



## Turkish Salvage Project

*Leon Marfoe*

During the summer of 1982, a fairly brief third field season was carried out at the site of Kurban Höyük, in southeastern Turkey. Unlike the previous season, very little of the work carried out in the field was devoted to excavation. Instead, most of our effort was concentrated on clearing the backlog of artifacts that had accumulated during the extended 1981 season, and on the tedious task of bookkeeping.

As a result, only a few short weeks in the already brief eight week season was spent onsite. We decided to limit our digging to solving specific problems raised the previous season, which meant that one major area of excavation (area C) was not worked in 1982. The two deep soundings, still one of our higher priorities, were continued because we were anxious to know what the transition between the earlier Early Bronze Age and the later Early Bronze Age levels was like. Based on our 1981 work, we suggested that there was a gap between the two periods of occupation. This was confirmed in 1982, and it seems fairly clear that the town that was formed around 2500 BC grew rapidly from as yet poorly known and certainly inconspicuous beginnings.

At the top of the larger southern mound, we continued to investigate the complex belonging to the end of the Early Bronze Age in the hopes of understanding the nature of the buildings further. A number of rooms were cleared in this attempt, many of which appear to be domestic quarters. In a different sector of this area, part of a street was also cleared.

The main focus of our 1982 work was on the finds, however, and here we hoped to process and analyze at least a portion of each major class of material found. Here we were particularly successful, and our multi-talented team did a remarkable job of catching up on our backlog. Guillermo Algaze, aided by Ron Gorny, were able to analyze virtually all our pottery so that only about 2-3 weeks of work remain. When you consider that this meant individually recording 80-90,000 sherds out of over 100,000—it's almost the archaeological version of mass production. Just as important, it is pretty clear now that we can identify chronological changes and spatial differences in the ceramics reflecting not only subtle changes in style, but also in activities.

Likewise, the study of our chipped stone has progressed so that we can begin to identify where specific uses of different tools were carried out, and possibly what was being done. For the bone, it would appear that certain animals were being slaughtered in the courtyards of the lower town, and their waste products simply dumped in the street. Although the study of our botanical remains remains cursory, it now seems quite likely that there may have been a deforestation of our region taking place in the 3rd millennium.

As before, our survey has continued apace with the work both onsite and in camp. This year, much of the work was concentrated on digging test pits, taking phosphate samples, and investigating sherd scatters across the fields. However, we were still able to survey areas that had not been covered in previous seasons. One of the discoveries found late in the season last year was a Neolithic site possibly dating to the 6th millennium, but partially covered by a large Medieval urban sprawl emanating from a nearby mound. The questions posed by a site of such an enigmatic period are of course intriguing and our hope is that something can be done there before the reservoir is flooded. But this, of course, is true with a number of other sites that we have found.

Having just returned from ten days in Istanbul, where I attended a splendidly organized symposium on the Anatolian civilizations, the word is out that there are only two more years before the valley is flooded. At the least, this may mean that a diversionary dam meant to send water through a tunnel onto the Harran plain will be completed in late 1984. If so, we will be directly affected since our site is located directly in front of the diversionary channel. So as I write this, I am also preparing for our penultimate campaign scheduled to begin in two weeks. Time is now really short, and we shall be attempting to do a task originally scheduled for several more years.