

At the Peak of Mount Judi

Tur Kardu (Mount Judi) has a prestigious place in Syriac culture, one of the branches of Eastern culture.

Like Turabdin and Tur Izlo (Mount Bagok), it is a very ancient mountain that has inspired Syriac culture throughout history.

Climbing a mountain in any part of the world is like going back in time.

But climbing Kardu / Mount Judi means ascending to the apex of humanity and the history of civilization.

For me, Kardu / Mount Judi is the womb of humanity.

After two very productive days of work at the 1st International Turabdin Symposium hosted by the University of ŞIRNAK, we went up to the Sefine region on Mount Judi with scientists from Turkey and abroad.

On May 3, 2023, we visited those mystical peaks.

Although I really wanted more, that was the only day I could climb Kardu / Mount Judi.

Movement always contains tremors and motion.

Life begins and often continues with tremors.

But let us not forget that where there is movement, there is motion. There is being.

We climbed Mount Judi with our hearts pounding, shaking, and excited, with inner tremors.

A spiritual serenity atop Mount Judi replaced the savor of the feast of knowledge at the symposium.

I was very excited during the climb to the Sefine region, just like the Syriac academics from abroad.

Those peaks had so much to say. I could hear their whispers...

Those peaks were full of mystical energy. Although the air was instructive, it was never patronizing.

It was humble, natural, and sincere.

It seemed to be inviting us to a sincere heart that cultivates a forgiving, confronting sublimity.

It was like we were welcomed with an all-encompassing kindness on a cozy cushion, asking, "**Where have you been until now?**".

Those peaks were shaking our hands and embracing us with genuine sincerity.

Everyone in the group saw and felt that holy place. Everybody listened to that wonderful stillness.

But I looked and saw it differently from everyone else.

Although reading the serenity of those peaks that breathe life into the surroundings was very challenging, I felt differently.

In Syriac culture, Mount Judi is known by the name of Kardu.

The name Kardu comes from ancient Akkadian/Assyrian, one of the ancient branches of Syriac.

Just like the neighboring Gabar mountain, the name "**KARDU**" means "**valiant, strong, brave.**"

According to church records, the Kardu region was converted to Christianity in the 4th century thanks to the work of the disciples of Mar Awgin.

For this reason, a monastery was built way back then on the summit known today as the Sefine region of Mount Judi.

This monastery was given the name of Saint Mor Jacob.

Church history (especially hagiographical works) speaks a lot about the metropolitans/episcopates assigned to the Kardu region, the monasteries built in the Kardu mountains, the Syriac literature produced in the foothills, and the ascetics, masters, and clergy of Kardu origin.

This shows that, at one time, the Kardu region was like a flowing river for Syriac culture.

I think it would be useful to get acquainted with some of the monasteries on the slopes of Kardu / Mount Judi, the remains of which have been left by that river and are mentioned in historical records and which were generally named after the disciples of Saint Mar Awgin.

As far as I have ascertained from various sources and local elders, these monasteries are as follows:

Kamul Monastery, Gallo (Galala) Monastery, Mor Basima Monastery, Mor Adona Monastery, Mor Yuzadak Monastery, Mor Abdisho Monastery, Mor Ishok Monastery... among others....

We don't need to be the same to see the good/beauty in other cultures and show understanding. I think being able to see the truth in every culture will help broaden our perspective.

Scientific symposiums are like archaeological excavations. They bring to light new, hidden information.

They process, refine, and present their knowledge.

The main thing is conscious intention and sincere awareness.

The words we say and the actions we take either weaken and kill that intention and awareness, or they strengthen and make it happen!

I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the organization of the 1st International Turabdin Symposium, including the esteemed Prof. Dr. Abdurrahim Alkış, Rector of Şırnak University.

Best regards...

Yusuf Beğtaş

President of Syriac Language-Culture and Literature Association / Mardin