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Mount Ida from the Iliad to Turkish Folk Beliefs: Some Notes on Its Origin and Mythological Continuity<sup>1</sup>

İlyada'dan Anadolu Halk İnanışlarına Kaz (Ida) Dağı Yolculuğu: Kökeni ve Mitolojik Sürekliliği Üzerine Bazı Notlar

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## Abstract

This study aims to find the origin of Kazdağı, which has an important place in both Greek and Anatolian mythology. Mount Ida had a geopolitical and economic importance for the people of Anatolia in ancient times. The significance of the mountain is also reflected to the myths, epics and the legends. Ancient writers give brief descriptions of the mountain and exemplifies the reasons why it is a holy place. A well-known epic, the Iliad emphasizes the richness of Ida in terms of its natural resources. This richness also enlightens the mythological importance of the mountain. Iliad clearly indicates the importance of Ida in Greek mythology. In Anatolia, Ida is known as "Kazdağı" and there have still been some folk beliefs and legends related to it. The most common of these is Sarıkız, which is extremely famous around Balıkesir and Edremit. Sarıkız, known as a local legend in Turkish culture, is unique as it shows its importance among the local inhabitants of "Kazdağı". Given the fact that the origin of Ida, whose mythological importance was still kept among Turks, was rooted in Anatolia, it is inevitable to examine the journey from the Iliad to Sarıkız. In this context, the ancient and modern sources are investigated and the data gathered are given in the main part of the study. In conclusion, the article aims to contribute to the researches whose purposes are mainly to compare the Greek and Anatolian cultures in terms of important places. We intend to find out whether there is an interaction between the two cultures and if there has been this intercultural connection, how and in what aspects it is going on in terms of the importance of Mount Ida.

Keywords: Mount Ida (Kaz), Greek Mythology, Anatolian Legends, Iliad Epic, Sarıkız Legend

# Öz

Bu çalışma, hem Yunan hem de Anadolu mitolojisinde önemli bir yere sahip olan Kazdağı'nın kökenini bulmayı amaçlamaktadır. Kazdağı, Antik Çağ'da ve Anadolu halkı adına jeopolitik ve ekonomik açıdan oldukça önemli bir konuma sahiptir. Dağın bu önemli konumu, aynı zamanda mitlere, destanlara ve efsanelere taşınmıştır. Antik yazarlar dağın tarifini detaylıca bizlere sunarken onun neden kutsal olduğunu da örneklendirmektedirler. Antik kaynaklar arasında oldukça iyi tanınan bir destan olan İlyada, İda dağının doğal kaynaklar yönünden zenginliği üzerinde durmaktadır. Bu zenginlik dağın mitolojik önemine de ışık tutmaktadır. İlyada, Yunan mitolojisinde İda dağının neden önemli olduğunu açıklıkla göstermektedir. Anadolu'da "Kazdağı" olarak bilinen bu dağ ile ilgili efsaneler ve halk inanışları hala varlığını korumaktadır. Bunlardan en yaygını olarak bilinen Sarıkız efsanesi, Balıkesir ve Edremit illeri çevresinde oldukça ünlüdür. Türk kültüründe yerel bir efsane olarak tanınan Sarıkız, Kazdağı'nın yerli halkı arasındaki önemini göstermesi bakımından eşsizdir. Mitolojideki önemini Türkler arasında da devam ettiren İda Dağı'nın kökeninin Anadolu topraklarında atıldığı göz önüne alınırsa, İlyada'dan Sarıkız'a giden yolculuğu incelemek kaçınılmazdır. Bu kapsamda, antik yazarların konu ile ilgili eserleri incelenmiş ve bu eserler modern yazarlarınkilerle kıyaslanmıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu makale, ağırlıklı olarak Yunan ve Anadolu kültürlerini önemli yerler bağlamında kıyaslamayı amaç edinen araştırmalara katkı sağlayabilmeyi hedeflemektedir. Ida Dağının önemi açısından, iki kültür arası etkileşimin olup olmaması ve eğer olduysa hangi konularda etkileşimin devam ettiğini bulmak niyetindeyiz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İda (Kaz) Dağı, Yunan Mitolojisi, Anadolu Efsaneleri, İlyada Destanı, Sarıkız Efsanesi

#### Introduction

Mount Ida of Troad, known as "Goose Mountain" (Kaz Dağı) in Anatolia, is a very remarkable mountain in the early periods of ancient history related to the economic, historical and cultural aspects (Evans, 2019, p. 61-99). It is located in the Southern Marmara Sea, the south of Biga Peninsula and the north of Edremit Gulf. It is the border of two modern cities Balıkesir and Çanakkale in Turkey. There are many hills, of which Sarıkız, Babadağ and Karataş are the most famous. (Turan, 2002, p. 158; Duymaz, 2001, p. 89; Duymaz & Şahin, 2008, p. 118; Aydemir, 2013, p. 64; Sezer, 2016, p. 4-5; Evans, 2019, p. 61; Külzer, 2020, p. 585). Despite its steep rugged cliffs and roads, the Mount Ida (Kaz) has always been an important place for its dense forests and water resources. (Ovid, Fasti, IV. 206; 247; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 103; Külzer, 2020, p. 586).

Thanks to its topography and resources, Mount Ida has a very important place in ancient history. It was famous for its wealth of wild forests, animals, plants and water sources. These properties also affected the myths of Greek and the mountain has become sacred. In late antiquity, around Ida, Assos (Behram Kale), Gargara (first on Kocakaya hill, since the fourth century BC the southwest of Arıklı) and Antandros (the west of Avcılar) are known to be the commercial centers and to receive the rank of bishoprics under the metropolis of Ephesos. These urban centers are also believed to have connected Constantinople and Propontis to the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, it is clear that the communication and exchange of goods with the other settlements, in the central parts of the Troad and beyond were provided by the extended Roman road system (Külzer, 2020, p. 585).

Since 1870, when Schliemann started to excavate the mound of Hisarlık, the researchers have frequently visited the region of Troad in order to discover more about Troy in Homer's epic, Iliad (Easton, 1989, Korfman, 2003, p. 1-2; p. 26; Luce, 2003, p. 9-10; Begemann; Schmitt –Strecker and Pemicka, 2003, p. 173-174; Kitts, 2015, p. 623- 625; Ivanova, 2016, p. 39). The researches respectively headed by Wilhelm Dörpfeld, Carl W. Blegen, Manfred O. Korfmann, Ernst Pemicka, Brian Rose, and Rüstem Aslan have indicated much about Bronze Age Troy. The archeological findings show that there has been a continuous settlement from the pre-historic times to the present day Turkey (Begemann; Schmitt –Strecker and Pemicka, 2003; Körpe, 2016, p. 1-15; Ivanova, 2016, p. 39-48; Sezer, 2016, p. 15-24; Külzer, 2020, p. 585-586).

Ida has been the home of several legends and myths in both Ancient History and Anatolia. In Greek mythology, there have been some names of people related to Ida such as *Idaia* and *Idaios* (Homer, İlliad III. 247, V. 9; Apollodorus, I. I. 4-7; Erhat, 1984, p. 164; Berens, 2009, p. 62). Roman geographer, Strabo and some other subsequent ancient sources claim that the people migrating from Crete to Anatolia settled around Troad and gave the mount the name of Ida attributing to Ida in Crete (Strabon, 13. I. 48; Theophrastus, *IX*; Pausanias, V. 7. 5-8; Erhat, 1984, p. 308; Evans, 2019, p. 18-32).

In this study, it is aimed to clarify the importance of Ida both in Greek and Anatolian mythology. Since the first records dealing with Ida, the importance of Ida in Anatolia is searched on chronologically in ancient sources. The local beliefs that are common in subsequent cultures such as Romans, Byzantine, Ottoman and Turks briefly examined. A Greek epic, *Iliad*, and an Anatolian legend *Sarıkız* have been chosen as key models. The similarities and differences related to the continuity of Ida across cultures in Anatolia tried to be explained in detail. There have been a number of researches and studies on the north-west of Turkey.

However, these studies are mainly in Turkish language. The lack of the studies in English language has led us to study on this topic. Here, in this study, it is aimed to give a brief description of the studies regarding Mount Ida in Greek mythology and the Mount Kaz in Anatolian one in terms of the epic Iliad and the legend Sarıkız and thus, to contribute to the researchers to bridge on the field.

## 1. Mount Ida In Ancient Sources

Mount Ida is often mentioned by many ancient writers such as Homer, Diodorus, Callimachus, Ovid, Herodotus, Thucydides, Theophrastus, Catullus, Vergil, Strabo, Pliny and Pausanias. They generally choose to refer the mountain for not only its location but also its sacred position. Ida always had a crucial place for Greek and Roman writers. However, they were not agreed as to whether the infant god, Zeus had been grown up on Mount Ida or Mount Dicte. Mount Ida is favoured by Diodorus (Library of History, V. 80; Callimachus (Hymn, I. 51) and Ovid (Fasti, IV. 207). Ida is the holy place where Zeus, his sons and grandchildren settle down in Anatolia such as Dardanus, Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymedes and Ilus is known to found the city Ilium in Troad. Ida is also famous for Zeus' kidnapping Ganymedes, whose name means 'bright' or 'brilliant' and is said to be the most beautiful of mortals (Anthologia Graeca, 9. 77, CP 23. 369; Diodorus, IV. 75. 3; Ovid, Fasti, VI. 43; Duymaz, 2001, p. 89; Thanos, 2003, p. 89; Aydemir, 2013, p. 64). Moreover, in Greek mythology, Mount Ida is known as the place where the first beauty contest were held. The Goddess of love, Aphrodite became the queen of beauty after winning her rivals (Can, 1963, p. 249-267; Necatigil, 1988, p. 60; Aydemir, 2013, p. 64; Duymaz & Şahin, 2018, p.118).

The first written accounts about Ida comes from Homer's epic, the *Iliad*. It gives detailed information about the geographical location and its place in mythology (VIII, XIV, XV, XX). Herodot mentions the Ida as a hunting place (I. 43), as the home of the gods (I. 59) and as an important geopolitical place (VII. 172): "In order to protect Hellas, firstly, the straits of Ida should be defended". Also, while categorizing the Aeolian cities, Herodotus attaches a particular importance to the cities neighboring Ida (I. 151). Besides, he tries to use term Ida while explaining the Persian excursion itinerary (VII. 42) He also mentions Ida as timber suitable for shipbuilding or (2) a particularly densely wooded forest (1.151.1, 7.42.2, 1.151.1, 7.42.2, 1.110.2, 4.109.2, 4.175.2, 5.23.2, 7.111.1; Evans, 2019, p. 79-80).

Thucydides mentions Ida as the suitable place for shipbuilding since it has the abundance of timber and plenty of other supplies (IV. 52. 3)<sup>2</sup>. Xenophon also points out the importance of Ida as a home of shipbuilding. He noticed that the army built triremes at Antandrus by using the timber from Ida (I. 1. 25). Similarly, Theophrastus explains the various kinds of trees grown on Ida and notices the importance of these trees for shipbuilding. Ida is mentioned among the important timber centers (III; IV. 5. 5) (Evans, 2019, p. 71-75). In terms of forests of Ida, the most extended description on the forests of Ida as a wild and dangerous place is perhaps Catullus' poem 63. Although written by a Roman poet in the first century BC, the poem seems to replicate the world-view of a Greek polis in some key respects. Ida is portrayed as the kingdom of the goddess Cybele, in deep and shadowy forests, full of wild beasts which obey Cybele's commands, its freezing heights hostile to human habitation (Catullus, 63.3, Evans, 2019, p. 65-66).

Vergil clearly points out the sacred place on Ida (II. 682) and the forests of the mountain (II. 692-693). It is possible to claim that Strabo is the elaborator to clarify the position of Ida as he explains the geographical position and the borders of Ida (XIII. 1. 5). Moreover, he locates the cities orient to Ida. It is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For wood and timber usage see also Buxton, 1992, p. 6; Evans, 2019, p. 58-79.

determined as the center of the cities' locations (XIII. 1. 10, 24, 25, 51). In addition, he mentions about the timber coming from the mountain (XIII. 1. 51) and the water sources and the rivers of the mountain in detail (XIII. 1.43). Like Strabo, Pliny also presents the names of the rivers of the mountain (V. 122), the cities (V. 96) and the kinds of trees grown around Ida (XIII. 54). Pausanias (V. VII. 5-8) underlines the importance of Ida in Greek mythology. The gods are believed to come from "Cretan Ida". Ida is a holy place for the humanity. He also uses the term "*Trojan Ida*". He points out that local people grow comel trees on the mountain and they cut down them to make the Wooden Horse in Troy (Pausanias, III. XIII. 2-5)<sup>3</sup>.

## 1.1. Mount Ida In Iliad

The *Iliad* is the epic of Ilion or Troy. The *Iliad* in fact tells about the Trojan War<sup>4</sup> but one could learn all about the gods/goddess, wars, weapons, journeys, hunting, mines, houses, furniture, clothing, men and women. The traditions, beliefs, respects, horrors, hopes and sorrows of the Greek people are clearly determined (Kitts, 2015, s. 629-630). Among the places regarded as important and sacred, Olympus and Ida have the leading roles as well as Troy. Firstly, Ida appears as the place which Zeus wants to go up with his chariot and watch the wars (Hom. İlliad, VIII. 43-52; Mylonas, 1946, s. 203; Myres, 1954, p. 130):

"...stepped upon his car and touched the horses with the lash to start them; and nothing loath the pair sped onward midway between earth and starry heaven. To Ida he fared, the many fountained, mother of wild beasts, even to Gargarus, where is his demesne and his fragrant altar. There did the father of men and gods stay his horses and loose them from the car, and shed thick mist upon them; and himself sat amid the mountain peaks exulting in his glory, looking upon the city of the Trojans and the ships of the Achaeans." (Murray, 1928, p. 341-342).

Here, Ida is regarded as a very important place in terms of three main reasons. First, Zeus chooses Ida to observe the wars between two nations. He never intervenes the wars but leaves the result of the wars to the people's fate. As an observer god, Zeus considers that Ida is the most suitable place to watch over his people. Zeus is not only the observer but also the organizer of the wars (Myres, 1954, p. 130-131). The importance of Ida in the divinity of Zeus is clearly indicated as follows: "Then the son of Cronos stretched evenly for them the line of battle, as he looked down from Ida, and they kept slaying one another." (Murray, 1928, p. 505). On Ida, Zeus organized the course of events and he equalized the armies and the war started (XI. 336).

Ida is often mentioned as the home of Zeus. In the myth of Zeus and Hera, which we learn about their love affair, Ida is depicted as the place where Zeus lives and everything can be seen (XIV. 332). In the final part, Hecabe asks her husband Priam, who wants to visit Zeus after Hector's death to pray to Zeus, who sits on Ida and looks down over all Troy. The fact that Zeus lives on Ida and watches the city is so clear (XXIV. 291). The godship of Zeus is combined with the sanctity of Ida. In the epic of Patroclus, it is clear that Zeus is the god of Ida and Ida has a priest called Laogonus (XVI. 605).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For the importance of Trojan horse, see Apollodorus, XIV, 16-25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ant. Gra. 9. 522, CP, 23.446.

Secondly, it is clear in the lines that Ida has plenty of animals. Therefore, Ida is a fertile place for husbandry and hunting. Finally, Ida is overflush in terms of its resources. This prolificacy must come from its various kinds of trees and rivers<sup>5</sup>. The power of Ida is directly expressed by the people and gods during the war. Poseidon and Apollo decide to use of its rivers in order to demolish the high wall in the city of Priam: "

Poseidon and Apollo would agree to destroy it, channeling the force of all the rivers against it, those that flow from Ida to the sea." (Kline, 2009). It is clear that the will of gods could only be carried out with the power of Ida. This power stems from water sources and fertility of Ida (XII.17-19). That power does not only come from the rivers but also the winds from the crests of it. Zeus uses this power to destroy the ships of Achaeans (XIII. 254-259).

The fertility of the Ida is clearly referred in the myth of Hera and Sleep (XIV. 283-288). The mountain is depicted as its abundant natural sources:

"They soon reached Ida of the many streams, mother of wild creatures, by way of Lectum where they left the sea and crossed the land, the forest crowns quivering beneath their feet. Sleep halted then, before Zeus could see him, and settled on the tallest fir-tree on Ida, one that pierced the mists and reached the sky" (Kline, 2009).

It seems to have various adjectives dedicated to Ida related to its holiness and fertility. They are frequently used in the epic, yet the one that is once used is "many-ridged" (XXI. 448) (Kline, 2009).

# 2. Mount Ida During the Turkish Period

The historical, cultural and geographical values of Ida continues to exist in Anatolia, albeit regionally. With its high and majestic appearance, heavy and various vegetation, rivers, fertile lands and coasts suitable for ship trading, the region of Ida has been a settlement for many civilizations for thousands of years. With its legends and common types of living, Ida has been a great model of the cultural continuity of human history.

Recent studies and findings in the neighborhood of Mount Ida clearly indicate that the region was continually inhabited in Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Periods (Arslan, 2003, p. 31-32; Göbel; Satır; Kadereit, Wagner and Kayan, 2003, p. 341; Körpe, 2011, p. 23; Yalçıklı, 2011, p. 27-35; Kaplan, Şen and Günaydın, 2016, p. 1098). It means that so many civilizations settled in the region of Ida including the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Turks and Ottomans. During the Roman period, following the Polytheist beliefs, the sanctity of Mount Ida continued during 350 AD, when Christianity became influential in the region. With the Christianity, the mountain referred a female cult again thanks to the Mother Mary after the long stable Hellenistic period. However, the female cult entirely came into existence with the legend of Sarıkız, a Turkish legend; that is Ida reached its old power and sanctity with the help of a Turkish local legend which is kept by Tahtacı Turkmens (Çoban, 2012; Aydemir, 2013, p. 65).

As Cook (1973) and Arslan (2003, p. 31-32) state that the Turkish occupation of the region started in the  $14^{th}$  century. The inhabiting area around Troy itself, however, was not densely populated during the Turkish era. This area only became more populated at the beginning of the  $17^{th}$  century. The settlement history of the region during the Ottoman-Turkish period remains unclear.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The term "many-fountained" is also used in chapter XI. 184; XIV. 157 and XIV. 283, 307; XV, 151; XX. 59, 218; XXIII: 116). The term "mother of wild beasts" is also referred in XIV. 283; XV. 151. Gargarus, where there are the grove and altar of Zeus is depicted as the topmost peak of Ida in XIV. 293 (Mylanos, 1946, p. 203; Thanos, 2003, p. 90).

As Roux (1994, s. 127) points out that the fertility and the sanctity of the mountain with its Greek and Christian properties first combined with the Shamanist then Muslim beliefs. The fertility of the mountain turned to appear in a female cult during Turkish period. This pre-Islamic form of mountain cult included three main divine themes: tree, water and mountain. In fact, this female cult coming from Greek culture glorified Sarı Kız or "Blonde Girl", the daughter of Fatima, who was the beloved daughter of Muhammad the Prophet. Bonnefoy (2000, p. 147), Önal (2003, p. 114) and Duymaz and Şahin (2018, p. 117) agree with Roux and claim that before the Turkification of Anatolia, the mountain cult held with the one coming from Central Asia. This pre-Islamic form of cult was then added Islamic characteristics and Ida became one of the inhabitations of Turkish tribes.

The settlement of Tahtacı Turkmens in the Mount Ida and its surroundings dates back to the period of Mehmet the Conqueror (Kaplan, 1996, p. 17; Tanyu, 1987, p. 121-122; Eröz, 1990, p. 23; Duymaz, 2001, p. 89; Duymaz and Şahin, 2008: 118; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 112; Evans, 2019, p. 63). The Sultan wanted to benefit from the trees of Ida for the conquest of Istanbul and Lesbos. Prior to the conquest, he wished to build the fleet and invited the Turkmens to cut the trees necessary for the teakwood. A group of Turkmens started to settle down the region and as their jobs were to cut down the trees for timber necessary for shipping. They provided a logistic support for Ottoman navy (Tanyu, 1987, p. 121-122; Eröz, 1990, p. 23; Duymaz, 2001, p. 89; Duymaz and Şahin, 2008, p. 118; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 112). As they were wood-workers, there were given a nickname "Tahtacı" (Evans, 2019, p. 63). These people still live on the foothills of Ida but after the settlement of Ahmet Vefik Paşa, they changed the Greek effects in their favor (Kaplan, 1996, p. 17; Duymaz and Şahin, 2018, p. 118).

Ida bears all the characteristics of a sacred place in the legends of Anatolia such as Sarıkız and Hasan Boğuldu, after the Turks settled down the region (Çoban, 2012; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 111; Koçak and Demirlikan 2018, p. 13). Both legends refer the same settings and motifs. The story of legends is related to love of young men and their eager interests in two strong and beautiful women. The setting in both of them is Ida (Koçak and Demirlikan, 2018, p. 14). The holiness of the Mount Ida is closely related to the legend of Sarıkız and "Sarıkız Peak" (Blonde-Maiden Peak) (Evans, 2019, p. 61), where there is the tomb of Sarıkız, is one of the peaks of Ida that shows the beliefs of local people. This peak is among the other sacred places such as "Babatepe" (Father Peak) (Evans, 2019, p. 61), where there is the tomb of Cılbak Baba (Destitute Father) (Evans, 2019, p. 62-63), the father of Sarıkız, "Cılbak Peak"; "İkrar Hill"; "Kaz Avlusu", where Sarıkız built herself in order to keep the geese (in Turkish "Kaz") together; "Çatalçimi", which is considered to be the place for the water need of her flock of geese and lastly "Karataş Peak" (Black Stone Peak) (Evans, 2019, p. 61), which is also called Gargarus and where Zeus directed the wars of Troy (Ataman, 1941, p. 251-253; Duymaz and Şahin, 2018, p. 118; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 111; Evans, 2019, p. 61-62). All these places are related to the legend of Sarıkız and the mountain cult of Turkish culture.

Nowadays, in Gargarus, which is in modern Çanakkale-Küçükkuyu, one can see a center of the local belief, "*Altar of Zeus*", where Zeus stays during the wars and which is the highest point of Ida in Iliad (Homer, Iliad, XIII 41; Uluocak, 2014, p. 62; Duymaz and Şahin, 2018, p. 121-123; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 111; Sezer, 2016, p. 43; Evans, 2019, p. 26). Gargarus is regarded as a place where ancient Greeks sacrificed to the gods in order to win the wars, to protect from the illnesses and famine and to get fertile crops. The sanctity of

Gargarus has still been alive in Anatolia. Today it is the place where one can see Edremit Gulf, Greek islands such as Lesbos and ancient cities like Assos and Troy. Having mythological importance, Gargarus is still famous for its wish trees for Anatolian people. It is an area especially famous for Turkmens as they have their rituals, offer their sacrifices and celebrate the *Hidurellez*, a local and seasonal festival (Somuncuoğlu, 2011, p. 102; 5; Uluocak, 2014, p. 62; Kumartaşlıoğlu, 2017, p. 285; Duymaz and Şahin, 2018, p. 121-123; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 111). In fact, Hıdırellez festival is believed to come from Christianity and the sanctity of Ida passed to Turks by means of Christian beliefs and customs (Hasluck, 1929, p. 100). When one considers the cultural and mythological continuity of Ida in history, this assumption is likely true.

The fertility and the sanctity of mythological Ida also reflects to an Anatolian poem by a Turkish poet, Mustafa Seyyid Sutüven. The poem "Kazdağı" clearly indicates the holiness of the mountain in Greek mythology (Sutüven, 1976, p. 162-163; Kapukaya, 2018, p. 115): "Ida is the mountain of love, love lives on the mountain, Ida is the mountain of love as much as in Ancient Greece. On this mountain, glorious poems gave Homer the wings. Here Achilles rode horses and gained so many victories. "6. Moreover, the poem Sarıkız Marbles (Sarıkız Mermerleri) by Ömer Bedreddin Uşaklı gives a brief explanation about Ida and addresses Ida itself (Turan, 2002, p. 159): "Aphrodite lived on your blue hill.... The mountains of the universe are some part of you... Homer wrote the Iliad under your pine trees...Barbarus built his ships in your green forests...,7

# 2.1. A Turkish Folk Tale About Mount Ida: Sarıkız

Among the local folk tales and legends, the most famous one is Sarıkız, which has an influence on Turkish oral literature. It is considered to have different versions in time and the researches show the versions have the same settings and mainly the same plot (Karadağ, 1996, p. 18; Duymaz and Şahin, 2008, p. 118; Aydemir, 2013, p. 65; İlhan, 2014, p. 71-78; Gök, 2021, p. 9-10). Although there are some differences in the plot, four versions have so much in common related to the main subject of the legend<sup>8</sup>.

The most popular version of the legend is mainly about a very beautiful blonde girl, called Sarıkız, who lives in Ayvacık with her father, "Cılbak Baba". After the mother dies, as Cılbak wishes they have to move to Güre. A shepherd of Ida, Cılbak went on pilgrimage and left Sarıkız in the village. The young men there wanted to have a relationship with her or marry her. The more she refuses the offers, the worse reputation she gets. Once Cılbak returns the hometown, he learns the disrepute of his daughter and takes her to the peak of Ida in order to protect her<sup>9</sup>. He knows he can not kill her so he asks her to live on the mountain with her geese. Cılbak wants to worship and he needs water, Sarkız fetches the water but it is salty. As Cılbak gets surprised, Sarıkız told that she took it from the sea. As soon as she finishes her words, she dies. Meanwhile, Cılbak he deeply regrets and realizes that she is innocent and a sainted girl. He leaves her on the hill; walks there for a while and dies there. The villagers find Sankız dead on the peak where her father leaves her. The peak is then called Sarıkız and the mountain is called Kaz, not Ida. (Karadağ, 1996, p. 18; Kalay, 1997, p. 58, Turan, 2002, p. 152, Aydemir, 2013, p. 65; Evans, 2019, p. 62-63). The importance of Sarıkız

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The translation is done by the writer herself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The translation is done by the writer herself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The first four versions have the same subject in spite of minor differences but the last version is totally different (İlhan, 2014, p. 71-76; Gök, 2021, p.16-20). There are six versions of the legend and they are mainly similar (Duymaz, 2001, p. 90-93).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> There are different ideas about Cılbak's intention. For example, Turan (2002, p. 152) and Aydemir (2013, p. 65) state that the father wants to kill Sankız so he takes her to the top of the mountain and Evans (2019, p. 62) claims that he leaves her die up there.

Peak is clearly seen in the work of Sabahattin Ali (2015, p. 115) and he informs us about Mount Kaz and states that Sarıkız Peak is the highest hill of the mountain (Koçak and Demirlikan, 2018, p. 15).

The names of places around Ida are derived from the tale of Sarıkız such as *Kaz*. Since Sarıkız was the shepherdess of the geese (Kaz) on the mountain, it was named as Mount Kaz. According to the legend which also explains the name of the neighboring village of Akçay, the villagers who are thirsty ask Sarıkız for help and Sarıkız calls out to the stream and says "*Ak çay*!", that is, "*Stream, flow! The stream suddenly starts to flow and then both the stream and the village there are named as Akçay*" (Çelik, 1988, p. 7; Turan, 2002, p. 160-161). In modern Akçay, one of the biggest avenues, Sarıkız Avenue has the monument of Sarıkız and her geese in a pool and the name Sarıkız is given to some places, kinds of food and drinks in Akçay (Turan, 2002, p. 160-161). During the Olive Festival of Akçay, Sarıkız is symbolically revived every July (Çelik, 1988, p. 7; Duymaz, 2001, p. 100). Similarly, Güre is given its name in the same way. As soon as Cılbak understands that his daughter is innocent, he pleads her to return to the village but Sarıkız refuses it and says "*I am slandered there. May those men be güre and the women be widow.*" Then the village becomes to be known as "*Güre*" (Ataman, 1986, p. 32-36; Duymaz, 2001, p. 99) Furthermore, one of the peaks of Ida that is believed to have the tomb of Sarıkız is called "*Sarıkız Peak*" and the other peak on the mountain that is considered to have the tomb of her father, is named as "Babatepe" (Sakaoğlu, 1976, p. 103-104; Kurç, 1982, p. 65-66; Duymaz, 2001, p. 100; Evans, 2019, p. 61).

The Turkish and Islamic beliefs around Ida and Sarıkız are extremely striking. These beliefs are generally of Alevi and Bektashi origin. Alevis and Tahtacı Turkmens are claimed to visit the tomb of Sarıkız. These visits are known to be performed in August per year (Balcıoğlu, 1937, p. 87; Boratav, 1984, p. 228-229; Karadağ, 1996, p. 18; Kalay, 1997, p. 58-59; Baha Said Bey, 2000, p. 135; Önal, 2003, p. 111; Duymaz and Şahin, 2008, p. 121; Aydemir, 2013, p. 65, Evans, 2019, p. 61). It is also claimed that Alevi Turks consider the tomb of Sarıkız as "*Kaaba*" and the visitors as "*hajji*" (Balcıoğlu, 1937, p. 87; Duymaz, 2001, p. 96; Koçak and Demirlikan, 2018, p. 15). One of the highlights of this festival is a pilgrimage to the Tomb of Sarıkız where the visitors make vows by tying *yazmalar*, the colourful embroidered cotton scarves traditionally used by Turkmen women, to the loose stones of the enclosure. The enclosure of the festival becomes a riot of color, with the walls swathed and the flagpole swaddled in scarves of every color (Evans, 2019, p. 61).

It is widely believed that Turkmens visit the tomb just for a wish or an offering and they have some rituals (Kalay, 1997, p. 59; Duymaz, 2001, p. 97; Turan, 2002, p. 154; Önal, 2003, p. 11; Gök, 2021, p. 30). During the 2-day visits, first, the tomb is visited, the prayers are said and the wishes are made. Then, in order to find out that the wishes will come true or not, the visitors use the pebbles around the tomb. These pebbles are regarded to be the stones that Sarıkız has collected on the mountain before she dies (Kalay, 1997, p. 58; Turan, 2002, p. 153)<sup>10</sup>. As a result, they are extremely important for the people who come for their wishes. After the wishes are made, people remove the stones and if they see some insects like ladybug, it means that their wishes will come true. Finally, the ceremony is ended with Mawlid and the public meals such as "Asure and Keskek". This ceremony is today carryout out by the municipality of Güre (Kalay, 1997, p. 58, Turan,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> According to a different version of the legend, the stones that Sarıkız uses to build a yard for geese and this yard is called" the yard of geese" ("Kaz Avlusu"). Kartalçimen Fountain is in this yard (Turan, 2002, p.153).

2002, p. 154-157)<sup>11</sup>. Sarıkız Hill is also visited by the women who wish to have a baby. For the wish, the women have to take a stone from the ground near the tomb by the foot without touching the hands. While getting the stone, they make their wishes and vows; they move backwards and leave there. If their wishes come true, they have to come back there with that stone and the vow.; throw the stone; sacrifice the vow and give the people to eat (Yaşar, 2018, p. 36). However, Karadağ (1996, p. 19) and Turan (2002, p. 151) claim that there is another Sarıkız, who was a daughter of an Ottoman Sultan and died as a child. Her tomb in Ovesli becomes a place where the women who hope to have a baby come and make a wish.

Today, Sarıkız is mentioned in some Turkish poems. Ömer Bedreddin Uşaklı addresses Mount Ida and mentions Sarıkız in his poem Sarıkız Marbles (Sarıkız Mermerleri) (Turan, 2002, p. 159): "Your cliffs cracked because of the sorrow of Sarıkız...You wind is blowing by commemorating Sarıkız. Her voice is crying in your rocks and water... I want a piece of marble on which the tears of Sarıkız fell off." In addition, Aşık Bektaş Gazeloğlu mentions Sarıkız as the sultan of the sainted, the daughter of Fatima (Turan, 2002, p. 160).

# 2.1.1. Sarıkız: Beauty, Purity and Water

Sarıkız has some similarities with Aphrodite and Artemis. Sarıkız is depicted as a very beautiful girl who lives on Ida. The beauty of her is resembled to the goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite. (Duymaz, 2001, p. 89; Aydemir, 2013, p. 64; Gök, 2021, p. 21, 33). Aphrodite is also known as her love affairs. In contrast, Sarıkız is referred as innocent and sainted. In spite of many attempts of young men, Sarıkız never accepts the offers and manages to preserve her honor. From this respect, Sarıkız is resembled to Artemis, who is famous for her purity and benevolence. Despite her wow of chastity, Artemis is slandered owing to unchastity (Yolcu, 2020, p. 77; Gök, 2021, p. 34-35). Despite all the slanders and villainies, Sarıkız continues to live without any sense of revenge and so survives with her purity, as well (İlhan, 2014, p. 79; Yolcu, 2020, p. 77; Gök, 2021, p. 34-35). Both Sarıkız and Artemis are also referred as helpful characters in the myths (Gök, 2021, p. 35). Sarıkız is also considered to resemble to Aphrodite in terms of her hair as she is referred as "Golden Aphrodite". In fact, although the hair of the girl is not blond, she is named as Sarıkız. Researches around the region indicate that while the girl is leaving the village, the children throw eggs upon her, so her hair turns to yellow color and so she starts to be called like that (Gök, 2021, p. 32-33).

Another common motif between Sarıkız and Aphrodite is the reference of water. There is a strong relationship between Aphrodite and the sea as Aphrodite is believed to be born out of the sea foam (Ant. Gra. 9.485, CP. 23, 441; Apollodorus, I. III. 1-2; Ovid, IV. 65). Similarly, Sarıkız has a close relation with the sea. On Ida, as her father Cılbak wants to perform an ablution, Sarıkız reaches her hand down from the top of the mountain towards the sea below and takes the seawater easily. In fact, it is impossible to fetch the water from the sea for a person who is on the peak of a mountain. This performance makes the father trust her and her saintness spreads throughout the region of Ida (Karadağ, 1996, p. 18; Kalay, 1997, p. 58, Duymaz, 2001, p. 95; Turan, 2002, p. 152; İlhan, 2014, p. 79; Gök, 2021, p. 33). After this oracle, she becomes a healer figure in the region. This curative figure is closely associated with the water cult. This water oracle is a common motif in Anatolian epics, Quran and hadiths (Ocak, 1984, p. 71-94; Duymaz, 2001, p. 96).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The main meal is the sacrifice meat for the public endowment (Boratav, 1984, s. 228; Turan, 2002, p.158).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The translation is done by the writer herself.

Bringing water from the sea as an oracle, Sarıkız is regarded as the "master of the waters" and that is, she rules the water. In Anatolian legends, she is widely related to water and the hot springs<sup>13</sup>. In a folk tale, she is described as a beautiful girl living with her mother and her cows. One day, she falls asleep while she is feeding her cows and she hears a noise in her dream. The noise asks the question "Will I come crying or babbling?" She answers the question by saying, "Come bursting." Then, the rocks crackles and water pulses from the mountain. The waters take Sarıkız away, she vanishes and comes out to be the hot spring here and becomes a healing source of the region<sup>14</sup> (Sakaoğlu, 1976, p. 171-172; Boratav, 1984, p. 50; Duymaz, 2001, p. 94-95). In another tale that is told by the local people of Gülpınar, a girl with long blonde hair went out of a bath called "Çamaşırhane" in Çoklum Stream and walked towards the Sarıkız Peak (Kaplan, Şen and Günaydın, 2016, p. 1105).

Near Sarıkız Peak, there is a strong spring water that single girls drink on purpose. It is believed that the girls who would like to get married have to drink that water, wash their hands or have a bath and their wishes will come true (Boratav, 1984, p. 228; Turan, 2002, p.155). Sarıkız is still believed to live in water and the children of Turkmens are known to pray for the "almighty streams" in order to recover from their stomachache or nuisance (Duymaz, 2001, p. 96). Moreover, in Çanakkale and Balıkesir, the children who come close to the rivers or the sea and who bend to the wells are urged by using the name of Sarıkız: "Do not come too close, Sarıkız is there and she pulls you up!" (İlhan, 2014, p. 79). This saying becomes a proverb nearby Ida and is used as warn for careless children. These beliefs may be based on the stream called "Blonde Stream" (Sarı Çay) (the ancient Rhodios), which passes through the center of Çanakkale (ancient Abydos) (Akarca, 1978, p. 2; Evans, 2019, p. 83).

# 2.1.2. Sarıkız: Mountain

Mountain has always been a respected and sacred phenomenon and it has become a cult for the Turks (Roux, 1994, p. 127; Önal, 2003, p. 100-101; Çevik, 2007, p. 183). In all the versions of the tale, Sankız has always been in relation with the mountain (Roux, 1994, p. 127; Duymaz, 2001, p. 96; İlhan, 2014, p. 79; Gök, 2021, p. 24). From the childhood to the youth, Sankız or her father are on or around Ida. The father is the shepherd and Sankız is the shepherdess of her geese on Ida. It is the reason why the name of *Kaz* is given to the mountain. Indeed, Sankız's flock of geese are also important in this regard, since in Turkmen culture goose has a range of divine associations on account of the belief that, as the highest flying bird species, it is the the only animal that is capable of communication with the god (Evans, 2019, p. 64).

Ida is the place where Cılbak chooses to kill her daughter or protect her and the mountain motif is evident in terms of her saintliness. Sarıkız performs the signs of miracles; her father refuses to kill her and realizes that she is not a normal human but has a supernatural power. That is, Sarıkız proves her saintliness and innocence on Ida. Among the Shamanist Turks, the mountain is one of the sacrificial places for the gods. Mountain is regarded as a holy place because of its majesty and closeness to the sky. In the mythological documents of the Turks, one could easily find out so much data indicating the mountain is a cult. The rituals and sacrifices related to the gods were carried out on the tops of the mountains. These places were considered the nearest points to the Tengri. The mountains whose tops were inside the clouds were regarded as "the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> For Sankız springs, see Marini, 1972, p. 520.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The translation is carried out by the writer herself.

residence of the Tengri" and thus there were some rules in order to reach these mountains and hunt there (Roux, 1994, p. 124-128; Ögel, 1995, p. 430-437; Önal, 2003, p. 114; İlhan, 2014, p. 79).

It is also believed that Sarıkız lives on Ida until she dies and she helps the people in need and trouble (Kalay, 1997, p. 58; Turan, 2002, p. 151). After so many years, when her father visits to see her on Ida, he finds her with the same appearance and beauty as if she did not get older. She looks just the same exactly like she was years ago. In fact, she is considered to survive for years on Ida without any difference in her size, appearance and age. In spite of the difficulties and harsh effects of the nature, she keeps surviving on Ida. In the place of the ordeals she has, she is assigned to the saintness level (İlhan, 2014, p. 79-80). In Turkish mythology, it is mentioned that there is a reference of Sarıkız in Shaman prayers of Urenha Turks as "six blonde girls living on the rocks". It is also regarded that the Kazakh, Kirgiz and Bashkir Turks believe the soul which is in the shape of Sarıkız. The soul means a remedy for troubles and they call her whenever they are in danger or they have in difficulty (İnan, 1987, p. 262; Turan, 2002, p. 151; Duymaz, 2001, p. 94).

Similarly, a legend in Afyon presents us a rock called Sarıkız. The rock is like a statue and the face is showily dressed. This unique rock is served as an entombed saint. Having chased by infidels, Sarıkız took refuge in the cave here and was protected by the God here. Today, this entombed is visited, served food and lit candles by local people. Also, the ones who have troubles or problems look for remedies from Sarıkız rock (Tanyu, 1987, p. 109-110; Duymaz, 2001, p. 95).

# **Conclusion**

Having a very important place both in economy and geopolitics, Mount Ida became prominent in ancient history. It provided rich natural resources for the neighboring settlements. With this property, it was regarded as a very fertile place for the inhabitants. This fertility also helped the beliefs of the local people and in time it reflected to the mythology. In Greek mythology, Mount Ida was the home of Olympian gods and goddesses in Anatolia. This glorious mountain is mentioned in the works of many ancient writers. Homer's Iliad presents a thorough description of the gorgeous mountain. Since later writers often drew on Homer's descriptions, the ancient sources have a great deal of similarities in their accounts of Mount Ida. Ida becomes the symbol of fertility in terms of natural resources. In Anatolia, Mount Ida (Kaz) has been continuously inhabited. It is highly respected as a sacred place in Anatolia. As a striking example for intercultural effects of the holy places since pre-historic times, Ida may be regarded as the leading one in spite of its local properties. As the mountain cult is highly remarkable in Turkish culture, Ida serves the cult place for the local people, Turkmens. This significance appears in the folk tales in the region. It is also noteworthy that these legends contributed to the Turkification of Mount Ida and its surroundings, which have an important place in Greek mythology. *Sarıkız* is the symbol of both the mountain and water cult of Turks just as in Greek myths. It still reflects the beliefs, wishes, hopes of the local people.

In Greek mythology, the gods and the goddesses show the divinity of Ida but in Anatolian mythology, just a human being, Sankız displays it. The divinity which starts to appear in Iliad, has been preserved in Anatolia among the cultures and has continually survived until today. The rituals of Turkmens in the region are considered to be passed by the Christians. Thus, there are some assumptions about the origin of Mount Ida and its mythological continuity. However, our current knowledge is not yet sufficient to say how these stories and the sanctity of Mount Ida were perpetuated. The Christian Greeks who were already living in the region when the Turks arrived may have passed on various narratives about Mount Ida to the Turks. Another suggestion is that the Turks may have adapted an already existing story to Mount Ida. Probably, the

Turks might have combined their cult belief with the Islamic traditions. In fact, their oral tradition must have formed via the experiences, intercultural effects and the religious beliefs of local people. In addition, even though there has been so many Turkish studies on this local mountain, it is confirmed that there is still a lack of the research and studies dealing with folk tales of the region. Our suggestion is that the folk tales and legends of the region should be more in order to understand its mythological continuity better. In addition, the studies carried out on the north-west of Anatolia are mainly in Turkish. The legends that now seem to be local may be more international with the help of foreign written sources and studies. Finally, it would be better for the increased number of researches and studies on the Edremit and Balıkesir region should inspire for the others in all the regions of Turkey and thus, we could find out more about the mythological and historical continuity of the folk tales, myths and legends of the ancient civilizations and modern ones.

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