

Mt. Ararat and the Ark

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The identification of the "mountains of Ararat" (Gen. 9:4) has naturally been of considerable interest. In present times, explorers and travelers, particularly those of a theologically conservative orientation, have argued over the identification of the mountain and claims have been made about the existence of remains of a wooden structure, sometimes identified as the Ark, on various mountains, even supposedly visible from space. We shall not even start to refer the reader to the extensive literature on these "identifications": a search of the Internet will suffice to provide much information about it.

In a significant and intriguing book, Norman Cohn traced the interplay in enlightenment times, of the literal belief in the Flood and the Ark and the growing understanding of geology and palaeontology, including fossils.¹ This tension came to a peak in the mid-nineteenth century, and it continues today in conflicting claims about "creationism" and evolution.² The present volume must stay limited, however, to the perceptions of these events by Ancient Judaism, early Christianity and allied traditions, at which time, on the whole, the biblical account was taken for granted. Considerable uncertainty surrounded the identification of the "mountains of Ararat" and, at the same time, writers also steeped in the classical tradition knew the Greek flood story of Deucalion and Pyrrha as well as the Mesopotamian flood story.

¹ Cohn, Norman (1996), *Noah's Flood: The Genesis Story in Western Thought*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press).

² Compare, for example, the discussion in the nineteenth century of Adam's navel, so well presented by Gould, Stephen Jay (1985), 'Adam's Navel', in *The Flamingo's Smile: Reflections in Natural History*, (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Co.), esp. 99-103.

Here our purpose is not to give an exhaustive study of these traditions in antiquity, which would involve inter-cultural detective work on the one hand, and exhaustive literary investigations on the other. We have resolved to use as a key the verses in the Hebrew Bible generally thought to apply to Mt. Ararat (as it is inaccurately called) and present some cases of their interpretation by the ancient biblical translations and early biblical retellings.

Ararat in the Bible and Its Translations

1. Genesis 8:4

The biblical text reads:

וְתַנֵּה הַתְבָה בְּחִזְדָּשׁ הַשְׁבִּיעִי בְּשַׁבָּעָה עֶשֶׂר יוֹם לְחִזְדָּשׁ עַל הַרְיָ אֲרָרָט

"And the ark rested in the seventh month on the seventeenth day of the month on the mountains of Ararat". Armenian traditions and many modern ones simply identify the mountains of Ararat of the Bible with the Greater Masis, the highest peak (5,165 m) of a two-peaked mountain in historical Armenia.³ As we shall see the situation in

³ See, for example, M.J. Mellink, art. "Ararat," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), vol. 1, 194-5. He stresses the Ararat-Urartu connection, and regards the connection with "modern Mount Ararat" to "preserve the name in a restricted sense." The connection with Urartu is certain, but the identification with modern Mt. Ararat is simplistic, and see the discussions by Hewsen and Garsoian, cited in notes 7 and 8 below.

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late antiquity was more complicated.⁴



The Septuagint translation, of third century BCE, translates ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη τὰ Ἀραράτ "on the mountains, Ararat," transliterating the name of the mountain. This adds no information to the text of the Hebrew Bible, and its translators expressed no widely accepted geographical identification for "mountains of Ararat". In the Hexaplaric tradition οἱ λ (= οἱ λοιποί *reliqui*) read ἀρμ[ενίας] "of Armenia" showing a connection of the mountains of Ararat with Armenia, though it identifies specifically neither the mountain, nor "Armenia". This connection is also to be found in the writings of the pagan rhetor, Apollonius Molon of the first century BCE. He is quoted as saying that "the man who survived the flood left Armenia, with his sons, having been expelled from his native place by the inhabitants of the land. Having traversed the intermediate country, he came to the mountainous part of Syria, which is

⁴ See T'. X. Hakobyan, S.T. Melik'-Baxšyan, and H.X. Barselyan, *Dictionary of Toponymy of Armenian and Adjacent Territories*. Vol. 3. Erevan: Erevan State University, 1991, 704 (in Armenian).

desolate."⁵ It is clear then that, in the first century BCE in the Hellenistic world and, we may assume, in the Jewish Hellenistic world, the mountains of Ararat were thought to be in Armenia.

Their more specific identification, as we have noted, raises problems. Early in the Christian era, the Aramaic biblical translation of Onqelos reads "על טורי קרדו" on the mountains of Qardo", i.e. Gordyene. The same is found in Targum Neofiti, which has the spelling ܩܪܕܘ "Qardon". There is reason to think that in such matters, Targum Onqelos reflects a Babylonian tradition.⁶ This name is also found in certain Hexaplaric witnesses, which attribute the reading καρδὶ to "to hebraikon" and "hē syrē". Thus all these witnesses identify the mountains of Ararat with Qardu, i.e., with Korduk⁴ or Gordyene and, therefore, with southern mountains of present-day Kurdistan. This identification was old in Armenian tradition as well. In the fifth century, P^cawstos (3.10) knows the name Sararat, though some have considered this

⁵ See Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Israel Academy, 1974), 150. Stern notes that "the Babylonian tradition, which was contaminated with the Jewish account in the Hellenistic period, records that many people were saved on Mount Ararat" (*ibid.*, 151).

⁶ References to Mt. Qardu are also found in Syriac sources: Check for references to Mt. Qardu in Peeters, P., "La légende de saint Jacques de Nisibe," *Analecta Bollandiana* 38 (1920), 285-373.

Harrak, A., "Tales about Sennacherib: The Contribution of the Syriac Sources," in: P.M.M. Daviau, J.W. Wevers and M. Weigl (eds.), *The World of the Aramaeans III: Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 326; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001)*, 168-189.

a misreading of *i leřins Araratay* as *i leřin Sararatay* (i.e. "on the mountains of Ararat" is misread as "on the mountain of Sararat").⁷ One wonders, about both these suggestions, whether it is likely that a well-known name from the Bible would be corrupted, by whatever textual process to an otherwise unattested form. In his *Historical Atlas* Hewsen marks a mountain named Sararad (with a variant Ararad) on his map 110 E4, but this, he informs us, is based on P'awstos.⁸ Garsoian would interpret the variant **ՍՐԱՐԱՏ** Hūrarat of Qumran 1QIsa^a to Isaiah 37:38 as showing, quite indubitably that the biblical reference is to Urartu, presumably because of the long ū or o in the first syllable.⁹ Philo, *Quaestiones in Genesin* 31 and 32 does not mention the name of the mountain. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.90 speaks of "a certain mountain in Armenia". In an interesting tradition, in section 92, Josephus says, "However, the Armenians call this place Αποβατήριον The Place of Descent; for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shown there by the inhabitants to this day." Professor Hewsen has remarked on the striking similarity of this information with the similar Armenian tradition, identifying Naxijevan as the place of descent. This, so he says, "sounds like a folk etymology for Nakhichevan, whose modern name is derived from an earlier 'Nakhjawan' apparently from the same folk etymology".¹⁰

⁷ Or an inadvertent error. See the important discussion by Nina G. Garsoian, *The Epic Histories Attributed to P'awstos Buzand (Buzandaran Patmut'iwnk')*, (Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies, 8; Cambridge MA: Harvard, 1989), 252-253.

⁸ Robert H. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001). See his discussion on p. 15.

⁹ See Garsoian, *Epic Histories*, 252. The hē remains unexplained and the variant Ռ/Ռ is not less difficult than that of ա / ս. This reading also occurs in 4Q252 CommGen A 1,10 and 4Q196 Tobit^a ar 2,4 (Ararat).

¹⁰ Naxjavan, an older name of Naxijevan, is connected with Noah's descent from the ark, see T'. X. Hakobyan, S.T. Melik'-Baxšyan, and H.X. Barsefyan, *Dictionary of Toponymy of Armenia and Adjacent Territories*, vol. 3 (Erevan: Erevan State University, 1991), 951. There is another village called Naxjavan and, according to Armenian tradition, in that village of Naxjavan is the tomb of Noah's

This identification may actually be very old and may have been made by Jews in the old Armenian capitals (Armavir, Artashat) from which Mt. Ararat is clearly visible.¹¹ If Hewsen's view is accepted, and it is only hypothetical, then the connection of the "mountains of Ararat" with Masis might be rather old.

It is hard to know precisely what the tradition preserved by Josephus in the name of Nicolaus of Damascus witnesses: "There is a great mountain in Armenia, over Minyas, called Baris, upon which it is reported that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved; and that one who was carried in an ark came on shore upon the top of it; and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses, the legislator of the Jews wrote" (*Antiquities* 1.95 citing Nicolaus of Damascus Book 96).¹² That the mountain of the flood is in Armenia is clear in the writing of this pre-Christian, pagan author from Syria, but exactly where in Armenia is not specific. We can make no suggestion as to the origins of the name Baris.

Josephus cites yet another tradition, from Berossus who says: "It is said there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs" (*ibid.*, §93).¹³ This identification of the

wife, *ibid.*, 956. On this tradition, see M.E. Stone, *Armenian Apocrypha: Relating to Adam and Eve* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha, 14; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 122. On the name of Noah's wife, see *ibid.*, 91 and 96 and in the present volume, [%%](#).

¹¹ Personal communication from R. Hewsen, 25 April, 2005.

¹² On Nicolaus of Damascus, see Ben Zion Wacholder, *Nicolaus of Damascus*. (University of California Publications in History, 75; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962). CHECK THE BOOK!!! See Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, Vol. 1, 236-37. Much later, within two pages, Georgius Syncellus identifies it as in both Phrygia (§22) and Armenia (§23): See Adler and Tuffin, *Chronography*, 30-31.

¹³ See Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*, Vol. 1, 56, 58.

"mountains of Ararat" with Gordyene connects with that of Targum Onqelos and the Hexaplaric *reliqui*, and its attribution to Berossus may confirm its Babylonian origin. Gordyene is easily available from Mesopotamia.

In *Jubilees* 5:28 we read the following: "Noah planted vines on the mountain on which the ark had rested, named Lubar, one of the Ararat Mountains," and the same name recurs in *Jubilees* 7:1, 17 and 10:15. The name Lubar is also mentioned in the extract from Jubilees found in "The Book of Asaf the Physician".¹⁴ Independent additional witness to it is in other texts from Qumran, viz. 1Q20 (1QGenesis Apocryphon) 12:13, 4Q244 (4Q pseudo-Daniel^b) frag. 8:3, and 6Q8 (6QGiants) f26:1. We have found no other reflexes of the name Lubar, but it clearly was the name of the mountain of Ararat upon which the Ark rested according to one pre-Christian Jewish tradition and had other connections with Noah

In the Palestinian (Jerusalem) Targum, which stems from the early Christian period and from the Land of Israel, we read the following translation of Genesis 8:4:

And the ark rested in the seventh month, that is the month of Nisan, on the seventeenth day, on the mountains of Qardon (קָרְדוֹן). The name of one mountain was Qardiniya (קָרְדִּנִיָּה) and the name of the other mountain was Arminiya (אַרְמִニָּה). And there the city of Arminiya (אַרְמִנִּיָּה) was built, in the eastern land.

The mention of two mountains in connection with the ark, which explains the plural in the biblical text, is conflated here with the tradition of Qardo-Gordyene. The text does know a second tradition relating the second mountain to Armenia, which is distinguished from Gordyene. Yet, it is not clear that earlier, in Hellenistic times such a distinction was preserved, and there is confusion about which territory the name

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¹⁴ See page %%% in the present volume.

"Armenia" designates. Targum Yerushalmi likely reflects a later geographical tradition. The identification of Mount Arminiya is not clear, and it could be a second (unidentified) mountain of Gordyene or, conceivably, a mountain further north, i.e., Masis. The building of a city called Arminiya after the descent from the Ark is not mentioned in the Bible, but is known in the Armenian sources as is discussed above.¹⁵ Josephus knows the place name Apobaterion, but does not mention a city name. This may be taken to mean that in Palestine, in the mid-first millennium approximately, Armenia was understood to be further north, and something of the geographical realities of Armenia, i.e., the two-peaked Masis mountain, was known, as well as the Armenian tradition that Noah built a city when he came forth from the ark. This would bespeak a direct familiarity with the Armenian Christian tradition and might also be one of the very first pieces of evidence hinting at an identification of Masis as the mountains of Ararat of the Hebrew Bible.

2. Isaiah 37:38

וַיְהִי הוּא מַשְׁתַחַווּ בֵּית אֱלֹהָיו אֶדְרָמֶלֶךְ וּשְׁרָאֶצֶר בְּנֵי הַכָּהוּ בְּחַרְבָּה וְהַמָּה נִמְלְטוּ
ארץ אררט וימילך אסר-חדן בנו תחתיו:

"While he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, he was struck down with the sword by his sons Adrammelech and Sarezer. They fled to the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king." For this verse the Septuagint has: καὶ ἐν
τῷ αὐτὸν προσκυνεῖν ἐν τῷ οἰκῷ Νασαραχ τὸν παταχρὸν αὐτοῦ Ἀδραμελεχ

¹⁵ For alternative Noah traditions, see Moses of Xorēn 1.6; P'awstos' traditions were mentioned above, notes 6 and 8. In *Encyclopedie Judaica*, 1.474 it is remarked that Targum Yerushalmi is presenting a later geographical situation than that of the Jewish Hellenistic sources. In our opinion, it is overlaying the Jewish Hellenistic sources with a later geographical reality. See also Lewis, J.P. (1968), *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 98.

καὶ Σαρασαρ οἱ νιοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπάταξαν αὐτὸν μαχαιραῖς, αὐτοὶ δὲ διεσώθησαν εἰς Ἀρμενίαν καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν Ασορδαν ὁ νιὸς αὐτοῦ ἀντ' αὐτοῦ.

Here the Septuagint, which in Genesis simply represented "Ararat" by a transliteration, translates it "Armenia" (the translations of Genesis and Isaiah, of course, are not by a single translator, but the Greek of the Torah was very influential. Targum Isaiah, however, reads וְאַיִן אָשַׁתֵּבוּ לְאַרְעָא קָרְדוֹן "and they took refuge in the land of Qardo", reflecting the same tradition as the Palestinian Targum of Genesis.

The Hebrew of the parallel in 2 Kings 19:37 is identical, and the LXX is very similar, except that for "Armenia" it reads the transliteration "Ararat". The Aramaic Targum of 2 Kings reads the same as the Targum of Isaiah at this point. There is no hint of the tradition of two mountains found in the Palestinian Targum of Genesis 8:4. Referring to the same tradition, the Book of Tobit reads τὰ ὄψη Αραράτ, "the mountains of Ararat". In 4Q196, the Aramaic of Tobit, frag. 2.4 we find *tûrē Ararat*. As note above, Lubar is the name of the mountain elsewhere in Aramaic Tobit.¹⁶

3. Jeremiah 51:27

The third occurrence of the name "Ararat" in the Hebrew Bible is in Jeremiah 51:27. This verse includes "the kingdom of Ararat" in a list of nations. Again we seek to evaluate the understanding of these names in the Second Temple period and later.

טפער העלו	סוס כליק סמר	אררט מני ואשכנו פקדו עליה	קדשו עליה גוים	השמיעו עליה מלכותו	תקעו שופר בגוים	שאו נס בארץ
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Raise a standard on earth, Sound a horn among the nations,

¹⁶ See Georgius Syncellus, *Chronography* §47 and Adler, William and Paul Tuffin (2002), *The Chronography of George Syncellus*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 61.

Appoint nations against her, Assemble kingdoms against her

— Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz—

Designate a marshal against her, Bring up horses like swarming locusts! (JPS)

In the Septuagint we read:

ἄρωτε σημεῖον ἐπὶ τῇ γῇ σαλπίσατε ἐν ἔθνεσιν σάλπιγγι
ἀγιάσατε ἐπ’ αὐτὴν ἔθνη παραγγείλατε ἐπ’ αὐτὴν βασιλείαις
Ἄραρατ παρ’ ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῖς Ασχαναζαίοις ἐπιστήσατε ἐπ’ αὐτὴν
βελοστάσεις ἀναβιβάσατε ἐπ’ αὐτὴν ἵππον ὡς ἀκρίδων πλῆθος

This translation raises a series of interesting text-critical issues that lie beyond our discussion. Crucial for the present enquiry is the list of nations. In English, based on the Hebrew, we read, "Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz". It is commonly accepted that Ashkenaz is the Scythians. For example, according to *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* "the association of Ararat, Minni, Ashkenaz and Medes (Jer. 51:27-28) recalls the military situation of the early sixth century B.C., when Urartu, Manneans, Scythians, and Medes were all active preceding the fall of Babylon."¹⁷ The LXX, however, transliterates the first and third terms, Αραρατ and τοῖς Ἀσχαναζαίοις, giving a gentilic form for Ashkenaz, i.e., Ashkenazians. The Greek translator rendered Hebrew יְמִינָה, which occurs only here in the Bible, not as an ethnic or even a place name, but as a form of the preposition מ "from", so reading "from me", so παρ' ἐμοῦ.

In the Targum we find, once more, an intriguing tradition:

מלכוֹת קָרְדוֹ מִשְׁרַת הַוְרָמִינִי הַדִּיב
place of Hūrmînî (*corresponding to Minni*), Adiabene (*corresponding to Ashkenaz*)."

¹⁷ G.E. Buttrick et alii (eds.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: 1962), 1.194. Minni seem to be the Manneans, a people associated in the Assyrian inscriptions with the Urarteans, whose territory was South of Lake Van (*ibid*, 3,392).

Moreover, הַנִּי taken by some sources to mean "from" appears as הָרְמִינִי "Hormini" an alternative form of Harmînê or Hârmînê. This place name occurs Targum Amos 4:3 and Targum Micah 7.12.¹⁸ The Targum undoubtedly partly at least reflects a later political situation than that of the biblical books. The suggestion has been raised that this form should be related to the name "Armenia", and this is made more plausible by Targum Micah 7:12 which translates "great Hûrmînî". This, Jastrow suggests, might translate "Armenia Maior".¹⁹ In Amos 4.3 we find in Hebrew הַשְׁלֵבֶתֶן הָרְמִינִי. This is translated by NRSV as "and you shall be flung out into Harmon", while JPS translates "And flung on the refuse heap". There is clearly a linguistic problem here in the word haharmônâ, which is listed by *BDB* with the notation "meaning dubious".²⁰ The LXX give ὁ ὅπος τοῦ Ρεμμαν "the mountain of Rhemman" which is based on separating the word into *har* "mountain" + *rmôna*.

Intriguingly, the Targum separates this word into two parts, but then translates the first part and then the whole word, producing *tûrē harmînî* "mountains of Harmînî".

This evokes Genesis 8:4 "mountains of Ararat". We conclude from these two readings

that Ha/ûrmînî is taken by Targum to the Prophets to refer to Armenia. This is obviously a word play, but its repeated use shows the importance of Armenia in the early Christian period, and even its geographical referent.

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¹⁸ The Hebrew, according to the vast majority of authorities, should be translated "from", deriving from the preposition *mîn* "from".

¹⁹ Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Pardes, 1950), 1.368.

²⁰ S.M. Paul 1991, 135-36 does not translate this word, but gives an overview of suggestions in his commentary. He is unwilling to choose between them. The options raised by commentaries on Amos are varied, and the question is, as Paul rightly concludes, moot.

Literatur 154; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005).²¹

Appendix:

1. The Ark in Apamea

In the chapter on art, the particular connection of Noah's Ark with Apamea may be observed (see p. %% above). The chronographic tradition connects this with the location of Mt. Ararat in Pisidia, which it preserved alongside the Armenian identification. As examples, we shall quote Sextus Julius Africanus, cited by George Syncellus and John Malalas:

But when the water receded, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat,
which we know to be in Parthia, but some say it is Kelainai in Phrygia.²²

The sixth-century Byzantine chronographer, John Malalas says in Book 1.4:

After the flood had ceased and the waters had abated. the ark was found to have settled on the mountains of Ararat in the province of Pisidia, whose metropolis is Apamaea. Its timbers are there to the present day, as Pergamos the Pamphylian has written. Josephos and Eusebios Pamphyliou and other chroniclers have stated that the mountains of Ararat are near Armenia, between the Parthians, the Armenians and the Adiabenoi, and the ark settled there.²³

²¹Thanks to Sergey Minoff.

²² See William Adler and Paul Tuffin, *The Chronography of George Syncellus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 30 = §22.

²³ E Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of John Malalas* (Byzantina Australiensia 4. Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), 4.

2. Concerning a City Built after exit from Ark

Here we adduce a couple of less known traditions about a city built after the exit from the Ark. This section makes no claim to being exhaustive, but simply to record some material the writer has encountered in the course of his research. The one tradition that is shared by these sources, and which is quite striking, is the idea that Noah or one of his sons, built a city after he left the Ark.

1. R. de Bruyne (1925), "Epistula Titi discipuli Pauli de dispositione sanctimonii, *Revue Benédicte* 37. 47-72 gives this fragment, from p. 290 of his eight-century manuscript.²⁴

Uel propinquam sororem fas esse non alienam sicut fili noe post transactum cataclysmum respexerunt / 290 / sibi loca in qua aedificarent sibi civitates, nuncupantes eas in nomine uxorum suarum, quorum similitudinem et isti iugati consumant.

So it is not lawful for a closely related sister to be a stranger/estranged, just as the sons of Noah, after the passing of the flood, sought out places for themselves in which they built cities for themselves, naming them in the name of their wives, whose (the sons) likeness also those having been bound together might destroy.²⁵

2. According to the Hebrew Bible a city was built by Cain (Gen. 4:17) and another by the men of the generation of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:4). The city in Gen. 4:17 is named after the Cainite Enoch, but not after his wife. In addition Ninveh and three other cities are mentioned as built by Ham's descendant Nimrod in Gen. 10:10-11. None of these cities seems to fit with the tradition that Noah or his sons built a city

²⁴ See note on p. 67 of de Bruyne (1925).

²⁵ Theodore A. Bergren has assisted with the translation of this passage, which has a number of grammatical difficulties in it. He is not entirely sure of all details.

when they left the Ark.

3. Another tradition about the city built after leaving the Ark is given above, according to the Palestinian Targum to Gen. 8:4, which says, “The name of one mountain was Qardiniya and the name of another mountain was Arminiya. And there the city of Arminiya was built, in the eastern land.”

4. This tradition about city-building is more ancient, however, and *Jubilees* 7:16 reads: “And Shem dwelt with his father Noah, and he built a city close to his father on the mountain, and he too called its name after the name of his wife Sedeqetebab.”

This contains the detail included in the apocryphal *Epistle of Titus*, in which the city was named by the name of the builder’s wife (see above). This tradition, which is extended in the passage (*Jubilees* 7:13-17, cf. Jub. 7:35) to all three sons of Noah, the corresponding ones in 1QapGen 12.8-9 and 4Q244 fig. 8, as well as relevant Syriac traditions are discussed fully by Machiela in the present volume, pp. %%-%-%%.

5. In an Armenian apocryphal retelling of the early history of humankind, we read that the mountain upon which the Ark rested was Masis. "55 And Noah, after receiving God's blessing, descended the mountain and dwelt in Agori. 56 When his seed multiplied, they went down to Ijewan and 57 they filled the first dwelling [nax ijevan], and in such a way they filled the earth. 58 And the name of the place was called Naxijevan, and that is Noah's tomb. 58 Such it is until today."²⁶ Here biblical events are connected with Armenian geography; Armenian names are used and onomastic aetiologies are invoked. Thus the name *հղելան* Ijewan is connected with the Armenian word *իջնել* "to descend", i.e., "place of descent" and with *օթելան* "lodgings" while Naxijevan, a different place, is understood as "dwelling of the first

²⁶ W. L. Lipscomb, *The Armenian Apocryphal Adam Literature* (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 8), Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990, 205.

descent". Moreover, the place of their initial descent is identified as a site in Armenia called Agoři, at the foot of Mount Ararat. They moved to Naxijevan, which is actually a city. So, though the building of a city is not mentioned explicitly a city is said to be the place of Noah's dwelling on leaving the Ark.