

(not published) suggest that the chance of the whole path, including pre-selection and fine-tuning afterwards actually be executed, appears to be *less* than that the highly refined final gene should arise by trail and error in one leap. Not only are the chances of fixing each mutation having positive selection small, but extinction of each evolutionary ‘experiment’ to generate new genes requires starting all over again multiple times.

Is Cudi Dagh an *impossible* location?

I am writing in response to Bill Crouse’s article in which he espouses an alternative resting-place for Noah’s Ark. While I would agree that the *primary* reason for searching on Mount Ararat is the wealth of eyewitness accounts that place the Ark there, I would heartily disagree that other reasons are invalid. The very fact that physical conditions on Ararat make it *possible* for the Ark to both be preserved, as well as hidden most of the time (which thus lends credence to the eyewitness accounts), make Ararat a leading candidate, whereas Cudi Dagh is an *impossible* location for the Ark’s preservation from a physical standpoint alone. If it had indeed landed there, it would hardly have been preserved to be the subject of eyewitness reports several millennia later. I would furthermore take issue with Crouse’s rather flippant dismissal of the eyewitnesses as either mistaken or crackpots. He admits that *one* example of a credible witness would suffice to undermine his entire thesis. Has he spoken with Vince Will? Vince is a Christian pastor who saw the Ark *both* in photographs *and* from the pilot’s seat of a plane during WWII. He examined the photos closely and then verified his sightings from the air. He is adamant that it was no rock, since it was broken open and he was able to see inside a portion of it (ever seen a *rock* with cages inside it?). He is so certain of what he saw that he has stated he would ‘stake his salvation upon it being the Ark’. If Vince Will is a crackpot or mistaken, Mr. Crouse

at least owes us an explanation of how he—a *non-witness*—is better able to determine what Vince saw than Vince himself.

Crouse also contends that Ararat has been thoroughly searched and fully documented. I doubt that *anyone* actually involved in climbing Ararat believes that to be the case—myself included. Two of my friends and partners at different times, John McIntosh and Richard Bright, were with James Irwin at various times and both have attested to the fact that even Irwin’s teams searched very little of the upper reaches of the Ahora Gorge. They were thwarted at different times by the military, by the conditions, and even by Irwin himself (falling and being injured and thereby aborting that year’s mission). The mountain is vast, treacherous, and difficult to access—physically, politically *and* spiritually—and *fully capable of continuing to hide the Ark*, especially given the year-round snow cover.

Crouse, in lieu of eyewitnesses, uses the Koran and several other Muslim sources to bolster his theory that the Ark came to rest on Cudi Dagh. Of course, it stands to reason that since the Koran mentions Cudi Dagh as the resting-place of the Ark, other Muslim sources would scarcely dare publicly contradict Mohammed. Even the existence of a stone ‘mock-up’ of the Ark on Cudi Dagh is *not* evidence of the Ark having once been there, but evidence of the Islamic faithful paying tribute to their belief in the Koran.

Crouse has an interesting pattern of determining the reliability of a witness: Everyone who claims to have seen Noah’s Ark on *Mount Ararat* is ‘unreliable’ because, according to Crouse, it is not there; on the other hand, those eyewitnesses who were either lost or *liars* are deemed reliable when Crouse—a *non-eyewitness*—believes their testimony can be *altered* to bolster his theory. It’s easy to claim that there are no reliable eyewitnesses when you simply change the testimony of those you disagree with, or better yet, call them liars.

But going one step further, for the sake of argument, suppose Crouse is

right that the Turkish soldiers *did* see the Ark (and they were wrong about their own location) after WWI. That would have to mean that the Ark was still extant *at least* until WWI. Yet, elsewhere in the same article is a photo of a stone structure on the mountain, called ‘the Ship of Noah’ by the locals. According to Crouse, Gertrude Bell took this photo after ‘exploring the summit’ in *1910* many years *prior* to WWI.

Where is the Ark of Noah purportedly seen by the Turkish soldiers seven years later? Is it possible Gertrude would ‘explore the summit,’ take a photo of a crumbling stone corral, and *ignore* a 150-m long ship? Hardly. Which means that *photographic evidence* in Crouse’s own article *preclude* him from using the Turkish soldiers, or Prince Nouri, or ‘two Turkish journalists in 1949’ to somehow add credibility to a theory which otherwise is completely devoid of *any* credible eyewitness support.

To put it simply, if Crouse’s theory had *any* merit, we would have to accept the following: the Ark lasted for well over 4,000 years on a mountain *not* covered in ice, a mountain readily accessible, but it was never photographed or properly documented, and the only people who saw it and told about it, either did not even know where they were or they *lied* about where they were in order to make their story more acceptable to other Christians, and *then* the Ark completely disappeared within the last 80 years. *Or*, the Ark can disappear and reappear, even though, as the photo shows, there is no snow to hide it.

Maybe, the Ark no longer exists in recognizable form, but *if* it does, the only credible evidence for it is on Mt. Ararat. I would, however, concur with Crouse on one additional point, namely that finding Noah’s Ark will most certainly require God’s intervention and timing, *as well as the prayers and efforts of His people*.

David Larsen
Pasadena, California
UNITED STATES of AMERICA



Bill Crouse replies:

First off I would agree with David that Mt Ararat is a mountain conducive to preserving an object the size of Noah's Ark. If it were covered with volcanic rock it could easily have become fossilized, and if it were buried perpetually in ice the wood would not rot. He also mentions that the size of Ararat renders it a good hiding place. It is definitely a massive and complex volcanic structure but it is still finite. One Turkish officer in the commando force stationed in that area told me he trained his men on the mountain and there were very few places he had not been. The mountain has been searched by fixed wing plane on numerous occasions as well as by high-powered helicopter. My point is, the mountain in the last 20 years has been thoroughly searched. Previous writers have also exaggerated the size of the icecap not the mention that it has greatly shrunken in size over the last several decades. The entire icecap can easily (maybe not a good choice of words!) be searched in an afternoon. Most of this ice is moving down the mountain as several glacial fingers with the possible exception of two areas which may be stationary, but have now had preliminary checks with penetrating radar.

I am sorry that David took my dismissal of eyewitnesses as flippant. I can assure the readers of *TJ* that I spent hundreds of hours tracking down and comparing stories. I also believe I am on firm ground to dismiss most of them as not reliable (the word 'crackpot' is David's). Nowhere did I call anyone a liar, but for the record, I believe the

accounts of Chuchian,¹ Liedmann,² Gurley, Navarra,³ and Behling⁴ are clearly not true. Two, Gurley⁵ and Liedmann confessed to lying. At least one of the above suffered from mental problems. -

With regard to the WWII aviator, Vince Will, I have read his account and have no opinion. I will only say that what he saw was evidence for him. We have no photos or other evidence to corroborate his story.

I believe David misread my account of the Turkish soldiers (p.16). If they saw anything it was probably the Ark-shaped stone building on Cudi Dagh. It would have been clearer perhaps if I had written '...when they came upon what *they thought* was Noah's Ark.'

By the tone of David's letter it seems he has an emotional commitment to the Ararat site. For reasons I can't go into here, I also have emotional ties to Ararat. I wish it would be found there, and I am still intrigued by the so-called Ararat Anomaly.⁶ Perhaps we will soon have a definitive answer.

Bill Crouse
Richardson, Texas
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

References

1. *Ararat Report*, February–March 1990, p. 5. For this article I spent a day with Chuchian as well as interviewing his employer and others who knew him.
2. *Ararat Report*, January 1987, p. 2. Liedmann confessed to lying before the elders and pastor of his church in Lubbock, TX, and later to the entire congregation. My source was the pastor who is currently pastor of a large church in Dallas, TX.
3. *Ararat Report*, May 1993, p. 2.
4. *Ararat Report*, May 1993, p. 4.
5. Before his death, Gurley was a subscriber to *Ararat Report* and he often corresponded. He confessed to me personally that the story he wrote about the Russian discovery was entirely fiction.
6. Maier, T.W., Anomaly or Noah's ark? *Insight* 16(43):10–14, November 20, 2000.

Cudi Dagh not high enough ?

Bill Crouse¹ suggests there is compelling evidence, from ancient historical accounts prior to the middle of the 13th century, that Noah's Ark rested on Cudi Dagh (Cudi Dagi), a mountain in southern Turkey about 300 km south west of Mount Ararat.

Crouse cites several geological reasons why remains of the Ark might not still be on Ararat, and then seems to infer that because the remains of the Ark are not found on Ararat that it never landed there, suggesting that after a proposed sub-surface survey of the icecap; 'Ararat should be completely discounted as the final resting place of Noah's Ark'. This seems an illogical conclusion given that he has just cited several reasons why, if the Ark had landed on Ararat it would not still be there!

Crouse lists several ancient pagan, Christian, Jewish and Islamic accounts and suggests that the historical evidence from these ancient references that the Ark landed on Cudi Dagh easily outweigh historical evidence that it landed on Ararat.

I suggest that there are two geographical arguments which, when considered in the light of three passages of Scripture, may rule out Cudi Dagh as a possible resting place for the Ark.

First geographical argument

Genesis 7:24, '... the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days' (i.e. until day 150).

Genesis 8:4, '... the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat' (i.e. day 150).

Genesis 7:24 and 8:4 indicate, in my opinion unequivocally, that *the Ark rested on the same day that waters began to subside*.² The maximum floodwater level then could have been little more than the *draft* the Ark (15 cubits/6.7 m) above the summit alti-