

Oral presentation

The Flood in the Black Sea – Science and Mythology

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We want to start this article with the dedication of Prof. D. Peev, director of the Botanical Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Science, to our book “The Black Sea, the Flood and the ancient myths” – “Only the one who can open the gate of the past becomes a man of wisdom who sees through the future.”

The most recent geological history of the Black Sea, which covers the last 25 thousand years, is a subject of special attention today. This interest is due mainly to the hypothesis we have launched about the early Holocene flood in the Black Sea. This hypothesis was a real shock to the scientific community, among whom the Bulgarian geologists and archaeologists received it with great hostility. The anathematization was accompanied by a fierce media campaign, as a result of which Prof. Robert Ballard, the discoverer of Titanic, left Bulgaria disappointed.

In this connection, international marine research was conducted for the purpose of correlating geological, climatic, and historical events in the Black and Aegean Seas during the last 25 thousand years. Special attention was paid to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which contain important data for deciphering the course of the catastrophic events around 9.5 – 8,000 BP. The most important scientific arguments in favor of the flood are as follows:

- The presence on the shelf periphery of an old shoreline that existed around 9.5 – 8,000 BP. The old shoreline is located at depths of 90-120 m.
- The existence of catastrophic-type deepwater organogenic-mineral sediments (sapropels) that are products of the catastrophe. A rapid change of macro- and microfauna from the brackish lake organisms that existed more than 8,000 years ago to typical marine organisms.
- The occurrence of hydrogen sulfide contamination, which resulted from the catastrophe.

A few existing artifacts that are questioned by some authors may be reduced to the following essentials:

- The presence of remains of ancient Neolithic settlements and necropolises along the coast (Varna, Durankulak and Constantsa) that may be dated around 6–5,000 BC.
- The remains of ancient Neolithic settlements and necropolises in the region of the old shorelines at a depth of 90–120 m.
- “The Noah Plate” – a disputed and maybe unique artifact that was probably a cult funeral plate. The signs on “the Noah Plate” may turn out to be the oldest written messages from the pre-flood age.
- The Neolithic settlements and necropolises along the coast and the sparse remains (for now) along the region of the old shorelines are likely to be fragments of a pre-flood Neolithic civilization.
- The analyses of the numerous pieces of gold and copper jewelry and the various funeral plates testify to the existence of a highly developed Neolithic civilization and the beginnings of primary forms of state organization.

Among the number of existing myths and legends, we’ll examine three of the most popular ones which are directly related to the flood:

- **“Myths and Legends from Ancient Sumer”** is an exceptional authentic document, deciphered by an assistant in the Assyriology Department of the British Museum, George Smith, more than 130 years ago. Being acquainted with the Bible, he was surprised to discover an older Sumerian legend about the flood described in a realistic way. The Gilgamesh Poem is a legend that gives us information about the travels of the mythical king of Uruk, Gilgamesh, through “the sea of death,” which we identify with the Black Sea. Discovering many connections between the Black Sea and the later Sumerian civilization, it is not impossible that Gilgamesh came from Noah’s family.
- We consider the Bible a significant literary synthesis of events from different times, borrowed from retold sources the authorship of which was erased over the course of time; however, the basis of the Genesis flood is paraphrased from the Gilgamesh epic.
- Plato’s version of Atlantis in the two dialogues, Timaeus and Critias, has been the focus of much interest for hundreds and thousands of his interpreters. Atlantis “is located” in various sites – from the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Titicaca, and including the Black Sea. It is a known fact that the people of Atlantis are described as “sea people” in the Bible, who had abandoned the mythic Atlantis Island after the catastrophe and founded Palestine.

Juxtaposing the data from the Black Sea’s natural events and archaeo-mythology, as well as the legend of Noah’s ark, we can claim with a high degree of reliability that the remains of the ark are located within the Black Sea bottom. They are situated at contemporary depths of about 40 m, where Noah’s ship anchored after the flood. During the last 8,000 years, the remains of the ship and Noah’s grave have been covered with alluvial and marine silts. The discovery of the remains is a task of high priority for modern marine archaeology. The restoration of deepwater geo-archaeological exploration is not only a matter of prestige for marine science, but also an important criterion for clarifying a key page of the most ancient human history that transpired in our lands.