the most approved commentators, (1734). Mt. Djudi/Judi appears as *al-Ġūdiyy* (الْجُودِيّ, Arabic), *Cūdī*, (Kurdish): *Cudi* (Turkish), also known as *Qardū* (קרדו, Aramaic), (Classical Syriac).
- 9 For example, see Lloyd R, Bailey *op.cit.*, Bill Crouse, Gordan Franz, “Mt. Cudi-True Mountain of Noah’s Ark,” *Bible and Spade* 19:4 (2006), pp. 99-111; Hamlet Petrosyan, “The Sacred Mountain,” in Levon Abrahamian and Nancy Sweezy (eds.) *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture and Identity* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, (2001), p. 33-39; Arnen Petrosyan, Biblical Mt.. Ararat: Two Identifications, *Comparative Mythology*, December 2016, Volume 2, Issue 1, pp. 68-71.
 - 10 *Babyloniaca*, was a history of Babylon written by Berossus for the Greeks, who were fond of origin or *ktisis* stories. The original work of Berossus is lost but quotes of it survived in works by Alexander Polyhistor and (later) Josephus and Eusebius.
 - 11 Atraḥasīs means “exceedingly wise;” Utnapishtim means, “he who saw life.”
 - 12 See Richard D. Lanser Jr., *An Armenian Perspective on the Search for Noah’s Ark*, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Near East Archaeological Society, November 14-16, 2007, San Diego, California.
 - 13 According to Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare, “The Syrians of the east Tigris had floating among them, independently of the Jewish legend, a native story of a flood and of an ark which rested on the Djudi mountain in the land of Kardu. Under the influence of this Syrian form of the legend, especially in the second and later centuries, Armenia and Ararat, Djudi and the land of Kardu (i. e., Gordyene), were all confused together . . .,” in “Reviewed Work: Ararat und Masis. Studien zur armenischen Altertumskunde und Litteratur by Friedrich Murad,” *The American Journal of Theology*, (April 1901), p. 336. Similarly, August Dillman, in his Genesis commentary (1892: 147) suggests that “this late Jewish exegesis arose by their interpreting the biblical Ararat as the land of Kardu; and the specific Mount Cudi location was the result of familiarity with the Babylonian flood epic, which, according to the version transmitted by Berossus, places the landing site of its hero Xisuthros explicitly into the region of Kardu.” See also, J. P. Lewis, *Noah and the Flood: In Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Tradition, The Biblical Archaeologist*, (December, 1984).
 - 14 According to the Qur’an, 11:44, “Then the word went forth: “O earth! swallow up thy water, and O sky! Withhold (thy rain!)” and the water abated, and the matter was ended. The Ark rested on Mount Judi, and the word went forth: “Away with those who do wrong!” For a convenient translation see online <https://quran.com/11/44>.
 - 15 See Bill Crouse and Gordon Franz, “Mt. Cudi, True Mountain of Noah’s Ark,” *Bible and Spade* 19.4 (2006), pp. 99-111.
 - 16 See Armen Petrosyan, Biblical Mt. Ararat: Two Identifications, *Comparative Mythology*, December 2016, Volume 2, Issue 1, p. 73 and references there.
 - 17 Movses. Khorenaci, *The History of Armenia*, Yerevan, 1981, p. 50-51.
 - 18 In his *History of Armenia*, Movses. Khorenaci derives the name from king *Amasia*, the great-grandson of the Armenian patriarch Hayk, who is said to have called the mountain *Masis* after his own name.
 - 19 See A. Petrosyan, E. Lipinski, and W. Horowitz. There are many reasons given for equating Masis with Māšu: (1) the names sound and are spelled similarly-see E. Lipinski, and W. Horowitz and A. Petrosyan who writes, “In the Assyrian version of the Akkadian language, Māšu sounded Māsu.”; (2) both mountains have similar traditions-again, according to A. Petrosyan, p. 72, “In Armenian folklore, Masis is referred to as “the Black mountain” and “the Dark land”, which could obviously be put in parallel with

- Gilgameš's journey in darkness after reaching Mt. Māšu and "the mountain / land of the dark" in other ancient Semitic sources. Also, both mountains have a tradition of being associated with the sun; and both are cosmic or "world mountains" that reach the heavens and the underworld below. (3) linguistic arguments (see A. Petrosyan); (4) both mountains have a connection with the idea of "twin" which obviously evokes the two distinctive peaks of Masis. In early Akkadian glyptic art, several cylinder seals dating to ca. 2200 B.C. have been found that show a double peaked mountain-often with one peak higher than the other-with the sun god Shamash emerging between the peaks. These cylinder seals are almost universally thought to be depicting the Akkadian Mt. Māšu.
- 20 Tilgay p. 216. Unfortunately, the Atraḥasīs Flood story is damaged and that section where the reference to Māšu might be expected to appear is missing.
- 21 2 Kings 19:37: And it came about as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place; Jeremiah 51:27: Lift up a signal in the land, Blow a trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations against her, Summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz; Appoint a marshal against her, Bring up the horses like bristly locusts.
- 22 In addition to being a cognate with the Hebrew Ararat, it appears in Akkadian as *Urashu*, and in Armenian as *Ayrarat*. See David Marshall Lang, *Armenia: Cradle of Civilization*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1970, p. 114; and Anna Elizabeth Redgate, *The Armenians*. Cornwall: Blackwell, 1998, pp. 16–19, 23, 25, 26 (map), 30–32, 38, 43.
- 23 Mack Chahin, *The Kingdom of Armenia: A History*, Routledge Curzon: Abingdon, Oxon, (second revised edition, 2001), p. 54.
- 24 Some of these peaks include Suphan Dagi (4058 m), Tendurek Dagi (3584 m), PIRRISIT Dagi (3109 m), Kucukagri (3896 m), Agri Dagi (5165 m), Hudavendiger Dagi (3421 m).
- 25 Archibald H. Sayce suggested that as early as the sixteenth or seventeenth century BC, the Babylonians knew of the Armenian highlands as *Urdhu* (probably the contracted for of *Urardhu*). A. H. Sayce, "The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Van," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Studies*, (1882), p. 412. This idea has been repeated by Chahin, p. 53.
- 26 Abram Rigg Jr., Horace, "A Note on the Names Armānum and Urartu". *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 57/4 (Dec., 1937), pp. 416–418; Zimansky, Paul E. *Ancient Ararat: A Handbook of Urartian Studies*. Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1998, p. 28.
- 27 Grayson, A. K. *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin (1975).
- 28 For example, see Chahin p. 55, refers to Nairi as meaning "Riverlands."
- 29 See Paul Zimansky, *Ecology and Empire* p. 49.
- 30 Zimansky, *Ecology and Empire*, p. 49
- 31 Paul Zimansky, "Urartian Material Culture as State Assemblage: An Anomaly in the Archaeology of Empire," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, (1995), p. 103-105 of 103-115.
- 32 Mack Chahin, *The Kingdom of Armenia: A History*, Routledge Curzon: Abingdon, Oxon, (second revised edition 2001).
- 33 Zimansky, *Ecology and Empire*, p. 50.
- 34 See H.F. Russell, Shalmaneser's Campaign to Urartu in 856 B.C. and the Historical Geography of Eastern Anatolia according to the Assyrian Sources, *Anatolian Studies*, 34, (1984), 171-201.
- 35 According to Russell: "If Dayaeni is in the area occupied by the Diaueche, all the essential conditions for its location in the Assyrian evidence are met: the Diaueche occupied land near possible sources of the Euphrates, close to Urartu," p. 187. Russell places Dayaeni north-west of Urartu on his map.
- 36 The Assyrians seem have continued to refer to Nairi as a distinct entity for decades after the establishment of Urartu, until Nairi was totally absorbed by Urartu (with some

- southern parts taken over by Assyria) in the 8th century BCE. See Paul Zimansky, *Ecology and Empire: The Structure of the Urartian State*. pp. 49-50.
- 37 Chahin, p. 54, 55.
- 38 Chahin, p. 54.
- 39 Mt. Nişir/Nimush is, of course, mentioned explicitly in the Gilgamesh Epic as the mountain where Utnapishtim's ark landed. While some identify this mountain with Pir Omar Gudrun in northern Iraq, some scholars believe the name is a secret or hidden name and not the actual name of the physical mountain upon which the ark landed.
- 40 See Chahin p. 54.
- 41 See Davies, G.I., "Introduction to the *Pentateuch*", pp. 19, 20 in Barton, John; Muddiman, John (eds.). *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- 42 Examples of such scholars and their studies include I. M. Kikawada, "Literary Convention of the Primaeval History," *Annual of Japanese Biblical Literature* 1 (1975) 3-21; Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Bible and Its World* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1977) p. 31; G. Wenham, "The Coherence of the Flood Narrative," *Vetus Testamentum* 28: 336-48; William Shea, "A Comparison of Narrative Elements in Ancient Mesopotamian Creation-Flood Stories with Genesis 1-9," *Origins* 11 (1984): 9-29; David Toshio Tsumura, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories," in Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura eds., *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* (Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, Indiana (1994) pp. 27-57; Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Biblical Flood Story in the Light of the Gilgamesh Flood Account," in Joseph Azize and Noel Weeks, eds., *Gilgamesh and the World of Assyria*, (eds. Joseph Azize and Noel Weeks), Proceedings of the Conference held at Mandelbaum House, The University of Sydney, 21-23 July 2004, Leuven: Peeters (2007), pp. 115-127.
- 43 See especially Shea, above, n. 20; Duane Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch*, (Baker: Grand Rapids, MI), 1991) pp. 185-187; Kenneth A. Kitchen *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, MI) 2003, p. 426, 427; the studies by Wenham, Rendsburg (note 1 above) and Jared Pfof, "A Literary Analysis of the Flood Story as a Semitic Type-Scene." *Studia Antiqua* 13, no. 1 (2014).
- 44 See Rendsburg above, n. 20
- 45 So Rendsburg and Pfof (notes 1 and 2 above).
- 46 Jared Pfof, p. 6.
- 47 According to Tigay, "various considerations arising from the study of Akkadian literature as a whole have led scholars to the conclusion that the late, standardized versions of most Akkadian literary texts, including The Gilgamesh Epic, were produced during the last half or quarter of the second millennium. As a rough approximation of the date, 1250 is sometimes given, but it should be kept in mind that the date is conjectural," p. 131.
- 48 See W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," pp. 96-113 in *I studies Inscriptions from Before the Flood*, (Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura eds), Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, Indiana, 1994) p. 108.
- 49 Kenneth A. Kitchen p. 426-427.
- 50 See above, n. 38.
- 51 William G. Lambert and Alan R. Millard, *Atraḥasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 14.
- 52 George, Andrew R., trans. & edit. (1999), *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (reprinted with corrections 2003 ed.), Penguin Books, page 101.
- 53 Andrew George, pages xxiv-xxv. The most complete version of the Standard Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh Epic is a 7th century copy found in Nineveh at the library of Ashurbanipal.
- 54 See Tigay 1982, pp. 123-29, 185-86; George 2003, pp. 339-47.
- 55 Lambert and Millard 1969, pp. 131-33.
- 56 George, pp. 139-40.

- 57 Kitchen and Rendsburg p. 122, (although Rendsburg prefers a composition of the Hebrew story in the early Iron Age).
- 58 William Shea, "A Comparison of Narrative Elements in Ancient Mesopotamian Creation-Flood Stories with Genesis 1–9," *Origins* 11 (1984): 9–29. Shea is followed by Kitchen (op.cit. n.21, p. 422–424).
- 59 Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Bible in Its World: The Bible and Archaeology Today* International Varsity Press:Downer's Grove, Ill, (1977), p.35.
- 60 For a convenient summary of the history of the Kingdom of Urartu see Oktay Belli
- 61 Pfost, p. 6.
- 62 Ibid.



Mount Ararat (M. Lordoğlu)

MOUNT ARARAT: THE MOUNTAIN THAT HAS UNITED AND KEPT CULTURES ALIVE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Oktay BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

Big Ararat (5137 m) and Little Ararat (3896 m) are located in Turkey's Eastern Anatolia Region and are very near to the borders with Armenia, Nakhchivan and Iran. Both mountains are clearly visible from the neighbouring states. But from Turkish soil the best and most glorious view of Big and Little Mount Ararat is had and it is from here it is gazed upon with the greatest admiration. Looking very benign and not tiring one's eyes, both mountains seem close enough to touch just by the stretching out of a hand.

The Serdarbulak Pass at 2700 m above sea level south of Big Ararat separates it from Little Ararat. When looking at Big Ararat one immediately tries to spot its sibling Little Ararat. Big and Little Ararat are among those mountains in the world that complement one another. For this reason Turks have immortalised the two mountains through stories, poetry, riddles, ballads and in the "*Legend of the Two Sisters*".

The Hurris that were the first to establish a strong kingdom in the Eastern Anatolia Region in the prehistoric period were by their arch enemies the Assyrian Kingdom in Mesopotamia called the "*Uruatri*" (Urartu). The name Urartu is not the name of a people, "*it is a geographic term meaning a mountainous land*". The Urartians referred to themselves as from "*Bian*" or from "*Van*".

After the Urartu Kingdom collapsed and disappeared from the historical arena at the end of the 7th century B.C., the name of Urartu appears in the Torah as "*r-r-t*". "*r-r-t*" also means "*Ararat*". The geographic location of the Eastern Anatolia Region where the Urartian lived is also called "*Hari Ararat*" "*Mountainous Ararat*". Besides the prehistoric and medieval writers, travellers, researchers and geographers in the modern ages have also used the name "*Mountainous Ararat*".

The Armenians have named Mount Ararat "*Masis*" meaning "*High Mountain*". The Iranians call it "*Kuh-i Nuh*" meaning "*Noah's Mountain*". The Arabs call Big Ararat "*Cebelü'l - Haris*" and Little Ararat "*Cebelü'l Huveyris*".

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com - www.oktaybelli.com

and how it protects them by keeping them alive for the future.

In conclusion Mount Ararat has united different cultures throughout history and will continue to keep them alive down the ages. Sheltering the universal human values of peace with the instincts of a mother, Mount Ararat successfully conveys friendship, brotherhood and love to the future.

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THE LESSONS OF GENESIS 6-9: WHAT THE BIBLE'S FLOOD NARRATIVE MEANS FOR ALL PEOPLE

Sam A. ANDREADES*

The passage of the first book of the Bible describing the flood of Noah's day, Genesis 6-9, commands our attention with its epic account of events that shaped humanity and our earthly home. As one of the foundational stories of the Hebrew Bible, it should not surprise us that the narrative teaches many lessons, revealing God through His act in history.

A Biblical exegesis customarily discusses in depth text critical matters, date and provenance of writing, issues of authorship, audience and time of the events the narrative describes. This article shall pass over many of these special introductory matters of the passage. Not that they are unimportant for the interpretation of the text, but that we might move quickly to benefit from the material, we forego discussing them here. We will also forego debate over issues such as whether the flood was universal or localized, when it took place, or how it physically came about. However you read the account, whatever your position on the relation of the account to the geology and biology and demographics of the earth, the writer represents the

events contained therein to have actually happened and so to display the character of God and how He acts in the world. Even without settling these matters, we can read the account for great benefit.

For, in fact, we *must* read it in faith for its lessons. What one believes about the reality of Noah will deeply effect one's behavior. As the rest of the Old Testament and New Testament reflect back on this account, the story becomes a way to warn and to encourage. The efficacy of these exhortations all depends upon believing that it really happened. The chief apostle of Jesus, Simon Peter, chastens the people in his second New Testament letter, lest they be lulled into a sense that these are just stories with no relevance for how God acts and orders the world today:

This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, ³ knowing this first of all,

* Dr. Sam A. ANDREADES, Iron Works Church, USA, e-mail: samandreades@gmail.com

THE PROVERBS, PLAUDITS, OATHS AND CURSES SAID ABOUT MOUNT ARARAT AND NOAH'S FLOOD BY PEOPLE IN THE NORTHEASTERN ANATOLIAN REGION

Oktay BELLİ*

The most important cultural asset, the subject of poems, tales, folk songs, elegies, folk songs, legends and religious narratives written by millions of people living in a 10.000 km² geographical area stretching from Europe to the depths of Central Asia, is Mount Ararat. Mount Ararat has maintained its sacredness from antiquity to the present day and it also has a universal identity that unites and sustains different cultures.

Mount Ararat has the most magnificent and highest peak in Anatolia and for centuries has been the subject of legends and sacred books. The most significant feature that sets Mount Ararat apart from other mountains in Anatolia and the world is the fact that it maintains its sacredness to this day as the subject of *Noah's Flood* in both the Bible and the Torah, the sacred books of monotheistic religions, just as it did in the polytheistic religions of antiquity.

Mount Ararat, the subject of The Flood, the common heritage of monotheistic religions, continues to carry the oldest legacy of the history of mankind from the past to the present. With this feature, Mount Ararat has

become enshrined in the hearts of millions of people. Mount Ararat and the religious teachings, tales and legends related to it, written and told from generation to generation, has been adopted not only in Anatolia but also by millions of people living in European countries, Georgia, Russia, Armenia, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan, Iran and Central Asia.

The love and respect for Mount Ararat in Anatolia is very different from that of people living in other countries. The local people in particular are attached to Mount Ararat acknowledged as the queen of mountains with the same love and respect they feel for a mother. The proverbs said about the Flood and Mount Ararat by the people living in the Mount Ararat Region for centuries demonstrate that Mount Ararat survives to this day without losing any of its sacredness.

As is known, the secret love and respect the Turks felt for mountains in Central Asia turned into a cult as part of the Shamanism belief. When the Turks arrived in Anatolia they blended the mountain cult that had existed for centuries in the Mount Ararat Region

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com - www.oktaybelli.com



another, are the greatest punishments from which people cannot escape. We know that the most poisonous snakes of the area live in the foothills of Mount Ararat. Tales told about the poisonous snakes living on Mount Ararat and the relentless war with eagles have been the

subject of legends. It is known that when Mount Ararat's snakes bite a person or living creature it is impossible to recover from their poison.

Interestingly enough, even today the thousands of people living in the East and Northeast Anatolia Region regard Mount Ararat as sacred and say their greatest proverbs, plaudits, vows and curses with Mount Ararat raising its peak proudly to the sky, as an example. The

fact that Mount Ararat is the subject of sacred books and that it witnessed the Flood has rightly made it mystical and very powerful in the saying of proverbs, plaudits, vows and curses.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 I would like to extend my endless thanks to our worthy researcher, writer and poet, Associate Prof. Zeynelabidin Makas and İsmet Alpaslan who assisted us and made very important contributions during our work in documenting the proverbs, plaudits, vows and curses said for centuries on Mount Ararat, Noah's Ark and the Flood by the people living in the East and North east Anatolia Region.
- 2 Our work in compiling the proverbs, plaudits, vows and curses said by the people on Mount Ararat, Noah's Ark and the Flood is continuing in a comprehensive manner.
- 3 We sincerely thank İsmet Alpaslan and Ahmet Yıldırım who wrote down the poem
- 4 I would like to thank my dear colleague Associate Prof. Zeynelabidin Makas who very successfully wrote the Epic of Mount Ararat and who has always supported us in our scientific studies.
- 5 I cannot thank my dear fellow countryman Minstrel Ensar Şahbazoğlu, who has brought the centuries-old minstrel tradition of the Kars-Caucasus Region to this day with great success, enough for his Epic of Mount Ararat.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MOUNT ARARAT IN TERMS OF CULTURAL HISTORY

Oktaý BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

The Urartians, the descendants of the Hurrians, established a state in Eastern Anatolia between the 9th and 7th centuries BCE and made Van Fortress (former *Tushpa*) its capital. Cuneiform script is the main innovation the Urartians brought to Eastern Anatolia, the Southern Caucasus and North-western Iran. Thanks to cuneiform script, we learn of the religious beliefs, cult ceremonies, gods, goddesses and the mountain, road, lake and river gods of the people living in Eastern Anatolia 2830 years ago. In cuneiform records, the Ararat region is mentioned as *Erikua*. Although we do not learn the name given to famous Mount Ararat from cuneiform records, we know that *'a bullock and two*

sheep were sacrificed' to lofty mountains such as Mount Ararat.

The Scythians, who entered the Urartian lands from the Caucasus and North Western Iran at the end of the seventh century BCE, began to lay waste to and savagely plunder all their fortresses and settlement centres. The



Mount Ararat

* Prof. Oktaý BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com - www.oktaybelli.com

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THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNT ARARAT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN TERMS OF FAITH TOURISM

Faruk KAYA*

INTRODUCTION

The situation regarding the mountains has undergone a dramatic change, especially in the last fifteen years. Since the “World Summit” held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the mountains have become more important in both political and scientific aspects (Funnel-Price, 2003: 183; Keating, 1993: 58). Today, the mountains have a global role and importance over the development and environment-related discussions. That’s because of the fact that the mountains, which make up 24% of the land and where 10% of the world’s population live, are important resources in terms of water, energy and biodiversity. Mountains also play a key role for mines, forest products, agricultural products and recreation activities (Mountain Agenda, 1998; Panos, 2002).

Being defined as a tourism movement that includes activities such as being situated, resting, taking vacations and doing mountain sports in a mountainous region, mountain tourism applications are generally planned and developed on the medium-height and

high mountainous regions. As is known, 2002 was declared as “International Year of Mountains” by the United Nations. Such a date (2002) was also designated as the “International Year of Ecotourism”. It is a remarkable development that the concepts of mountain and ecotourism are brought together and taken to the international agenda by the United Nations in the same year. This is very important as it demonstrates the importance of mountains and environmentally sensitive tourism for the world and the sensitivity of the United Nations Organization on such issues (Somuncu, 2004: 2-3).

The efforts to declare Mount Ararat primarily as a national park were initiated in December 2002 due to the declaration of 2002 as the “International Year of Mountains” and Turkey’s commitment to grant a significant mountain the status of the national park within the framework of celebration events. As of 2003, the National Park proposal submitted to the consideration of the relevant ministries in accordance with the National Parks Law no.2873 was accepted and came into force after published in the Official

* Prof. Faruk KAYA, Agri Ibrahim Cecen University Faculty of Science and Letters Department of Geography, e-mail: fkaya@agri.edu.tr

✓ Today, Mount Ararat has a structure that mainly attracts the attention of mountaineers. However, the main target for tourism activities should be a large group of people from all strata, including small groups such as mountaineers as well. If infrastructure works are provided and necessary promotion is made, it would also attract great attention in terms of faith tourism. Therefore, the most important action that the government should take is to determine the quality of service, to determine the rules very clearly and to oversee this process properly.

✓ Considering the low tourism share that Agri province receives compared to Turkey and the insufficiency of public investments in tourism in the province, development of sustainable rational planning for the current tourism potential will increase the faith tourism activity in particular and will contribute to the development of the region to a great extent.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SILK AND SPICE TRADE ROUTE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL HISTORY AND ECONOMY OF MOUNT ARARAT REGIONS

Filiz BAŞBAYDAR BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

The famous Silk Road, which starts from China's present-day Xian province; Turfan reaches the city of Tabriz in Iranian territory through the cities of Kashgar, Samarkand, Bukhara, Balkh, and Merv. In fact, the Silk and Spice Road is like a wide range network passing through various countries and cities across a very wide geography. With the addition of the delicious and precious spices of the region to the Silk Road passing through India, this route is also called the “*Silk and Spice Road*”.

The Silk and Spice Road reaches many cities in Eastern Anatolia through historical customs gates such as Hakkari-Yüksekova, Van-Kotur, Doğubayazıt-Gürbulak and Iğdır-Dilucu, which are located on the Turkish-Iranian border today.

For the Mount Ararat region, there are two important customs gates: The Silk and Spice Road, which proceeds from the Iranian lands to the north, is 20 km from Doğubayazıt District-35 km from Iğdır with Gürbulak Customs Gate located

to the west. It enters the Mount Ararat Region through the Dilucu Customs Gate in the east. The Great Mount Ararat (5137 m.) and the Little Mount Ararat (3896 m.) have been watching over the historic Silk and Spice Road, which has passed through the northeastern and southern foothills for hundreds of years.

It is understood that the Mount Ararat Region, which is located in the center of the important customs gates of the Silk and Spice Roads entering the Anatolian lands, has been a milestone in the cultural and commercial interaction between China-Turkestan-India-Iran in the east and Anatolia in the west. Thanks to international trade, Mount Ararat has become the subject of legends in Anatolia, the Caucasus and the Middle East, as well as in China, Turkestan, India, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Iran.

In the Mount Ararat Region, the ruins of historical inns and caravanserais that have survived to the present day and names such as the “*Silk Road Bridge*” reflect the living evidence of the stamp on

* Dr. Filiz BAŞBAYDAR BELLİ, Art Historian, İstanbul / TÜRKİYE
e.mail: bafiliz@gmail.com

northern foot of the Great Mount Ararat, gives detailed information about the magnificence of the accommodation centers. Unfortunately, on the route of the Silk and Spice Road in the Mount Ararat Region, no remains of another caravanserai have been found for the time being. The Dragon Caravanserai, just like the Silk Road Bridge, reflects the most important historical document of the International Silk and Spice Road trade in the Mount Ararat Region.

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HARABA PAZAR FORTRESS: A DEFENCE STRUCTURE FROM THE LATE BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGE TO THE WEST OF MOUNT ARARAT

Oktay BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

Haraba Pazar Fortress is 73 km northeast of the city of Ağrı and approximately 114 km northwest of Mount Ararat¹. On a high rocky hill, away from the main roads and difficult to access, the fortress and the surrounding archaeological remains are unknown since there has been no research to date². The fortress at the western tip of the Sinek Upland, the most prominent upland in the Mount Ararat Region, is approximately 2440 m above sea level.

The nearest settlement to the fortress is the district of Pınarcık (Kanikurt) 1 – 1.5 km to the southwest. Despite there being a great number of settlements nearby, the largest village is Kovancık (Hacıdodo) to the west and Gölşevti to the south. Ziyaret Tepe with an elevation of 2887 m is 1.5 – 2 km southeast of Haraba Pazar Fortress and Pınarcık. As is understood by its name, Ziyaret Tepe (a place of pilgrimage) has been regarded as a sacred mountain by people in the region from antiquity to this day. The local people climb this sacred mountain that rises evenly with a slight

ridge to make votive offerings, and hold mysterious cult ceremonies. Even today, the sight of this sacred mountain that has no groves of trees either on it or at its foot has an emotional effect on people.

THE EASTERN AND NORTHEASTERN ANATOLIA REGION IN THE SECOND MILLENNIUM BCE

With the beginning of an arid climate similar to that of today and with the settlement mounds on the plains in the eastern and northeastern Anatolia Region becoming deserted from the third millennium BCE onwards, the uplands of the mountainous areas with their abundance of pasture and water became popular. The necessity to build fortresses to ensure the safety of the people of the uplands and their animals and to protect the rich sources of water and lush pastures began to emerge. Settlements where the people lived and their graves are at the southern foot of the fortresses.

As in the territory of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, it appears that the fortresses and settlement centres in

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,
e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The archaeological surface research we did on the Sinek Upland In 2002 was carried out under the guidance of Mehmet Konyar and Yakup Yiğit who know the area extremely well. If it weren't for the help of Mr Mehmet Konyar and Mr Yakup Yiğit, it would not have been possible for us to find the fortresses of Pınarcık and Haraba Pazar, the lower city settlement and the kurgan type graves that lie off the main roads. We cannot thank them enough.
- 2 Unfortunately other archaeologists were unable to carry out a comprehensive archaeological surface research similar to the one we carried out in 2002 on the Sinek Upland to the west of Mount Ararat due to the impact of terrorist incidents in the area. We published the data of this important research with the paper we prepared in English and Turkish in 2004. This important scientific paper has become material for the

theses of archaeologists studying for master's degrees and doctorates.

This work of ours is the changed, corrected and extended form of the paper previously published and entitled 'Research for Bronze Age Fortresses in Doğubayazıt Region-Doğubayazıt Bölgesi'nde Tunç Çağı Kalelerinin Araştırılması', (ed. O. Belli), *Güneşin Doğduğu Yer: Doğubayazıt Sempozyumu, 13-14 Eylül 2003 Doğubayazıt, The Land where the Sun rises: Doğubayazıt Symposium, 13 - 14 September 2003 Doğubayazıt* Doğubayazıt Kaymakamlığı Kültür Yayınları, No:1, İstanbul 2004, pp. 27-40.

- 3 We will continue our archaeological surface research work on the famous Sinek Upland to the west of Mount Ararat that has the characteristic features of fortresses and lower city settlement and kurgan type graves from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age in accordance with the possibilities.

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ÇİÇEKLİ FORTRESS AND TOMB BELONGING TO THE LATE BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGE, İĞDIR-TUZLUCA

Vedat Evren BELLİ*

ÇİÇEKLİ FORTRESS

Çiçekli Fortress is located approximately 18 km to the south of the town of Tuzluca in the province of İğdir. The fortress at the south-eastern tip of the celebrated Sinek Highland with its abundant springs is approximately 2130 m above sea level. The closest settlement to the fortress is the village of Çiçekli immediately at the bottom to the north.

The Çiçekli irrigation channel runs along the foot of the fortress to the north and there is the Çiçekli small lake to the south. Professor Dr. Oktay Belli has given the name to the fortress and to the Çiçekli channel and small lake ensuring its incorporation into archaeological literature. In Dr. Belli's article in 2012 entitled, The Recently Discovered Urartian Irrigation Channels on the Sinek Highland in the Mount Ararat Region, the Çiçekli Fortress was introduced to the science world for the first time in detail¹.

The Çiçekli Irrigation Channel skirts the remains of the fortress to the north and the Çiçekli small lake is to the south of the fortress². The irrigation channel

and small lake have been dated by Prof. Dr. Oktay Belli to the period of the Urartian Kingdom³.

A second important study on Çiçekli Fortress is the archaeological surface research conducted in 2016 by Asst. Prof. Dr. Ayhan Yardımcıel again with Prof. Dr. Oktay Belli.⁴

The surroundings of Çiçekli Fortress have abundant natural springs and are covered in grasslands and mountain pastures. For this reason, from antiquity to this day, the Çiçekli Fortress region has been used as a summer pasture by semi-nomadic peoples breeding sheep and goats for economic production. The vicinity around the Çiçekli small lake to the south of Çiçekli Fortress is full of goat hair tents put up for temporary use by semi-nomadic peoples. People traditionally make cheese and butter with the milk from their goats and sheep. Some of the cheese and butter is consumed on a daily basis, some is sold in İğdir and Kars and some is put in brine to be eaten in winter.

The local folk call the rocky hill with the remains of Çiçekli Fortress, '**Deve**

* Vedat Evren BELLİ (M.A.), Education Officer, Bitlis Eren University, Ahlat Vocational High School, Ahlat - Bitlis / TURKEY, e-mail: evrenbelli@gmail.com - evrenbelli@hotmail.de

FOOTNOTES

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- 1 This article has been prepared making wide use of the study entitled, "Recently Discovered Urartu Irrigation Facilities on the Sinek Highland, Mount Ararat Region", *II International Aras Basin Symposium, 13 – 15 December 2011, Iğdır*, Iğdır Governorship Special Provincial Administration Publication, No 1, Erzurum 2012, 16 – 49, published by Prof. Dr. Oktay Belli, who conducted fieldwork at Çiçekli Fortress in 2010.
- 2 Belli 2012, 41-45.
- 3 Belli 2012, 38-39.
- 4 Prof. Dr. Oktay Belli, Vedat Evren Belli and Güzin Sühran Belli joined the archaeological surface research team on Middle and Late Bronze Age Fortresses, Settlements and Necropolises in the Cities and Provinces of Kars, Iğdır and Ağrı led by Dr. Ayhan Yardımcıel with the permission of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Directorate General of Cultural Assets and Museums. The archaeologist Hakim Aslan, an assistant from Kars Museum, was the Ministry Representative. Dr. Ayhan Yardımcıel's detailed study is: *Ararat – Iğdır Provinces Middle and Late Bronze Age Aras Boyalılar (Coloured) Culture, Fortress and Necropolises*, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Directorate General of Cultural Assets and Museums Research Results Meeting, Ankara 2017, (pending publication).
- 5 Günortakaşı Fortress Hill, archaeologically very important, has become the subject of local legends. See the study on this subject, O. Belli, *The Legend of Halil the Herdsman from Ani* (2018, pending publication).
- 6 I would like to thank my dear mother Güzin Sühran Belli who drew the plan of Çiçekli Fortress and the illegally excavated grave with great success.
- 7 Belli 2004a, 33.
- 8 Belli 2016, 42-43.
- 9 Belli 2012, 44-45.; Belli-Konyar 2003, 91.
- 10 Belli-Konyar 2003, 91.
- 11 Belli-Sevin 1999, 18.; Belli 2004a, 35.
- 12 Belli 2016, 42-43.
- 13 Belli 2004a, 33-35.; Belli 2004b, 152.
- 14 Belli-Sevin 1999, 18 vd.
- 15 Belli-Bahşeliyev 2001, 28-29.
- 16 Belli 2012, 45.
- 17 Belli-Yardımcıel 2015-2016, 10.; Belli V.E. 2016, 74-76.
- 18 Belli 2004a, 33-35.; Belli 2004b, 152.
- 19 Belli 2016, 42-43
- 20 Belli 2005, 86-90.; Belli 2007a, 245-255.; Belli 2007b, 65-66.
- 21 Belli-Sevin 1999, 18 vd.
- 22 Our in-depth archaeological surface research on fortresses, settlements and necropolises belonging to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age in eastern and northeast Anatolia continues.
- 23 Bahşeliyev 2002, 21-55.; Belli-Konyar 2003, 6-89; Belli V.E. 2016, 74-76, fig. 1-3.

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THE DOĞUBAYAZIT REGION AT THE SKIRT OF THE SOUTHWEST SIDE OF MOUNTAIN ARARAT DURING THE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE

Ayhan YARDIMCIEL*

INTRODUCTION

The dissolution of the Early Bronze Age Kura-Aras culture (2200/2000 BC) in the Southern Caucasus, including Mount Ararat, was the period during which the Aras Painted Culture dated to the Middle Bronze Age emerged¹. Since the archaeological survey² we have conducted in the Doğubayazıt region on the southwestern skirt of Mount Ararat in 2016, we have found interesting graves of the Kurgan type of the Middle Bronze Age. It is known that the Kurgan burial tradition has been observed in this part of the Caucasus since the Early Bronze Age (3000 BC). However, this type of grave was used more intensively during the Middle Bronze Age.

Today there is no clear information about the transition or transformation between the two cultures. Whether these two cultures with different traditions are the same communities, why the Early Bronze Age culture left settled life, where they went, or where the groups represented by the Middle Bronze Age came from were not answered according to the results of the current research. One of the main reasons for this is the scarcity of stratified archaeological excavations. Nevertheless, researches in archaeological centers such as Karagündüz³, Dilkaya⁴ and Mound of Van Castle⁵ in the Lake Van Basin revealed that settlements were abandoned for a period of 1500 years until the Urartian Kingdom well after the Early Bronze Age. The few monochrome and polychrome ceramic pieces belonging



Musun 1 Kurgan

* *Historian of Prehistoric Ages and Lecturer Dr., Department of Tourist Guiding of Sarikamis Tourism Faculty of Kafkas University, Sarikamis, Kars, TURKEY, ayhanyardimciel@kafkas.edu.tr*

its existence with the emergence of the Urartian Kingdom. Today, the regions of Doğubayazıt region, Iğdır, Kars and Ardahan, which are the stakeholders of the Caucasus Geography, seem to have formed the western border of the Kurgan Culture. The Kurgan type has increased its archaeological wealth in terms of its burial tradition.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Işıklı 2011: 275-276.
- 2 *I express my gratitude to Prof.Dr.Oktay Belli, who contributed to the beginning of the research, participated in the first year researches personally and reviewed this text and made suggestions.*
- 3 Sevin-Kavaklı-Özfirat 1999: 411.
- 4 Sevin-Özfirat 2000: 140-143.
- 5 Tarhan-Sevin 1993: 411.
- 6 Smith-Badalian-Avetisian 2009: 27.
- 7 Belli-Bahşaliyev 2001: 14-16.
- 8 Pilibosian 2014: 43-44.
- 9 *This research was conducted by The permission of the T.R. Ministry of Culture and Tourism and is continued with the financial support of Kafkas University Scientific Research Projects Coordinatory and Turkish Historical Society.*
- 10 Özfirat 1998: 2.
- 11 Işıklı 2011: 68-69.
- 12 Yardimciel et al. 2018: 61.
- 13 Castelluccia 2010: 164.
- 14 Özfirat 2012: 294.
- 15 Yardimciel et al. 2018: 61
- 16 *I would like to thank Prof.Dr.Aynur Özfirat for the visuals of Bozkurt Kurgan Cemetery.*
- 17 Özfirat 2014: 45-53.
- 18 Yardimciel-et al. 2018: 61-62.

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THE REGION OF MOUNT ARARAT IN THE EARLY IRON AGE

Okday BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, there were not any archaeological surface surveys conducted around Mount Ararat, the most spectacular and holiest mountain of all Middle East and Asia Minor, and its vicinity before us. Therefore, very little is known about the Iron Age inhabitation of the Mount Ararat region. Since we have been making researches for forty years, it is our primary objective to solve this profound problem.

TEPERİZ NECROPOLIS

Teperiz Necropolis lies approximately 20 km south of Doğubayazıt, southeast and also northwest of Teperiz (Yeni Çetenli) Village. The tomb, southeast of the village, on the western part of a hill was dug illicitly by the local people. It looks very similar to the Early Iron Age tombs. The rectangular tomb chamber, 3,5 m in length and nearly 1 m in width, lies in an east-west direction.

There is another Early Iron Age necropolis inside the modern graveyard 500 m northwest of Teperiz Village. The tomb chamber, dug illicitly by the local people, lies immediately southwest of the



A grave after dig, Teperiz Fortress

village road. The heavy cover stones were removed and the grave goods were robbed from the chamber that is in the east-west direction. The 5.6 m long and 2.2 m wide chamber is rectangular in plan.



A grave after dig, Teperiz Fortress

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,
e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

accumulate. The idea of protecting the tombs against human, animal and nature is closely related with the “ancestral cult”.

The location of the tombs is very similar to the tombs in Necropolis I of Luhiune dating to the Early Iron Age. One thinks that the necropolis of Luhiune and the necropolis of Kasımtığı were planned and made at the same time. So many similarities among the necropolis dating to the Early Iron Age are not observed.

Tombs with Cromlech

There are many tombs with cromlech in Necropolis I. It is very fortunate that most of these tombs were not illicitly dug by the local people. The periphery of the tomb was surrounded by a single row of stones to prevent the soil from eroding away. Tombs surrounded by a single row of stones are also observed at the necropolis dating to the Early Iron Age in Eastern Anatolia Region.

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THE PRODUCTION AND TRADE OF ROCK SALT AND THE PLACE OF SALT IN FOLK LITERATURE IN THE MOUNT ARARAT REGION

Okday BELLİ*

Güzin Sühran BELLİ**

INTRODUCTION

We would like to begin this study of ours with a saying that has been passed on by word of mouth for centuries in the Kars region.

*'The spice of Kars is Kağızman.'*¹

The 'spice' expressed in this saying is all of the most delicious fruit grown in Kağızman and its surroundings. Kağızman is also referred to as the orchard of Kars².

The rock salt beds on both sides of the Aras River and to the west of Kağızman have met the salt requirements of Kars and the Caucasus for centuries³. As we will mention below, many sayings, verses and poems have been written on the subject.

The rich rock salt beds in the Mount Ararat region are in Tuzluca (former Kulp) and in Kağızman. The name of the settlement called 'Kulp' in both the Middle Ages and during the Ottoman Empire was changed to Tuzluca at the

time of the Turkish Republic. The rich rock salt beds nearby which had been mined for centuries had great influence in changing the name Kulp to Tuzluca.

Another substantial rock salt bed is at *Duz Dağı* about 70-80 km to the east in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic⁴.

According to the results of archaeological surface exploration, all three rock salt beds have been mined from antiquity to the present day and have met the salt requirements of the people in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus.

The rock salt beds in Kağızman have been surface-mined for centuries and the rock salt beds at Tuzluca are mined by opening galleries⁵.

As it does today, salt also found extensive use in antiquity, the Middle Ages and in the Ottoman Empire. These are the chief places where salt was used in cooking and social life:

* Prof. Okday BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

** Güzin Sühran BELLİ, Deputy Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, Researcher Writer Specialist on Eastern Anatolian Traditional Cuisine, İstanbul / TURKEY e-mail: guzinsuhranbelli@gmail.com

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A PLAN FOR A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO INVESTIGATE THE 2008 AĞRI DAĞI FIND

Sam A. ANDREADES*

INTRODUCTION

A 2008 survey performed by Dakot rescue climber Ahmet Ertuğrul uncovered parts of a large structure buried on Mt. Ararat (NAMI, 2011). The find includes three separate sites, identified as sites A (16,175 feet above sea level), B and C (at 13,800 feet above sea level), far above the mountain's highest inhabitable region, buried beneath frozen eluvium to a depth of 2 to 40 feet. The structure parts consist of varying sized compartments and multiple floors. Some walls have an inward slope. So far, the only material of construction found is wood. Initial reports say that pottery and organic remains are present inside the structure compartments. These reports and materials indicate large dimensions and an ancient age.

These extraordinary finds cry out for further investigation to determine the structure's date, origin, purpose and use, as well as how it could exist far above the mountain's highest inhabitable region and snowline. Fortunately, the nature of the finds provides significant data and multiple avenues of dating to make these determinations.

This paper presents ten scientific questions that should be asked about the find and explains what would be needed in a multi-disciplinary expedition to answer them. Answering the questions requires methods in geophysical surveying, geomorphology, glaciology, dendrochronology, archaeology, archaeobotany, archaeozoology, and civil engineering, as well as videography. This paper outlines these methods, technical obstacles, and some legal requirements that arise.

Ten Questions an Expedition Should Answer

The following questions will need to be answered to determine the nature and identity of the structure. Each question is its own research project, and yet each one is necessary. Fortunately, they can be carried out simultaneously, so a fruitful expedition will take a multi-disciplinary team. After we list the questions, we will treat each one, explaining the challenges of answering it and sketching the way forward.

* Dr. Sam A. ANDREADES, *The Interdisciplinary Scientific Research Firm, USA*,
e-mail: samandreades@gmail.com

approach such as suggested above will provide at least five avenues of dating. It will also allow experts to speak independently to their own fields.

Travel to the sites is itself physically difficult, given the altitude and terrain. Furthermore, visiting is limited by season and weather. Winter is too cold. Summer is too hot, as melting water creates treacherous conditions for climbing and working. During the possible expedition seasons, Spring (March-April) or Fall (September-November), temperatures at site B can go down to around 10°F in the daytime, and down to -10°F at night. At the higher Site A, of course, it is worse, going down to -13°F to -22°F, perhaps even -30°F. Strong winds, of up to 150 miles/hour, can encase the mountain. From Eli Village in Doğubeyazıt, at 5,000 feet, hiking to a 10,500 foot base camp will take 6-10 hours. From that base camp to another 14,000 foot camp will take another 4-6 hours. Site A at 16,000 feet will take another 4-6 hours to get to, not counting return time.

At lower altitudes, one must hazard poisonous snakes, bears, wild dogs and wolves. At higher altitudes, low levels of oxygen and hidden crevasses threaten the climber. The mountain is true to its name: "Mountain of Pain."

But to those able to meet the legal, technical and physical challenges, the answers await to one of the most intriguing and significant mysteries of our time.

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KORHAN: AN IMPORTANT FORTRESS AND CITY OF THE EARLY IRON AGE AND URARTIAN KINGDOM AT THE NORTHEASTERN FOOT OF GREATER MOUNT ARARAT

Oktay BELLİ*

Korhan Fortress and city at the north-eastern foot of Greater Mount Ararat are located in a very strategic position. When looking from the fortress to the north the İğdir Plain can be seen very clearly and to the east North-western Iran and the rolling mountains. The fortress and city were important not only in antiquity but continued to be so in the Middle Ages and the Ottoman Empire. The closest settlement centre to the fortress is the city of Doğubayazıt 36 km to the south-west. The İğdir plain stretches as far as the eye can see to the north descending from the north-east foot of the fortress.

The altitude of the rocky hill on which Korhan Fortress and the city are located varies between 1750 – 2060 m above sea level. The İğdir plain extends to the north and is approximately between 960 – 1050 m above sea level. In antiquity the İğdir plain was a swamp and malaria hotbed, and not suitable for settlement. That is why Korhan Fortress and city, Teperiz Fortress and Lower Erhacı Fortress and city dating to the Early Iron Age and the Urartian Kingdom were built

on the north-eastern foothills of Mount Ararat.

The northeast side of Great Mount Ararat is relatively even; verdant green meadows and lush pastures can be seen from the spring months onwards. The stunted oaks in the area that have escaped being felled show that the north and north-east section of Mount Ararat used to be covered with a dense plant community. Indeed, Arab geographers such as Ibn al-Faqih and al-Istakhri travelling in the Middle Ages wrote the names of each type of tree felled from the forest, brought to the market and sold. According to what we have learnt from these writers, the local people's winter firewood was supplied from Mount Ararat. The writers also mention that hunting in the forest abounding with game was popular amongst the local people.

KORHAN FORTRESS

Korhan Fortress, built on a hill of andesite rock with an average height of 2060 m above sea level, has a rectangular north-south plan (fig.1). The south, west

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY, e-mail: obelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

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TRADITIONAL CIVIC ARCHITECTURAL EXAMPLES IN DOĞUBAYAZIT, LOCATED AT THE SOUTH-WEST OF MOUNT ARARAT¹

Şahabettin ÖZTÜRK*

INTRODUCTION

Since the earliest times to the present, Doğubayazıt add located on south-western foot of Mount Ararat, has been used by many civilizations (Hurrians, Urartians, Persians, Arabs, Mongolians, Karakoyunids, Akkoyunids, Safevids and Ottoman State) by virtue of its location and strategical position. Each civilization has bedecked the region with architectural buildings, primarily religious, military and civic ones. Remnants of the architectural monuments made out of stone about those civilizations give us information about the building and technical features and economical, cultural and architectural pattern of the era.

Doğubayazıt has been placed on the famous Trade Route starting from Central Asia from past to present. The Silk Road ranges through China-Afghanistan-India-Iran line and reaches to Erzurum via Doğubayazıt and arrives at Trabzon on the Black Sea Coast. Doğubayazıt's significance increased with being the unique gate for armies that had headed for Eastern Anatolia from the Southern Caucasus rounding Mount Ararat from

north-west of Iran or for those that had headed in the opposite direction. As an important bastion by its strategical location, Doğubayazıt became a customs and trade center from Early Ages².

The name of Bayazıt had been changed to Karakilise during the Armenians' era and was Şorbulak as well during the Ottoman State era. Bayazıt was formed into the province during the first four years of the newly founded Turkish Republic while it was a sanjak's capitol of the Ottoman Empire previously. The word "Doğu" (East) was added on March 1st, 1934 by a cabinet decree and it has been called as Doğubayazıt since then on. When the province's center was moved to Karaköse (Ağrı) in 1927, Governor Ziya Tekeli was assigned to Karaköse and, Karaköse's District Governor Yusuf Ziya Bey was assigned to Bayazıt. The city that had been established over the field on western slopes of Ishak Pasha Palace expanded rapidly toward west settling the current flat plateau after the 1940's³.

Life in the old city on the western slopes of Ishak Pasha Palace has been

* Architect, Art Historian Şahabettin ÖZTÜRK, Ph. Dr. Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Architecture and Design Faculty, Architecture Department, Restoration Department Head, Lecturer, Tuşba/VAN e-mail: sahozturk13@gmail.com

continental climate dominates are made out of stones and their upper parts are made out of mud-brick. Traditional construction techniques of this kind of architectural buildings which have flat roofs, survived from the Middle Ages and Ottoman Era in the Doğubayazıt region.

The main reason for the quantity of traditional civic architecture examples' quantity being less in the Doğubayazıt district today is because the old city which had been founded on western slopes of Ishak Pasha Palace to expand towards platea and traditional civic architectural buildings in the old settlement were predominantly mud-brick and with flat soil roof. They were decomposed in time under the nature's impact. This caused more of concrete and vertical architecture that is far from Doğubayazıt traditional civic

architectural quality to form and develop today on the plateau. This situation has been creating worries about tradition and the future for the city's cultural and architectural quality negatively.

Today civic architectural buildings which are limited are being renovated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ağrı Governorship and Doğubayazıt District Governorship. In this way, the diversity and quantity of civic architecture in the region has been expanded and preserved. All these positive cultural changes have resulted in the increase the number of local and particularly foreign tourists' for visiting Doğubayazıt.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Van Yüziüncü Yıl University, Architecture and Design Faculty, Architecture Department, Restoration Department Head, Lecturer, Tuşba/VAN e-mail: sahozturk13@gmail.com.
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AN OVERALL LOOK AT THE URARTU IRRIGATION FACILITIES DISCOVERED IN THE MOUNT ARARAT REGION

Oktay BELLİ*

Since 1987, our project “*Research of Urartian Dams, Ponds and irrigation Channels*” has yielded rich data on Urartian irrigation systems. Here we will briefly present twenty seven noteworthy irrigation facilities, all of which date to the seventh century B.C.

Three mountains in Eastern Anatolia possess rich water sources: Tendürek, Aladağ and Ereğ Mountains, which lie east of the Van plain. The 3200 metre-high Ereğ Mountain encircles the eastern half of the Van plain like a crescent. Its numerous water sources create a fertile plain covering 150 square kilometres. For this reason, the rocky Van fortress was chosen as the Urartian capital in the ninth century B.C. Numerous water sources also pepper Tendürek and Aladağ Mountains, which reaches 3298 and 3255 metres above sea level.

Seven dams and irrigation channels lie on Tendürek Mountain. Five are on the northern slope, while the eastern and southern slopes have one each. The remarkable Upper and Lower Kom dams on the northern slope lie 2380 metres above sea level. They were constructed

from two adjoining horseshoe-shaped walls. Similar dams are observed in the Van region. The Upper Korhan and Bendmurat dams are the works of sophisticated water engineering; they feature complex spillways that face different directions.

The Ferhat irrigation channel is another remarkable structure in the Doğubayazıt region. The channel was built to carry water from Balık Lake, which lies 60 kilometres northwest of Doğubayazıt and 2250 metres above sea level. The Ferhat channel flows from Balık Lake into the Doğubayazıt plain and enriches fields in the north. In some parts, the channel is cut into andesite rocks or reinforced with high walls. The Ferhat channel is 51 kilometres long - second in length only to Minua channel that services the Van plain. Like the Minua channel, the Ferhat channel has been operational for 2700 years. With minor repairs, it is still in use today. Currently, Ferhat II in the Nakichevan region is not in use.

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY,
e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com

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SURVEYS OF MONUMENTAL URARTIAN ROCK SIGNS IN ARARAT MOUNT REGION

Oktaý BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

In the vicinity of Lake Van, the center of the Urartian Kingdom that ruled in eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and Northwest Iran between the 9th and the 7th centuries B.C., as well as around fortresses in its rural provinces, there have been found a large number of signs that are not worthy for their monumental quality and similar signs are not encountered in other Anatolian or ancient Near Eastern civilizations. Thus these finely carved monumentals rock signs constitute one of the characteristics of the Urartian civilizations in Anatolia, Caucasia, Iran, Northern Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Unfortunately, for the moment it is not known definitely from which culture the rock signs originate. It is noteworthy, however, that after the destruction of the Urartian Kingdom by the Scythians at the end of the 7th century BC, the tradition of rock signs disappears.

On the basis of surveys conducted in East Anatolia for the past 26 years, it has been determined that there are monumental rock signs near twenty

separate fortresses, irrigation canals and graves. More of which makes up the nucleus of the Urartian Kingdom. Similar rock signs have also been found to the north at Horum in Armenia and at Bastam, Tepe Chors and Kuh-e Zambil in Northwestern Iran. Atabindi, Upper Anzaf Fortress and Edremit are the locations with the highest number of rock signs and they are followed by Pekerç and Ardıç fortresses. The rock signs discovered so far at twenty separate centers add up to more than 134.

As ongoing research uncovers new centers, the number of rock signs will increase even further.

A large portion of the rock signs, which are generally found outside the walls of the Urartian fortresses, have either been weathered and broken up by natural causes, or they have been rendered invisible by a layer of plants and soil covering them. A large portion of the signs that had been carved in large limestone blocks were destroyed by people who used them as building materials during the Middle Ages, Ottoman period and in current times.

* Prof. Oktaý BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, Istanbul / TURKEY,
e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com

NATURE AND BIOTOURISM POTENTIAL OF AĞRI PROVINCE

Özdemir ADIZEL, Atilla DURMUŞ,
Erkan AZİZOĞLU, Emrah ÇELİK*

INTRODUCTION

The biogeographers led by Sclater and Wallace in the 19th century divided the world into six major regions in terms of plant and animal assets. These terrestrial regions are separated from each other by seas, deserts or mountain ranges and are isolated significantly. In these arrangements, the western region where Anatolia is located is called Palearctic (Paleoartctic) (Şişli, 1996; Demirsoy, 1996; Kiziroğlu, 2001; Akman, 1993).

Regarding the root of the word, Pale or Paleo means old, aged, Arctic means “in the north”, “north” and “northern hemisphere”. With respect to its history, the oldest and the most civilized lands on the earth are the Palearctic part of Anatolia. The regions where the transition from hunter gathering to settled life are experienced in this geography. Plants and animals were first domesticated here.

Thus, it can be concluded that it is no coincidence that these areas are called “Palearctic”, which means the oldest lands in the world. The presence of the remains of the oldest civilizations in Anatolia is a result of this situation.

The Palearctic Region is divided into four sub-regions. Anatolia has less than three of these sub-regions. In fact, it is not common that the region in the world with such a small piece of land contains such different environments. These lands are deemed as a bridge between Europe, Asia and Africa. Anatolia has different living environments such as Mount Ararat at 5137 altitude from the deep seas. These conditions cause habitat and biodiversity. Turkey alone is almost as rich as Europe and the Middle East in terms of biodiversity (Kiziroğlu, 2004; Yazar and Magnin, 1998, Anonymous, 1993). With its untouched nature and unique characteristics, the Eastern Anatolia

* Prof. Özdemir ADIZEL, Van Yuzuncu Yil University, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Biology, Van, TURKEY, e-mail: ozdemiradizel@yyu.edu.tr

* Prof. Atilla DURMUŞ, Hakkari University, Colemerik Vocational School, Hakkari, TURKEY, e-mail: atilla@yyu.edu.tr

* Dr. Erkan AZİZOĞLU, Iğdir University, Vocational School of Technical Sciences, Iğdir, TURKEY, e-mail: e.azizoglu65@gmail.com

* Dr. Emrah ÇELİK, Iğdir University, Vocational School of Technical Sciences, Iğdir, TURKEY, e-mail: emrah.celik@igdir.edu.tr

the tourism potential. In addition, with the trained personnel and facilities, the problems related to unemployment will automatically disappear.

If a tourist knows in advance where, with whom and how to go, his worries will disappear. The worries might be eliminated with a good presentation. Consequently, Ağrı province could become an important tourism center .

Wishing a future visitor to Ağrı should have at least the following sentences in his memo book:

“Mount Ararat climbing, a magnificent photosafari and Noah’s Ark Museum were wonderful. The world’s second largest meteorite museum was very interesting. Birdwatching at Dogubeyazit Reeds was incredible. I can’t forget the taste of the trout we ate at the restaurant at Fish Lake. Diyadin hot springs were a healing center. Nature is very well preserved. The ski resort and Ishak Pasha Palace were very nice. The hotel staff and guides were polite, trained and very professional. All the people in the world must see and live these beauties”

As a conclusion;

All of the activities that we imagine to be among the travel notes of people who will visit Ağrı in the future and more are available in Ağrı. He’s just waiting for the courageous pioneers to get his hands on it. It’s not a far-off dream.

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THE FERHAT IRRIGATION CANAL

Oktay BELLİ*

INTRODUCTION

The first irrigation canals, reservoirs and dams in eastern Turkey were constructed by the Urartian state in the first half of the first millennium BC. The first millennium was a turning point for the Eastern Anatolian Region where up until that time the main economic source had been herding. From this time on we know that agriculture took centre stage. The many dams, reservoirs and watering systems are proof of the modern and successful agriculture that ensued.

These structures, which arouse our admiration even today, became the subject of legends and folk songs among the peoples who succeeded the Urartians in eastern Anatolia. Neither in antiquity nor during the medieval or modern ages did any other civilisation build so many irrigation canals, reservoirs and dams, many of which, with their 2800 or more years of uninterrupted use have never been equaled anywhere else in the world. The numerous Urartian dams which we have discovered are the forerunners of the modern dams on the rivers of eastern Turkey today, and their unique construction technique is crucial to our knowledge of the history of engineering.

Some of the Urartian water works built 2700 or 2800 years ago have been badly damaged by floods, earthquakes and erosion over the millennia. Others have been destroyed in the process of constructing modern dams and reservoirs during the past seventy years, indeed more have been submerged under the waters of the Euphrates, than nature had managed to destroy in three thousand years. Therefore, one of the fundamental objects of this research project has been to study the remaining hydraulic structures and chart their historical development before they could suffer even more damage. Urartian dams, reservoirs and irrigation canals are among those archaeological remains which attracted the least attention in the eastern part of Turkey. Urartu was one of the most splendid of the civilisations which arose in this region, and the absence of research on the sophisticated construction technology which these people achieved is the most important gap in our knowledge of the historical development of hydraulic engineering.

Eastern Turkey lies in a region subject to violent seismic activity which has done untold damage to the monuments of the

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com

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THE LEGENDS OF MOUNT AĞRI (ARARAT)

İsmet ALPASLAN*

HOW MOUNT AĞRI GOT ITS NAME

Many legends are told about the mountains of Anatolia. Mount Ağrı (Ararat) is at the top of the list of mountains. None of the other mountains in Turkey are in as many legends as those of Mount Ağrı.

Here is an example of how Mount Ağrı got its name.

The storm of Noah...

The Prophet Noah, floated on the waters in his ship with the people and animals he had collected. After months on the waters the boat's anchor touched the top of a mountain. The boat shook and everybody was afraid. Noah called name of god "Allahuekber".

A miracle happened and the boat's anchor stayed free and the boat floated on the waters. Since then this mountain has been called "Mount Allahuekber". Then, Noah's boat floated to the south. The boat's anchor touched the top of another mountain. The Prophet Noah said "Suphanallah". The boat's anchor got free. Since then, this mountain has been called "Mount Suphan". Noah's boat floated on the waters a long time. Finally, the boat's anchor touched the top

of a mountain last time and didn't move. So altogether they said, 'What a heavy mountain!' Then they waited several days.

When the waters had receded, Noah and his people (and animals) got off the boat and onto the land. The people and animals then spread throughout the earth from here.

Since then, this mountain has been called, 'heavy (ağır) mountain' and in time the name changed to 'pain (Ağrı) mountain.'

PAIN OF HEARTS

Our ancestors used to say that there was a city at the foot of Mount Ağrı. Here, a shepherd drove the sheep for the people of the city. The name of this shepherd was Ağrı and he was loved by everyone.

The shepherd fell in love with the head of the city's daughter, Esmer. Esmer also fell in love with the shepherd.

One day the city leaders told the head of the city, 'The shepherd wants to marry your daughter.' The head of the city refused. However, the leaders insisted. At last the chief called the shepherd to the

* İsmet ALPASLAN Teaching, Folk Culture Researcher, İzmir/TURKEY
e-mail: alpaslan_ismet@hotmail.com

“Everything you get will be pearls, diamonds, emeralds, your wealth will surpass, but everything will not be a snap, slowly, patiently.”

The youngsters were even more excited, they left and came back on mares with foals. They left the foals at the mouth of the cave and galloped the horses into the cave. Inside of the cave was lit with garnet stones, the horses got stuck in the mud and unbelievable growls could be heard.

All were unbelievable agile riders. They turned the horses with the same speed that they entered. As they turned, they took handfuls of the mud while the giants followed them in pursuit. The horses accelerated.

When the giants were about to catch up, the mares desperately went out and joined the foals. The giants could not approach, they went back into the depths of the cave. The valiant boys opened their palms and what an opening it was! Some had too much mud in his hand, some less mud. As soon as they saw sunlight, the mud became the world's most expensive jems! The sparkle lit up the whole Aras plain. Some who had a handful regretted they didn't get more and those that took very little regretted it as well.

They instantly forgot Hızır granddad's words: “Let's go to the cave and get it again,” one of them said.

Someone else warned: “Granddad didn't say so. Something could happen to us. Let's wait for the granddad, take his advice and decide.” “Right!” they all said. They waited. No one came, nor went. In the end they got tired. They decided to go in and get some more jewels. Again, they left the foals outside and galloped the horses into the cave. Inside, no growls, no noise. They took as much mud as they wanted, filled their pockets, breasts and arm pits and fled quickly with the horses. The minute the mud saw sunshine they turned to stone together with the wrestlers.

They say that the black stones, the wounded stones on the lower slopes of Ararat are those of the wrestlers that stole the gems and didn't use their heads. Since that day no one has entered the cave.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 *The ancient Turks called the Prophet Noah 'Yayık Khan.'*
- 2 *The author of this book was born in a village that gives it's back to Mount Kısır and it's front to Mount Ararat. When he was little he did not know the reputation of Mount Ararat. He grew up with the tales and the myths of the mountains. Everything seemed natural to*

him. In every country he visited, he noticed the admirable image of Ararat and loved those mountains even more. It is because of his respect for those mountains that he wrote these tales from his childhood.

- 3 *Ağrı' Mountains means 'Pain' Mountains in Turkish.*
- 4 *Noah's Pudding.*

THE TALES OF MOUNT ARARAT

Yücel FEYZİOĞLU*

THE MOST FAMOUS ARK

Yayık Khan¹ opened his hands to the sky: “Oh, Lord, show us a miracle,” he implored. Show us a miracle, don’t let these people worship idols ...”

Before long a rumble, a turmoil; lightning strikes from the sky. Darkness during the day, light at the top of the mountains at night. Snow in the summer. Endless winter months. Seven-headed dragons came with this turmoil.

Yayık Khan with joy said: “You have seen it! You see, the heavens have warned us. Please believe in God! God is the Knower of all things ... God is the Seer of all things!”

Everyone listened and smiled: “God will send his own angel if He wants to tell us. What is happening with you!”

Everybody continued their work. They made carvings, ornaments, columns made of wood and stone. They put the most beautiful statues in the seat of honour, each one worshiped them.

Yayık Khan again warned them: Nay, my people! What you have done is heresy. Danger is coming, the wrath of

God is near. Remove these idols, do not shirk God, do not imitate Him.”

Nevertheless, they made such statues; statues that if you blew in their mouths, their lungs would fill with air, breathing and coming to life. All in different colors, all in different manner, of different beauty.

They gave names to these idols: God of Earth, God of Heaven, God of Water, God of Fire, Mother Goddess, Goddesses of Abundance, Wind, Storm and Rain.

The people were only talking about these Gods and Goddesses, they were struggling to improve them, to make them even more beautiful. Everyone was in the race to make the best statue.

Yayık Khan’s patience was exhausted, he got up and went to the sight of God: “Oh, Lord, this human lineage is beyond hope,” he said. “I have called many times, they didn’t listen... They resisted, they patronised... I called upon them with my highest voice, they didn’t care. Everyone made their own god, everyone worships them, my Lord. There is no one who believes in You anymore. Give these people a flood, destroy them! Re-create

* Yücel FEYZİOĞLU Researcher-Writer, Köln/GERMANY
e-mail: feyzioglu1@gmail.com

“Everything you get will be pearls, diamonds, emeralds, your wealth will surpass, but everything will not be a snap, slowly, patiently.”

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VERSES AND POEMS ABOUT MOUNT ARARAT, THE FLOOD AND NOAH'S ARK

*The Mount Ararat, the sultan of mountains,
about which the most verses and poems are written in the world...*

Oktay BELLİ*
Randall W. YOUNKER**
Vedat Evren BELLİ***

One of the most important historical events, which has preserved its mystery since Antiquity, is the Flood and the question of where the Ark built by Noah, along with its passengers, landed. A reason why the topic has remained current in almost all ages is the fact that the Flood has been mentioned in the holy scriptures of the three Abrahamic religions, namely the Torah, the Bible and the Koran.

The Flood was not confined to the era during which it occurred but became a subject of legends in almost all eras. So much so that the Flood is chief among legends that have spread across the globe. This interesting legend was transmitted from generation to generation under different names, although the subject remained unchanged. Without doubt, the region in which the legend is most widespread is Mesopotamia and its

vicinity, where the event occurred.

Although holy scriptures and many historical sources mention the flood and the Ark built by Noah, accounts on where the Ark actually landed with the creatures it contained vary. Therefore, research on the possible location of Noah's Ark still continues.

The belief that Noah's Ark is located on Mount Ararat or its close vicinity became the subject of stories and myths, as well as epigrams and poems, composed by people living in Eastern and Northeastern Anatolia. Many epigrams and poems have been composed about Mount Ararat and the Ark built by Noah, not only in Anatolia, but also in Armenia, Russia, Iran, Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan. However, 90% of the epigrams and poems were composed in Anatolia.

* Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY,

e-mail: oktaybelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

** Prof. Randall W. YOUNKER, Institute of Archaeology Andrews University, U.S.A.

e-mail: younker@andrews.edu

*** Vedat Evren BELLİ (M.A.), Education Officer, Bitlis Eren University, Ahlat Vocational High School, Ahlat - Bitlis / TURKEY, e-mail: evrenbelli@gmail.com - evrenbelli@hotmail.de

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Oktay BELLİ
Randall W. YOUNKER
Vedat Evren BELLİ

THE OLDEST CULTURAL AND TRADE CITY OF
THE MOUNT ARARAT REGION: DOĞUBAYAZIT

Ararat in Turkist Culture, 13-14 March 2016
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Mount Ararat (M. Lordoğlu)

ASHURE (NOAH'S PUDDING): ANATOLIA'S OLDEST AND MOST AUTHENTIC DISH

*The food from the Ark is ashura,
Such a food, it is the love of all.
Sait KÜÇÜK*

Güzin Sühran BELLİ*
Oktay BELLİ**

Ashure is one of the oldest known dishes from the 10.000 year old Anatolian traditional culinary culture. It entered into the Anatolian culinary culture after The Flood that is thought to have happened approximately 5.500 years ago and is still here today alongside changes both in belief systems and ingredients.

As we know, the day Noah's ark ran aground on Mount Judi or Mount Ararat as the flood abated, Noah wanted to celebrate and give thanks to God. The food stores were empty so all the remaining ingredients were cooked together. This famous dish, which is called ashure by the people of Anatolia, is a traditional dish from the Mount Ararat Region's culinary culture and it is made from a mixture of various pulses, grain and dried fruit.

Since there unfortunately is too little and inadequate cuneiform documentation we do not at present know whether ashure was made during the first half of the first century B.C.

when the omnipotent Urartu Kingdom was founded in the Eastern Anatolia Region and whether the inherent belief persisted.

Although ashure superficially changes depending on different religious beliefs, traditions and customs the sanctity with which it has been regarded has continued for centuries.

The best example of this is that following the martyrdom of Hüseyin in Kerbela on the 10th day of Muharrem (10 October 680), ashure was made in his honour and in the honour of those who died with him there, and it was distributed as charity.

The famous Turkish bard Fuzuli living in the 16th century describes ashure and Kerbela in these beautiful lines:

***Let everywhere be Kerbela
Every day Ashura
Come and lament Hüseyin
O surviving Zehra***

Whether ashure is believed to be made and distributed to commemorate

* Güzin Sühran BELLİ, Deputy Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, Researcher - Writer Specialist on Eastern Anatolian Traditional Cuisine, İstanbul / TURKEY e-mail: guzinsuhranbelli@gmail.com

** Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY, e-mail: obelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

10th day of Muharrem it is distributed among people as charity. The hot ashure dish which is served in bowls with light bread is eaten by everyone together. This interesting tradition, while it is rare now, is the continuance of the ashure soup that was cooked and distributed by the dervishes during the reign of the Ottoman Empire.

In conclusion, there have been some changes in the ingredients of the ashure dish that has been cooked in Anatolia for hundreds of years. For example, in many towns in Anatolia sugar is added and it is eaten as a pudding. This is why the ashure that is like a stew or a soup is also called “Adorable soup”.

Ashure is cooked every year on the ninth day of Muharrem and distributed on the tenth day as charity notwithstanding the varying ingredients, differing religious beliefs and traditions. The basis of this religious belief that has reached us from the middle ages is that cooking and eating the sacred ashure and distributing it to neighbours and the poor will increase welfare, abundance and fertility.

There is no doubt that Noah is at the root of this holy tradition that has continued in Anatolia for thousands of years. The abundance and fertility that Noah spread across the Eastern Anatolia Region is commemorated and eulogised in the poems of the bards. It is understood that ashure and the myths related to it which have been passed on down the generations are successfully carried on by the Anatolian people from the past to the present.

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ABDİGÖR (BLIND ABDI) MEATBALLS: MOUNT ARARAT AND ANATOLIA'S OLDEST DIET FOOD

Güzin Sühran BELLİ*
Oktay BELLİ**

INTRODUCTION

The Mount Ararat region has glorious uplands which have plenty of water and pasture. A large section of the people living in rural areas successfully continues the transhumance tradition. From antiquity to this day, the most important economic source of income of the local people is the farming of cattle, and especially sheep and goats.

Although an invaluable source of protein in people's diet, because it is expensive, meat is not a food which people frequently use in every dish. Meat is generally used fresh in dishes in the Ararat-Doğubayazıt traditional cuisine.

The consumption of too much meat in food is harmful to human health. In the traditional cuisine of Doğubayazıt, the preparation of meat dishes and the cooking method in order to diminish the harm of meat on health are very interesting. The traditional method applied to diet constitutes the oldest example at present in Anatolian culinary culture.

TO MAKE ABDİGÖR KÖFTE

The sinew and fat of the piece of meat taken from the sirloin and loin part of a heifer or bull calf are completely removed. The meat is beaten on a stone for about one hour with a wooden mallet and the sinew is carefully removed. When the beating process is over, very finely chopped (grated) onion, the yolk of an egg and sufficient salt is added to the meat and thoroughly kneaded. After this, each köfte is shaped into a ball the size of an apple weighing about 250-300g. After being placed in a crock or cooking pot of boiling water they are cooked in a tandır (pit oven) or on a stove. When cooked, the köfte rise to the surface and are taken out with a perforated ladle and put onto a plate.

The most important feature of the Abdigör köfte is that it swells in boiling water without disintegrating, and the inner part becomes hard and spongelike. For this the meat must be beaten on a meat stone with a wooden mallet.

* Güzin Sühran BELLİ, Deputy Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, Researcher - Writer Specialist on Eastern Anatolian Traditional Cuisine, İstanbul / TURKEY
e-mail: guzinsuhranbelli@gmail.com

** Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul/ TURKEY, e-mail: obelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

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THE DISAPPEARING DISHES IN THE MOUNT ARARAT REGION'S TRADITIONAL CUISINE

Güzin Sühran BELLİ*
Oktay BELLİ**

The main feature separating the Mount Ararat region from the other geographical regions of Anatolia is the thriving culinary culture in the plains, valleys and uplands together with its dishes.

The Mount Ararat region has glorious uplands with abundant pastures, rich mountain grass and cold, clean spring water. A large number of the people living in the countryside successfully continue the transhumance tradition. From antiquity to the present day, the most important economic source of income is cattle farming and, in particular, sheep and goat farming.

Although meat is a very valuable source of protein in human diet, it is not a food people use frequently in every meal because it is expensive. For this reason, the head, feet, tripe, intestines, tail, skin and horns of slaughtered cattle, sheep and goats are also utilised as well as the meat.

The various dishes made with meat by the people living in the uplands and countryside are simpler and more

natural. The kinds of grain, bean, dried meat or vegetable dishes made with meat or meat chopped with a cleaver cooked by the people living in the cities and towns are both difficult and appealing to the palate and eye.

The tasty, satisfying, nourishing dishes made with meat in the traditional cuisine of the Mount Ararat region, constitute the oldest and most original foods of Anatolia, the Caucasus, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan, Northwest Iran and Mesopotamia.

The oldest and most original dish in the traditional culinary culture of the Mount Ararat region is the shepherd's steamed dish (*çoban buğulama*) locally known as *goşteberg* cooked by people in the uplands without the use of cauldrons, pots, crocks or earthenware pots. The meat of the slaughtered animal is chopped and stuffed into cleaned tripe, placed over a fire in a pit, which is then covered with earth, and cooked.

Among the pilafs that are gradually disappearing from the traditional culinary

* Güzin Sühran BELLİ, Deputy Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, Researcher - Writer Specialist on Eastern Anatolian Traditional Cuisine, İstanbul / TURKEY
e-mail: guzinsuhranbelli@gmail.com

** Prof. Oktay BELLİ, Director of Belli Education Cultural History and Archaeology Research Center, İstanbul / TURKEY, e-mail: obelli@gmail.com, web: www.oktaybelli.com

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