

The Kurdish Guides and the Noah's Ark Discovery Fraud

by Amy L. Beam, Ed.D.

February 24, 2012

I have been avoiding issuing another statement about the NAMI/MEDIA/Paraşüt Noah's Ark fraud. (Note: all guides are Turkish by nationality, but refer to themselves as Kurdish by ethnic and cultural heritage.) To devote so much time to this topic is mildly embarrassing, because the world is in serious turmoil, and I can raise my voice on more pressing issues of free expression, humanitarian causes, and an end to perpetual war. However, I am one of very few people who know "from the horse's mouth" that the Noah's Ark discovery is a fraud. I had hoped not to be pushed to betray people's trust in me, because of the great affection I had for the two Mehmetts involved. It gives me no pleasure to expose their role in this fraud. To the contrary, I have always wanted to protect them, to shield them from harm, to keep their secrets at all costs, even though it is I who was betrayed by them. I offer details of my private life, in spite of my embarrassment, so that the reader can decide whether my word can be believed.

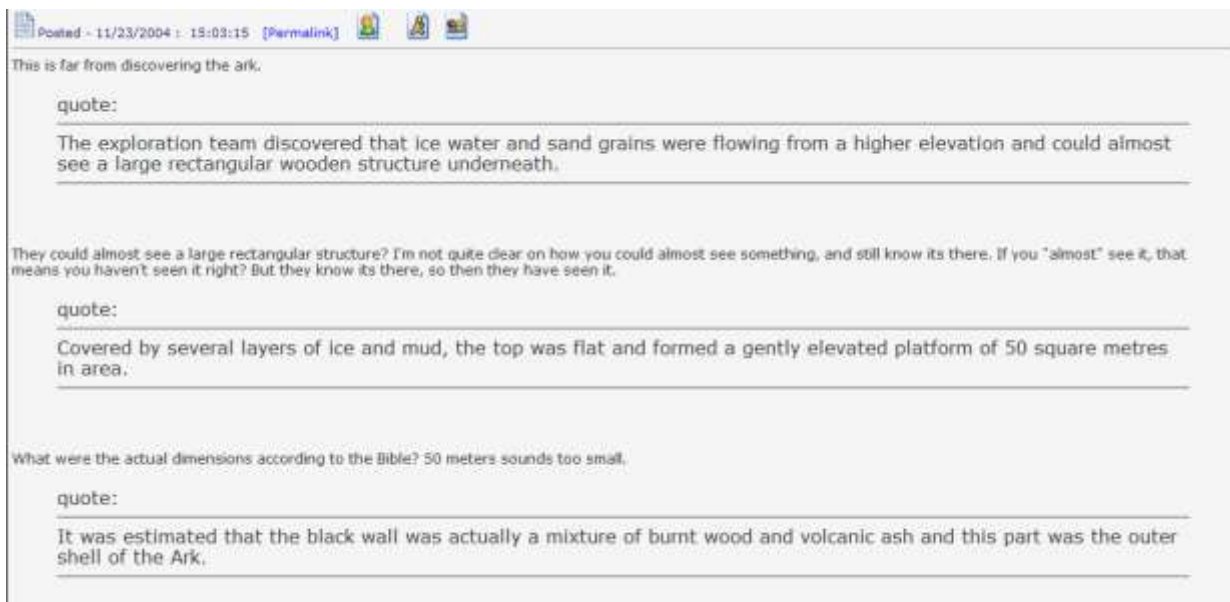
To devote so many hours and days to what seems like a trivial issue would be stupid, even disgraceful, were it not for the fact that tens of millions of dollars are involved in this fraud and millions of people have been deceived, many of whom donated money to Noah's Ark Ministries International (NAMI) in the search for Noah's Ark. [National Geographic TV reported](#) that the announcement by NAMI of the discovery of Noah's Ark was their tenth most viewed program on archeological discoveries in 2010. So NatGeoTV was also betrayed. They have removed the NAMI video from their website. I have exposed the fraud because I want to restore honesty to the Mount Ararat tourism business. There are, in fact, many honest guides who would, also, like this fraud exposed, because the fraud by *some* casts a shadow on the integrity of *everyone*.

On behalf of so many people who have risked their jobs and professional reputations and who have devoted so much effort to expose the NAMI/MEDIA/Paraşüt Noah's Ark fraud, I owe it to *those* people to not postpone the telling of my story any longer. With a heavy heart, I offer this insight into the role of the Kurdish guides in the fraudulent discovery of Noah's Ark.

As a point of clarification, many teams from around the world have been searching for Noah's Ark for decades on Mount Ararat. The Richard Bright American team supported by the Kurdish brothers Murat and Sayim Şahin have been conducting honest search expeditions on Mount Ararat for years and hope to have something to announce in 2012. They are not associated with the fraud of which I write here.

The fraudulent "discovery" which I refer to is being perpetrated by a Chinese Hong Kong group called Noah's Ark Ministries International (NAMI) and their marketing partner The Media Evangelism Limited (MEDIA). Actually their leadership are the same people. The Media Evangelism, according to its website at http://www.media.org.hk/main/asp/corporate_web_eng_002.asp, was officially incorporated in Hong Kong in 1991 with a mission "to take the message of our Lord Jesus Christ to all by means of high quality audio and visual products and services." For 25 years one of their major thrusts has been the dissemination of religious movies.

A MEDIA web page that has been removed from http://www.media.org.hk/noahsark/asp/apply1_eng.asp, but was saved at Google cache, reported on their discovery in 2004 that they "could almost see a large rectangular wooden structure underneath" the ice. Reader comments asked how one could "almost see" something. So here we are in 2012, Johnny Come Latelies. MEDIA has been outed for a long time.



Comments from Google cache page (original page deleted):

http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:tGGHmIMLDPoJ:www.skepticfriends.org/forum/topic.asp%3FTOPIC_ID%3D3496+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk

NAMI was formed in 2001. Interestingly, the timeline on MEDIA's website ends at 2004. This is the year that Noah's Ark Ministries International "took over" the Noah's Ark search under the NAMI name. Their Turkish partner, who is Kurdish, is [Ahmet Ertuğrul](#), nick-named Paraşüt (pronounced parachute).

[Joel Klenck](#), NAMI's so-called expert archeologist, is a liar. I do not have any trepidation using this term, because I know it is unequivocally true. Others who have encountered him have told me he is a "pathological liar" and a "sociopath." I have heard from many who know Klenck, including former work colleagues and other archeologists who have shared panels with him when presenting papers. Many of them have written thanking me for exposing him. I am told he even lies about his golf score. He is a public figure, claiming one of the most extraordinary discoveries in mankind's history, if only it were true. As a public figure, his right to privacy is greatly diminished. Because of the magnificent claim, it is fair investigative journalism to expose his true character in order to judge the reliability of his astonishing claims.

Since [November 13, 2011](#), Klenck has aggressively posted his [fake press release](#), written by himself in third-person, about his examination of the fictitious giant wood structure on Mount Ararat. His lies continue to grow like Pinocchio's nose. On January 19, 2012, Klenck posted on a blog site named MackQuigley Report (created November 15, 2011, possibly by Klenck himself) that the tiny white pellets in one of the NAMI photos taken in the fake Noah's Ark are [chick peas](#)! Personally, I think they might be seeds from Dogubeyazit market or hail stones, since I, too, have photographs taken on Mount Ararat of "white pellets". I must add that Klenck did not take these photos. They were released by Paraşüt long before Klenck ever visited eastern Turkey. Along with discovering Klenck's journal in his backpack, I also found photocopies of this photo along with other of the "Noah's Ark site" photos from NAMI's website.

Another photo from the phony site has straw. I am told by one guide in Dogubeyazit that this photo was taken in a small wood hut used to house sheep. If you are still a doubter, if you are a believer in the story of Noah's Ark and still hold out hope against hope that Klenck might be telling the truth, please ask yourself how straw and chick peas could survive for 4500 years. Try not to fall off your chair laughing. No science is required to understand this

fraud. I expect Klenck himself is snickering in disdain at all those who are foolish enough to believe his preposterous claims.

Klenck's attack on me continues to escalate. I have described his deception in the [NAMI fraud](#) elsewhere, so will not repeat it here, except to say that NAMI/MEDIA featured him in their movie, [The Days of Noah – Apocalypse II](#), months before he ever stepped foot in eastern Turkey. Klenck has never been to examine any big wooden structure on Mount Ararat because no such structure has been found. To demonstrate to you the pathological immaturity of this Klenck character, he posted a photo of a big [black cow](#) urinating on a pile of garbage and put my name across the cow in big letters. Once again, he writes in third person. By now Klenck has so many fictitious alias names online, it is hard to keep up with all of them. On the same blog site are extremely [anti-Muslim cartoons](#) and hate language. So this, then, is the disgraceful standard of behavior of NAMI's expert archeological witness to their Noah's Ark discovery.

Klenck claims his examination of the Ark is confirmed by other experts. The other so-called expert is none other than [Phillip Williams](#) who is peddling his book on Noah's Ark and who formed a non-profit organization called "New Beginnings" in North Carolina, U.S., whose stated purpose when he registered as a non-profit is to provide "shelter for the homeless." Williams has a PayPal button on his website for people to donate to the continuing exploration for Noah's Ark, although I do not think Williams has ever visited Turkey. I suspect donations go into his own pocket. I donated to him to find out his tax ID number, and he promptly refunded my donation. It was Phillip Williams who organized the opening in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 14-17, 2011, of NAMI's movie, *The Days of Noah – Apocalypse II*. Williams and Klenck write about the expertise of one another in glowing terms, confirming one another's lies. They appear to be in it for money.

One can start out in a small deceit, justifying one's behavior by thinking "*Who am I hurting? No one.*" and "*Who will know?*" When it is just a little seedling of an idea, it seems no one will know; no one will care. But if your idea sprouts and blooms magnificently, beyond your wildest expectations, then the answer to *Who will know?* is *everyone*. *The whole world will know!* Then you will be trapped in your own web of lies. That is what happened to the Kurdish guides and the Chinese leaders of Noah's Ark Ministries International and The Media Evangelism.

Joel Klenck hopped on board much later for his own self-promotion and because NAMI needed an "expert" to confirm their "discovery." Several other religious archeologists with integrity were invited by NAMI to give their expert testimony as to the validity of their discovery, but to NAMI's dismay, they testified to it being a hoax. Both [Dr. Carl Wieland](#) of Creation Ministries International (CMI) and [Dr. Andrew Snelling](#) have published their findings concluding the discovery cannot be true. Finally, NAMI and Klenck found each other in September 2010.

I have been urged to get the Kurdish guides who know where Paraşüt was working on Mount Ararat to take some unbiased, uninvolved archeologists and geologists to the site to examine the wood and the site independently. I get questions like "is it really 500 feet long?" "is it really two stories?" and so forth. Their basic assumption is that the NAMI team found a large wooden structure on Mount Ararat. Their question is merely: "is the structure they found Noah's Ark?" However, their premise is faulty.

My position remains that no one can take anyone to see a wood structure that does not exist. The way to further expose the hoax is to understand the culture and character of the Kurdish guides involved in the hoax. I prefer to use the word fraud, because it has a legal meaning. It is an intentional plan to part people with their money based on an elaborate deceit. To understand this fraud, you must understand the true character of the people involved and understand their relationships that go back 20 years. Furthermore, a few guides have identified the locations of some of the wood rooms shown in NAMI/Paraşüt photos as not even being taken on Mount Ararat.

"Tilki" Mehmet started Mount Ararat tourism in Dogubayazit about 30 years ago. When Tilki Mehmet faced hard times, because his life was threatened for having possibly witnessed a murder, Murat Şahin, owner of Murat Camping, gave him a job for over a year to ensure his family could eat. Murat went every day to pick him up and take him home so he would be safe.

Tilki was Paraşüt's mentor in tourism. Paraşüt is a little younger than Tilki Mehmet who is in his mid-50s. Paraşüt, in turn, was the mentor for Hakan Basboga, Mehmet Ceven, and Zafer Oney who are all about 30-35 and who have all been partners with one another in recent years. This younger generation also got their start working for Murat and Sayim Şahin, owners of Murat Camping, but Murat and Sayim no longer hire them.

I met Hakan Basboga in 2006 over Skype. We talked frequently until I traveled to Turkey, February through April, 2007, to meet Hakan. I did not learn until 2010 that half the things out of Hakan's mouth are lies. Other guides in Dogubayazit, who themselves have been cheated by Hakan, describe him as being so incredibly good at lying that they drop the word "con" and simply describe Hakan as an "artist" at lying.

However, **when Hakan and I were in Antalya in April, 2007, he was calling his partner Mehmet Ceven every day, because Mehmet Ceven was then on Mount Ararat with the Chinese team "making a movie about Noah's Ark".** Those were Hakan's words. Every day for 1-2 weeks he got a weather and progress report from Mehmet on Ararat. The weather was very harsh. Hakan said he and Mehmet had not been paid yet. The Chinese promised to pay the guides when the movie was finished and making money. Hakan said he, also, had worked the previous year(s) with the Chinese on Mount Ararat. I recall he worked more than one year, maybe going back to 2004-2006.



Ararat on the way to the top of Ararat
(Image 7 of 8)

CLOSE X

Camera man for NAMI/MEDIA team on way to camp 2, Mount Ararat

According to [Media Evangelism's English version website](#), Andrew Yuen Man-Fai was leading expedition teams to Mount Ararat in 2004 and possibly earlier. If you want to read this website for yourself, I suggest you do it now, before MEDIA deletes all traces of it, the way they deleted the incriminating timeline on NAMI's English version website. MEDIA's timeline states they made their *fourth* attempt in 2004 to ascend Mount Ararat. According to MEDIA's own timeline for 2004, they "found the resting place of the suspected remains of the Noah's Ark at the elevation of 4,200 meters."

In October 2004, the expedition crew led by The Media Evangelism Limited made their 4th attempt to ascend Mount Ararat and on October 19, found the resting place of the suspected remains of the Noah's Ark at the elevation of 4,200 meters. The crew's expedition to film the Ark's purported remains on Mount Ararat was the first such trip by a Chinese team.

* A meeting to share the expedition experiences at Mount Ararat was convened on Dec 5 [2004] at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, with Andrew Yuen Man-Fai and Pastor Boaz Li Chi-kwong as key speakers.

That's the same Andrew Yuen Man-Fai, head of Noah's Ark Ministries International (NAMI) who announced the discovery of Noah's Ark in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. The MEDIA Limited was registered as a charity in Hong Kong in 1991, yet it engages in for-profit activities and blurs its activities and identity with NAMI, registered as a not-for-profit religious organization. Notice MEDIA's "soft opening" in September 2004 of their gift shop. By December 2011, MEDIA was selling boxes of fortune cookies : \$60 for one box or \$88 for two boxes. Since I first wrote about their cookie sales, MEDIA removed their English web pages for the cookies.



tme 影音使團
 English Version

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- [Background, Vision / Mission](#)
- [Calendar of Major Events](#)
- [TME Programmes](#)
- [TME Worldwide](#)
- [We need your support](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Chinese Version](#)

[Calendar of Major Events](#)

Year 2004

October - December

- * In October 2004, the expedition crew led by The Media Evangelism Limited made their 4th attempt to ascend Mount Ararat and on October 19, found the resting place of the suspected remains of the Noah's Ark at the elevation of 4,200 meters. The crew's expedition to film the Ark's purported remains on Mount Ararat was the first such trip by a Chinese team.
- * November 1 marked the grand opening of RIGHT.
- * A meeting to share the expedition experiences at Mount Ararat was convened on Dec 5 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, with Andrew Yuen Man-Fai and Pastor Boaz Li Chi-kwong as key speakers.

July - September

- * "The Miracle Box" began its screenings and evangelical gatherings in local churches and schools in the entire 18 Districts in HK.
- * Research Institute of Give Him Thanks (RIGHT), a gift shop cum specialties showroom located in the heart of Mongkok District was soft opened on Sept 18.

重要消息

影音使團對有關「方舟探索」重要發現的立場

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Wong

Kevin

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The Media Limited website http://www.media.org.hk/main/asp/corporate_web_eng_002.asp.

MEDIA is a supposed to be a non-profit organization. Notice their "soft opening" in 2004 of their gift shop.



Andrew Man-Fai Yuen, NAMI/MEDIA, Hong Kong, April 2010



Wing-Cheung Yeung, NAMI/MEDIA, Hong Kong, April 2010



Andrew Man-Fai Yuen, Mehmet Ceven Kurdish lead guide



Fiona Leung, Chinese NAMI leader; Mehmet Ceven, guide

I am pondering how Andrew Yuen Man-Fai knew in 2004 they had found the “resting place” of Noah’s Ark at 4200 meters, if they had not actually found the “Ark”. How did they know the *location* if they had not found any evidence? A puzzle. How can you know the location of a thing before you find it, unless, of course you are selecting a construction site? MEDIA is being deceitful in its choice of words so they can later have “plausible deniability” and claim they never announced the actual finding of the Ark, only the location of the Ark. So we are coming up on what might be considered the *2012 Ninth International Press Conference to Announce the Discovery of Noah’s Ark*. What discovery will NAMI and MEDIA announce in 2012? Petrified chick peas?

Getting back to the Kurdish guides . . . When I asked Hakan in 2007 if anyone of the guides in Dogubeyazit believed Noah’s Ark was on Mount Ararat, **Hakan said, “No, everyone knows there is no Noah’s Ark, but it is good for tourism.** Noah’s Ark National Park is not even on Mount Ararat. We take tourists there as part of our cultural tour. It’s just a rock formation.” That park, called [Durupinar](#), is not the subject of this paper. I have visited it and I agree it is an interesting rock formation and nice place for a picnic lunch, but it is not Noah’s Ark remains.

Before I left Turkey in April 2007, Hakan introduced me to his mentor, Ahmet “Paraşüt” Ertuğrul in Istanbul. We stayed in his favorite hotel, Topkapi Hotel. Paraşüt was our tour guide for two days and he picked up all the tabs, including drinks, desserts, and a lovely dinner in his favorite restaurant on the Bosphorous. I thought then that Paraşüt spent money very freely and lavishly. I could not understand how he could have so much money to spend if he were only a mountaineer guide. I am told that today Paraşüt owns three apartment buildings in Dogubeyazit. I have not personally verified this.



Ahmet "Paraşüt" Ertuğrul and Hakan Basboga, Istanbul, April 18, 2007



Amy Beam, Hakan Basboga, Istanbul, April 18, 2007, taken by Paraşüt

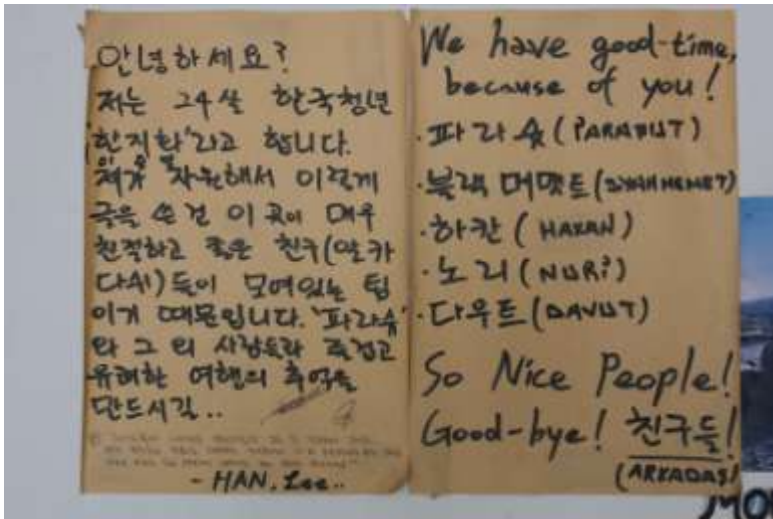
In 2007, I added Mehmet Ceven's photo to the website I made for Hakan. I took his photo, after I had left Turkey, when he was in his office sitting next to Hakan speaking to me on Skype with the computer camera turned on. I grabbed a screen shot.



Mehmet Ceven and Hakan Basboga, 2007



Hakan Basboga (left), Mehmet Ceven (right) in office they shared with Paraşüt



Old thank you note taped to wall in Mehmet Ceven's and Paraşüt's office. See it behind Hakan's head in previous photo. They thank Paraşüt, Siyan Memet, Hakan, Nuri, and Davut.

Before the 2007 season ended, Hakan instructed me to remove Mehmet Ceven's photo from the website because their partnership had broken apart. So my first time learning who Mehmet Ceven is was in March 2007. I do not know if Hakan Basboga has had any involvement with the NAMI and Paraşüt "Noah's Ark" since 2007, but to be clear, **it was Hakan who first told me in 2007 about the Chinese making a movie about Noah's Ark with Paraşüt and Mehmet Ceven on Mount Ararat.**

When I found out Hakan was lying to me about being single, about the Ararat business, the money he owed me, and about his mother's health, I took over the website I had made for him at www.mountararattrek.com. This was in February 2010, when Hakan's next partner, Zafer Oney, called and told me about Hakan's lies and that Hakan owed him money, also. Their business partnership (which I loaned \$4500 to Hakan to open) fell apart and they are still fighting over money and back taxes. Hakan got \$1500 US more money out of me in late 2007 when he told me if he could not raise the money by Friday for his mother's open heart surgery, the hospital would send her home to die. He told me he had sold his apartment in Dogubeyazit and needed only \$1500 more to pay the \$8500 for the surgery. His mother never had nor needed open heart surgery. The hospital and cardiologists confirmed it for me. Hakan never had an apartment to sell. That story would take several chapters to tell.

I heard from several other foreign holiday girlfriends of Hakan's. He tells them that he owns an apartment (and sold it many times). In February 2012, I got an email from another one of Hakan's tourist girlfriend's from Ireland. She said she met him in Istanbul in April 2010 and he boasted of having a big beautiful house with a swimming pool in Dogubayazit and that he was wealthy. For those of us who know Dogubayazit, we can only shake our head at the preposterous tale about a "big house with a swimming pool". I am not sure there is even one swimming pool in the entire town.

The same week that Hakan was lying to the Irish tourist in Istanbul, I phoned his American girlfriend, Felicia Netti, in April 2010. She was shattered to learn he was married and his wife was expecting a child (born June 2010). Felicia told me on the phone that she had already sent more than \$40,000 USD to Hakan. However, some women either refuse to believe the awful truth or simply do not care. One week later, Felicia Nettie hired someone to copy all the pages of my Mount Ararat website and replace my contact name and email with hers.

I am explaining about Hakan to help readers understand the culture of lying and cheating that is pervasive among the "street" guides in Dogubeyazit, Turkey. Keep in mind that Paraşüt was Hakan's mentor. Many others have told me that, although Hakan is a liar and cheater, *he is not as bad as many of the other guides!*

Tourism is a double-edged sword everywhere in the world. While providing the basis for economic survival in a tourism destination, it simultaneously corrupts the mores of a culture. The guides have had a lot of financial luck with their lies to gullible foreign women searching for something to fill their cup and to Christians searching for the Ark. A very accomplished con artist such as Hakan or Paraşüt can fool smart, honest people, such as happened also to Ark searchers Dr. Donald Patton and Dr. Randall Price. Dr. Price described the situation best when he wrote that searching for Noah's Ark is a "cottage industry" in Dogubayazit.

In January 2012, another guide told me that in 2011 he was repeatedly offered \$20,000 US dollars to take an Ark searcher to see Paraşüt's Noah's Ark site. The guide turned him down, telling him honestly, there is no Noah's Ark to show. He would, if he could, but he can't, and he is too honest to cheat this man. I myself have been approached by would-be searchers. One man claims he knows exactly where the Ark is because of a vision. Another woman tells me she only needs government permission and one guide, because she is certain she can walk directly to the very spot where the Ark is located. Another man who had gone off the trail on Ararat sent me a photo of a volcanic rock and told me it was without doubt the roof of Noah's Ark.

This external religious influence for several decades has corrupted the integrity of some (but not all) guides who succumb to the financial enticement from Ark searchers. The responsibility for the deception by Kurdish guides must surely be shared with foreign religious searchers who offer large financial incentives and do not easily take *no* for an answer.

In fact, another guide who is not involved with the Ark fraud, but who told me twice in December 2011, that Paraşüt stated he would kill me...this guide told me Paraşüt said to him, "Why is Amy angry at me? I make very good money with my lies." Of course, this is heresy. I don't know if the guide is telling me the truth. Here is our December 2011 chat log with the guide's name removed:

guide: *dear amy paraşut say I celd amy when come dogubayazit*
Amy: *kill me?*
guide: *yes*
Amy: *well, I would like to have that on video to take him to court. he is very bad liar*
guide: *paraşut wery engri you relly*
Amy: *did he think he could go on lying and cheating forever? did he tell you himself?*
guide: *paraşut in dogubayazit two weeks ago. he tell me himself. he say he make wery good money wit his lies. why amy engri at me for my lies he say. he kill you when you come to dogubayazit not only dogubayazit he say he kill you if you come to istanbul to*
guide: *be ceafil for perşut kill you*

After taking over the website www.mountararattrek.com in 2010, I did Ararat business with Zafer Oney, Hakan's former partner who asked me to send the climbing groups to him. We had problems, but I was working remotely from Barbados and did not know the seriousness of the problems until September 2010 when a young guide who worked for Zafer told me Zafer had not paid him for his guiding. So I ended my business partnership with Zafer. The head of the Saltik family told me in March 2011 that Zafer owes him \$18,000 US from the 2010 climbing season. Zafer Onay is no longer in the Ararat climbing business. I heard no one will do business with him because he owes money to so many people. Zafer built himself a very nice house in Dogubayazit with money intended to pay for guides, horses, and food. When I arrived in Dogubeyazit in 2011, Zafer wrote to the Dogubeyazit Court that I was there as a missionary in order to cause trouble for me, so I was investigated. The police were satisfied that this was not true.



Zafer Oney's house in Dogubeyazit, Turkey, built 2010

In August 2010, when Mehmet Ceven learned that I was sending Ararat climbing business to Zafer, Mehmet and his wife emailed me a number of times asking me to be partners with them instead of Zafer. They said that going from Hakan to Zafer was like going from bad to worse. They said Zafer was 100 times more dishonest than Hakan. It was not until January 2011, after I learned Zafer had not paid people, that I agreed to work with Mehmet Ceven. We began to work together over Skype, planning for the 2011 climbing season. We worked very hard as partners on nearly a daily basis until early May 2011. We already had a number of climbing groups scheduled. I told Mehmet that if I ever found out he lied to me, about *anything*, our partnership would be over. I had already been lied to by Hakan and Zafer and would not tolerate another liar.

In December 2010, I read [Dr. Don Patton's](#) and [Dr. Randall Price's](#) report on how they had been conned by Paraşüt and also their facts exposing the fake Ark site. I asked Mehmet Ceven for an explanation, because Mehmet is the lead mountaineer guide in all the photos with the Chinese. I told Mehmet that if he were involved in a hoax or fraud, I could not be business partners with him, because I would not risk tarnishing my professional career.

Mehmet told me it was true he had guided the Chinese on Ararat, but he told me the story was too complicated to tell over Skype. He promised to tell me all about the Noah's Ark discovery story when we met in person in March 2011 in Turkey. I told him this was a requirement in order for me to work with him.

Mehmet was to meet me at the Istanbul airport March 14, 2011. On the morning that I was packed and ready to go to the airport, Mehmet and his wife Karolina called me from Poland, where they live, and told me that Mehmet would not be able to arrive in Istanbul until March 17, but that his wife Karolina, Paraşüt, and Halis Ceven (Mehmet's father) would ALL THREE MEET ME at the airport and escort me around Istanbul for three days to check out hotel prices and photograph. They did meet me at the airport on March 14, 2011. Paraşüt was unfriendly toward me. He dropped us at Golden Hill Hotel, and I did not see him again. Mehmet and Karolina refused to give me an explanation for the last-minute changes. Mehmet still owes me for the airline tickets I charged on my credit card for him.

Mehmet Ceven arrived in Istanbul from Poland on March 17. He, Karolina, and I flew to Kars the next day. We spent about 10 days photographing and getting prices for restaurants, attractions, and hotels in Kars, Dogubeyazit, and Van.



Mehmet and Karolina Ceven, Amy Beam, Igdir, March 18, 2011



Amy Beam, Mehmet Ceven, Mount Ararat in distance, March 19, 2011

Our first day in Dogubeyazit, Mehmet took us to meet his cousin Davut and his family. It was a lovely visit. We found Davut forking straw from his haystack into bags for his horses. One horse had just given birth to a colt, and spring was in the air. Davut's five young children climbed on my lap and giggled like I was their auntie while Davut's wife served chai (tea). Mehmet explained to me that Davut provides horses for the tourism climbing groups and also was part of his and Paraşüt's Noah's Ark expedition team. They have worked together for years.



Davut and his children, Dogubeyazit, Turkey March 19, 2011



Amy Beam holding Davut's children, March 19, 2011



Mehmet Ceven visits cousin Davut, Dogubeyazit, March 19, 2011



Mehmet Ceven grew up in this house, now occupied by Davut's family.



Davut working at his haystack



Davut's horse and newborn colt, March 19, 2011

So many people world-wide have asked, *if all the guides in Dogubeyazit know that NAMI's and MEDIA's Noah's Ark discovery is a fraud, why don't they talk?*

There are at least two good reasons. The easiest reason is that few of them speak English, and even fewer have internet skills for telling what they know. Mostly, the guides have not talked, because no one asked them. I spent 2011 and now 2012 asking many of the guides about the fraud. Many have told me details in confidence. I do not share their names or those details here, because I want to protect innocent Kurdish guides in Dogubeyazit.

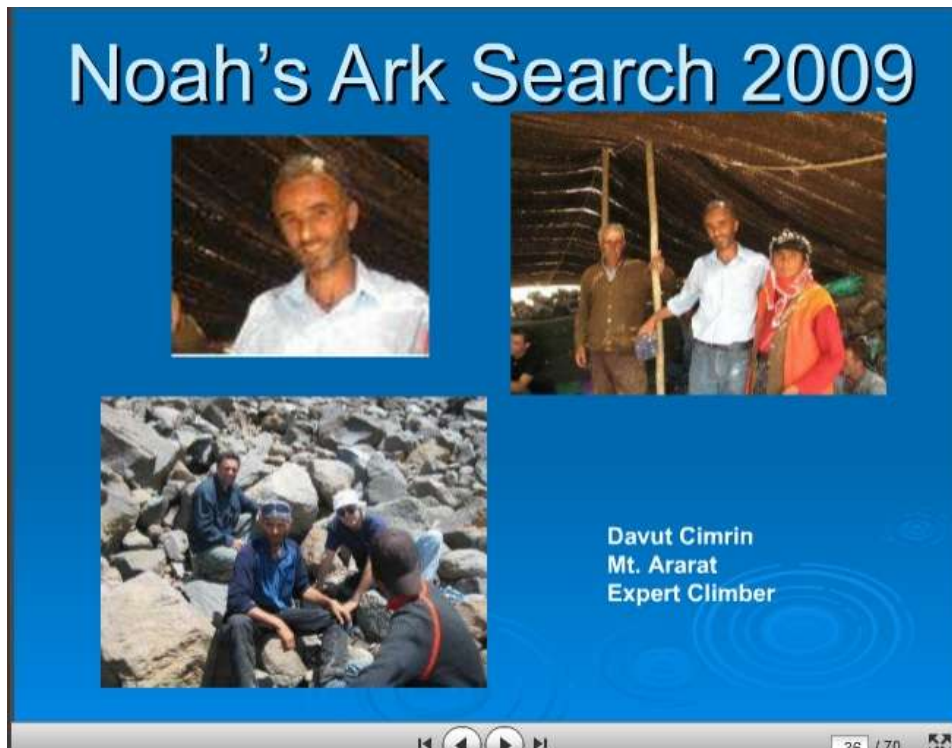
The more important reason why the guides don't talk is because most of them are related to one another in several extended families of hundreds of Kurds living in the same small village at the foot of Mount Ararat. They are cousins, brothers, and uncles. They must protect each other to survive. It would, in their lingo, "be shame" to betray family. Indeed, I too feel remorseful to reveal information about the Kurdish guides, because I like them and work with them in tourism. My purpose is to expose the persons whose intent was to knowingly deceive and commit fraud with the Noah's Ark movie and to protect the Kurdish guides who were simply paid to do a job and not talk about it. The fact that many guides were promised pay after the movie was completed, but did not get paid, has turned some of them against Paraşüt and Mehmet Ceven.

In eastern Turkey, families make sure their daughters remain virgins until marriage, so most men marry young and start families. There are very few guides in the Ararat tourism business who do not have a family to feed. They do not have the luxury to turn down work. They cannot risk losing their work, so they keep silent about the Noah's Ark fraud.

Davut's livelihood is to provide horses to the tourist groups who come to climb Mount Ararat. He is also a guide himself. When Ahmet Paraşüt Ertuğrul and Mehmet Ceven required horses for their Noah's Ark expeditions with

the Chinese NAMI/MEDIA team, Davut provided the horses, because that is *what he does* for a living. Also, he and Mehmet Ceven are cousins. How could he have foreseen back in 2004 that these semi-annual expeditions would become the basis for a world-wide fraud? *He* was not the one perpetrating the lie. He was simply doing his job, providing horses, so if they wanted to carry wood up the mountain with his horses, he did not turn down the work. Now his continuing work with his horses, his livelihood, depends on his continuing silence. For the sake of his immediate family as well as cousins and uncles, Davut remains silent, and that goes for many other of the guides.

I have no grudge against Davut and his lovely wife and adorable children. I wish them well, and hope one day truth can prevail without economic hardship coming to Davut and his family.



Davut Cimrin, guide, upper left. This is a slide from a [website by Noyan Tapan](#) dated August 10, 2010

In May 2011, after I had met Murat Şahin, he gave me this advice:

"You must drink tea with everyone and smile. Over the years, everyone makes a mistake. They have a story. Something happened in the past. Then they try to put it behind them. They start a new life. They have families to support. We all must go on. We must keep living with each other. We must let them support their families after they make a mistake."

It has become folklore in Dogubeyazit that in 2007 and 2008 (and maybe 2009) about 20 or 30 people from Mehmet Ceven's village carried wood in trucks up to 2800 meters on Mount Ararat. From there, horses carried it to 3200 meters which is camp 1. From there it was carried by men to 4000 meters. I was not there to see it with my own eyes, but I have spoken to other guides and tour operators who state they did see with their own eyes the trucks loaded with wood being driven up on the mountain. I have spoken with several guides who personally told me they carried the wood up Mount Ararat and participated in building with it. NAMI defenders have argued that wood would be too heavy for men to carry. To prove this is not true, in 2011, Kurds working for the American Ark search team carried extremely heavy, large generators to the top of Mount Ararat.



Kurdish guides carry heavy generators to summit of Mount Ararat



guides carried injured climber from 4200m to 2250m in 7 hours

After Davut’s younger brother, Erkan, confessed in 2010 to carrying wood up on Mount Ararat to build a movie set for the Chinese, he denied the statement was his on a YouTube video with Davut sitting next to him. There is more to this story about guides carrying wood up on to Mount Ararat to make the movie, but that is all for now on that subject. I believe Erkan Cimrin’s original confession is true, and I am aware of further proof of it being true, but Paraşüt and NAMI have threatened those who try to expose the truth by going to their employers, pressuring for them to be fired from their jobs, and threatening lawsuits. They did it to me, but I am self-employed. I can’t fire myself. They did it to Dr. Randall Price and also to at least one Chinese minister in Hong Kong who told me directly.

When Mehmet Ceven, Karolina, and I arrived in Dogubayazit, at the foot of Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey, Mehmet took me to stay in the house of Tilki Mehmet, his long-time friend and mentor. “Tilki” means “foxy” and it is his nick-name. I spent three weeks living in Tilki Mehmet's house.



Tilki Mehmet in front of his house, Dogubayazit, 2011



Room where Amy stayed in Tilki Mehmet’s house, 2011; Amy’s purple suitcase and aqua computer case on floor

Karolina went back home to Poland. Mehmet Ceven and I both left Dogubayazit separately in March and returned in April 2011. **I became close friends with and confidant to both Mehmet Ceven and Tilki Mehmet.** Most evenings we spent in Tilki's house. They drank rocki (a Turkish liquor like vodka) and sang beautiful Kurdish songs for my entertainment. Those were some of my most memorable, enjoyable times in Dogubayazit before my business partnership with Mehmet Ceven was destroyed by Paraşüt and Halis Ceven (Mehmet’s father). I grew fond of the two Mehmet's and they of me. Indeed, I still wish to protect them, in spite of their betrayal. I hope that if the truth is understood, they can extricate themselves from the deep mud they are in. Like the other guides, Mehmet Ceven has four children to support.



Tilki Mehmet, Mehmet Ceven, April 2011 in Tilki's house, Dogubeyazit

On April 20, 2011, one evening in the privacy of Tilki Mehmet's home, Tilki confided in me how he got the fake certificate for radiocarbon 14 dating of the wood. Tilki speaks fluent Farsi, the language spoken in Iran, so Paraşüt gave Tilki \$6000 USD cash and sent him on a secret mission to Iran in 2010. It took Tilki two weeks of phone calls, waiting, payments, and meetings to get "a certificate stamped by Ahmadinajad's number two man" verifying the wood was 4800 years old. Tilki came home to Dogubeyazit with only \$100 in his pocket, so Paraşüt gave him \$200 more. Tilki pleaded with Paraşüt, "My mother is in the hospital with cancer. She needs chemo treatments. Can you please at least give me \$500 or \$1000?" But there was no more payment from Paraşüt.

As for the wood, Tilki looked me in the eye, paused, then said, "There is a town in Iran called [Yazd](#)." He spelled it for me (Yasd). "The town is famous for many trees that are 4800 years old." He paused again. I waited. He continued, "**If Paraşüt's wood was really an historic relic from Noah's Ark, do you think the Turkish government would have let me take it out of Turkey the way they protect their antiquities? Impossible,**" he shakes his head and takes another drink of rocki.

"I know, maybe I did some bad business," Tilki admitted to me, "but my mother was in the hospital. I needed the money. What was I to do? And Paraşüt, he would not even give me \$500 for my trouble. He only calls me when he needs me." Tilki promised to show me the radiocarbon 14 certificate from Iran.

I ask you, dear reader, would you lie to save your mother's life?

07/12/11

0 SHARE

Photos: An Old Tree in Yazd

Photos by Afi Golshan, Mehr News Agency



Yazd is the land of old trees. As the most magnificent symbols of the past thousands of years, it is important that these trees be preserved. These photos show one of the oldest trees in Yazd which has been neglected and needs urgent attention and protection.



wood of 4800-year-old tree in Yazd, Iran



NAMI wood matches reddish color of Yazd trees

Tilki Mehmet is one of the kindest men I met in Dogubeyazit. He was my friend and confidant. He is loved by friends all over the world. The era of finding tourists at the bus station has been replaced by internet reservations. Time and technology have passed him by. Many people have taken advantage of Tilki and his mother's situation. He is a victim in this tragedy. Since Paraşüt's role in this fraud has been exposed, Paraşüt now keeps Tilki Mehmet under his control by hiring Tilki to work in his Istanbul office. At this writing, Tilki Mehmet's mother is still alive.

Mehmet Ceven told me more than once, in very emotional evenings, that he hated the name Ceven and he wanted to change his name to Mehmet Ararat. He hated the Ceven family name because he felt all they lived and worked for was capitalism and that their focus on money had ruined his life. I have a video, April 22, 2011, of Mehmet Ceven saying this to me into the camera. I pressed Mehmet Ceven to tell me about Noah's Ark on many occasions, but he refused, always claiming we were too busy and he would tell me when we had some quiet time.

When I finally insisted, he told me that there were five of them sworn to secrecy for life and they had been making secret trips for many years to Mount Ararat.

"Do you believe you found Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat?" I asked Mehmet Ceven.

"No, of course not," Mehmet answered.

"Did you find wood on Mount Ararat?" I pressed.

To quote him exactly: "I saw a piece of wood. Maybe it's from an old church or barn, but it's not Noah's Ark." Mehmet Ceven told me this April 21, 2011.

Mehmet Ceven explained to me that the Chinese NAMI group paid all his expenses to fly to Hong Kong in April 2010 to be part of their press conference to announce their discovery of Noah's Ark. They took him to the [Noah's Ark hotel and museum](#) they have built in Hong Kong. To his astonishment and embarrassment, Mehmet saw a life-size sculpture of himself and the Chinese woman inside the "room in an ice cave" discovering Noah's Ark. It was built from the photograph of NAMI's "discovery." I have tried to obtain a photograph of this sculpture of Mehmet, but am told by people in Hong Kong that photography is not allowed in NAMI's museum. I am hopeful someone will send me a photo.

Mehmet stated that NAMI leaders pressured him to say publicly at the April 25, 2010, Hong Kong press conference that he and they had discovered Noah's Ark. Mehmet told me that he refused to say this. You will

notice that Mehmet Ceven, Kurdish leader of the Chinese expeditions on Mount Ararat, is missing from the stage during the press conference. Mehmet speaks English very well and was the number one leader of the Chinese NAMI team, yet he did not speak at the 2010 Hong Kong press conference. He was in some of the photos taken afterwards in Hong Kong, standing with the Chinese NAMI leaders.



Mehmet Ceven, Andrew Man-Fai Yuen,
Wing-Cheung Yeung, HK April 2010



Mehmet Ceven in *Days of Noah – Apocalypse II*



Parasüt in red coat (second) and Mehmet Ceven (third) in red and yellow hat leading MEDIA/NAMI team

Beijing Press-Conference April 28, 2010



46 / 70

Ahmet Paraşüt Ertuğrul (4th from right), Mehmet Ceven (3rd from right kneeling), Numan Ertuğrul (Paraşüt's son; 2nd from right),

Noah's Ark Ministries International & the Team



Ark Researcher:
Clara Wei



Mountain Guide:
Mehmet Ceven (left)
NAMI Team (right)



Ahmet Ertugrul (Parasut), the search team leader, was the first to get information on the location and then started the search



44 / 70

Mehmet Ceven, lower left with mustache, Hong Kong press conference, April 2010

Muhsin Bulet is the Director of Tourism and Culture for the Province of Agri, Turkey. I was introduced to him in his office on May 10, 2011. Bulet was at the 2010 Hong Kong press conference as the guest of Paraşüt and NAMI/MEDIA. I emphasize that Muhsin Bulet's job is to publicize and promote tourism in eastern Turkey. That is his *job*. Just like Davut with his horses, Muhsin Bulet was doing his job: *promoting tourism*. It is my belief that it was not he who created the fiction of the discovery of the Ark, even though Paraşüt has stated his "beeg guy" in the government told him the location of the site. This is nonsense.

To my knowledge Muhsin Bulet has never been to Mount Ararat. What Bulet said was that if the discovery is true, it will be very good for tourism. I might add, even though it is *not true*, it has been good for tourism. If you do a Google search for *Noah's Ark discovery*, you get over 1.5 million matches. After the fraud began to be exposed, the statistic of being 99.9% sure the discovery of wood was Noah's Ark was revised to 90% certainty. I studied statistics in graduate school. Statistics is a science applied to quantifiable measurements. It involves standard deviations, degree of error, and so forth. The NAMI/MEDIA statement of statistical certainty is utter nonsense.

There are three kinds of publicity: (1) good publicity, (2) bad publicity, and (3) no publicity. In other words: (1) *fame*, (2) *notoriety*, and (3) *I never heard of this*.

It is possible Muhsin Bulet and other Turkish government officials who attended the Hong Kong press conference were deceived in the course of doing their job. On April 30, 2010, Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism launched an [investigation](#) into claims by NAMI that they had found the remains of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat. In all of the brochures, flyers, and posters promoting tourism in eastern Turkey in 2011, Muhsin Bulet has put Murat Şahin's photo, Kurdish leader of the American team. I think this is Bulet's apology for allowing himself to be used by Paraşüt in the Noah's Ark fraud.

One year to the day after the Beijing press conference, on April 28, 2011, Mehmet Ceven returned to Mount Ararat again with the "secret" Paraşüt Noah's Ark team. That's another long story which I will not tell here even though I know the names of everyone on the "secret" team. A day or two before going on Mount Ararat, Mehmet introduced me to another guide named Selçuk from Trabzon, on the Black Sea. He introduced me in Paraşüt's sporting goods store in Dogubeyazit which is operated by Paraşüt's son, Numan. Numan, being the adult son of Paraşüt, is also part of the "secret" team. Personally, Numan has always been polite and friendly with me, but family loyalty is demanded, and Numan is the son of Paraşüt who is NAMI's Turkish (Kurdish) partner in the fraud. Selçuk is part of the secret Paraşüt/Ceven team in the Noah's Ark fraud. It is believed by many local people that the wood for the Ark building site came from an old ship in Trabzon, Selçuk's hometown.

Mehmet told me that the reason they were going to Ararat the first week in May 2011 was to fulfill D.A.K.U.T.'s annual training requirement to go to the summit in the winter. D.A.K.U.T. is a private organization that promotes itself as a search and rescue team. Its leader is Paraşüt. I asked Mehmet, "What happens if you can't make the summit?" He laughed at my naiveté "D.A.K.U.T. is our own group. We certify ourselves." In fact, I learned only days later that this group of 9 people was going up to 4000 meters on Mount Ararat as part of what people in Dogubeyazit sarcastically refer to as their Noah's Ark *annual building program*. D.A.K.U.T. annual winter training is their cover story.

The weather was terrible and no one went to the summit, because that was not the purpose of their trip.

When Mehmet Ceven returned from Mount Ararat and his "D.A.K.U.T. training", he told me he was going to Kars airport the next day to return home to Poland. It was only later that I discovered he returned to Mount Ararat in

the morning to continue their secret work at the Noah's Ark site. I had vowed, if I ever discovered he lied to me, it would be the end of our business partnership.

Our unfortunate ending was engineered by Paraşüt. The night before our business partnership was destroyed, I was the guest of honor at a family dinner in Halis Ceven's house to celebrate my business partnership with Mehmet Ceven and introduce me to his entire family. I had just spent one week scrubbing and painting Mehmet's office in Dogubeyazit that had been locked and unused for a year-and-a-half, since Mehmet had married Karolina and moved to Poland. I was an inspiration to the Ceven family. Everyone had their hopes pinned on a good year financially, based on the income from the reservations I would make with groups to summit Mount Ararat.

The next day, while I was finishing painting the office, for which Mehmet had paid 6000 TL annual rent, Paraşüt phoned from Istanbul and asked me what I was doing in "his office." Halis Ceven, at Paraşüt's bidding, threw me out of Mehmet's office ten minutes later without explanation. Later, Mehmet Ceven sent me a text message saying how angry he was that his own father and partner Paraşüt had betrayed him and broken our business partnership. Mehmet did not use such delicate words to describe the betrayal.



Halis and Mehmet in their office in Dogubeyazit

old photo of Mehmet Ceven and his father Halis Ceven in office



Mehmet Ceven's office after Amy Beam painted it, May 5, 2011

I believe Mehmet Ceven wanted to create an honest business with me and build a prosperous tourism business on Mount Ararat and eastern Turkey. (I happen to be the only one who hangs on to this belief in light of his betrayal. Others in Dogubeyazit are not so generous in their assessment of him.) Mehmet spoke enthusiastically of many ideas for the future. Because of my internet and English language skills and his knowledge of the mountain and the local culture, he was so optimistic. Together we would make an unbeatable team. But Mehmet had one foot in each enemy camp. He could not be loyal to me and still participate in the fraud of Noah's Ark with Paraşüt and the Chinese. Paraşüt saw to it that our partnership failed because he knew that I did not believe he had discovered Noah's Ark, and therefore, I could not be counted on to keep their secret. Mehmet was on the horns of a moral dilemma. He chose the camp which he believed would bring him the most money to support his family.

Mehmet Ceven is like a figure in a Shakespeare tragedy, creating his own downfall. His story is not unique to the Ceven family, to Dogubeyazit, to the Kurdish culture, nor even to Turkey. Indeed, his tragic story of truth versus deceit, of integrity versus greed, of love and betrayal is all too common worldwide.

It was Mehmet Ceven who first taught me the Kurdish saying, "*Not everything in life is about money.*" In Dogubeyazit, one learns this lesson a very hard way.



Murat Şahin, Amy Beam, camp 2, Mt. Ararat, August 5, 2011



Sayim Şahin reviewing reservations with Amy Beam, 2011

I moved May 5, 2011, to Murat Camping and became business partners with Murat and Sayim Şahin. By late summer 2011, I was known in Dogubeyazit by all Mount Ararat guides. Each one was campaigning to get my business in order to have an internet-savvy partner to get reservations. One day, one of them invited me into his office. He explained to me that from 2000 to 2004, he shared an office in Dogubeyazit with Paraşüt, Tilki Mehmet, Halis Ceven, and Mehmet Ceven. This was the very same office I had painted. There were seven of them who shared the same office and also their Mount Ararat tourism business. There was virtually no competition. The Turkish government only reopened Mount Ararat to tourism in 2001.

In those early years, the organization of the climbing expeditions had many problems which he believed were not being addressed by his partners even though they could be readily fixed. He resolved to end his partnership with the others and open his own agency. **In 2011, this guide, now a tour operator, told me that in 2004 one of the leaders of the NAMI Chinese team approached him and suggested planting some wood on Mount Ararat, then announcing the discovery of Noah's Ark.** The Kurdish guide told him this was a very bad idea and he would have nothing to do with it. "It is very very bad to mess with people's religion" he told the Chinese NAMI leader. "The story of Noah's Ark belongs to all of the people of the world and your idea is very bad. It will bring trouble." The Chinese man never raised the subject again with this guide. The guide ended his partnership with Paraşüt, Mehmet Ceven, Halis Ceven, Tilki Mehmet, and the others and moved out of their shared office.

The idea that the NAMI/MEDIA leadership was deceived by Paraşüt is probably not true, based on this conversation of 2004. I believe Paraşüt and the NAMI/MEDIA leadership were all in on the fraud together from the beginning. Who would register a "church" with the name *Noah's Ark Ministries International* and make and market a movie about the discovery of Noah's Ark? If they could not find the Ark, they could just make it up. Recall, that on MEDIA's own website, they announced they had found the "resting place" of the Ark in 2004, although they had not actually found the Ark.

A [FaceBook](#) group was started in September 2011 to investigate the NAMI/MEDIA discovery and demand an audit and accounting from the NAMI/MEDIA leadership. Many church leaders and members worldwide have posted reminders that religious belief is based on faith. It is not necessary to find Noah's Ark as proof of one's faith or morality.

There are several film-makers backed by TV stations making documentaries in 2012 of the search for Noah's Ark and the hoax. Hopefully, some guides will speak publicly so that finally, all of the guides who were innocent victims in this fraud may be relieved of the burden of silence and secrecy.

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Mount Ararat Trek

Dr. Amy L. Beam operates [Mount Ararat Trek](#) in partnership with Murat Camping, a tourism business leading climbers to the summit of Mount Ararat. She is the author of the forthcoming book "Climbing Mount Ararat: Love and Betrayal in Kurdistan." She earned her doctorate in education from Syracuse University (1981, Syracuse, New York). [Amy Beam](#) has spent 30 years in information technology.