



Turkish Salvage Project

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In the summer of 1984, we carried out the fifth and last season of excavations at Kurban Hoyuk. Since the 1983 season had been a very successful, full scale excavation season, a large backlog of unanalyzed artifacts remained to be processed. In addition, both the scheduled completion of the preliminary dam and tunnel in 1985, and the appropriation and compensation of the village lands during 1984, made the processing of backlogged artifacts imperative. The 1984 campaign was consequently a study season, with excavations undertaken only to clarify problems left over from preceding seasons.

One focus for the excavations was the completion of the sequence on the south mound, particularly the critical transition between the end of the Early Bronze Age and the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age. Under the supervision of Michael Ingraham, who has worked on this trench for the entire five seasons of fieldwork, we also completed the excavation of the level associated with our Early Bronze Age "fortification" wall. This work thus completed our sampling of each phase encountered in the long sequence of occupation at Kurban.

On top of the south mound, the final operation was to clear a courtyard which had been partially excavated in 1983. Bruce Verhaaren, who had supervised this area since 1981, managed to reach the floors in a few short days of work, and found a large number of broken vessels. A second objective was to find the eastern edge of the Early Bronze/Middle Bronze settlement. Unfortunately, extensions of the excavations in this direction failed to find that edge, although we did find a cist tomb of the period which had been robbed out in antiquity. Instead, the edge of the settlement was found quite by accident in another area, which was being dug for another purpose.

This area was on the east slope of the mound, where we had started digging in 1980. Under the supervision of Pati Wattenmaker, we reopened this area with the hope of getting a larger sampling of domestic structures through horizontal excavation. Although we were interested mainly in the Mid/Late Early Bronze Age (ca. 2300 B.C.), the first level that we found was in fact that of the Early Bronze/Middle Bronze Transition, demonstrating that the settlement of this period



Area A step trench. Remains dated to the middle of the Early Bronze Age.

extended down the slope. Below that level, we then found the expected Mid/Late Early Bronze Age settlement and were able to clear part of a street and its associated houses. Also partly by accident, this level seems to date to a subperiod for

which we had little evidence, and therefore provides us with a larger corpus of materials for reconstructing the sequence.

Most of the effort, however, was placed on analysis, since we hoped to process as much of the backlog as possible before moving any remaining artifacts to the local museum. The museum had very little room available for storage, and the dig house was to be given up at the end of the season. No more survey work was undertaken during the season, and Tony Wilkinson was able to concentrate on studying the surface remains that he had collected in past seasons. Despite an enormous quantity of pottery too, Guillermo Algaze was able to record virtually all the ceramics that we had dug up, an extraordinary amount in the brief time that was available to us. We also finished the groundstone and objects, and made good inroads into the chipped stone. We were fortunate to be able to send the botanical and faunal remains back to the U.S.

At the end of the season, we had managed to reduce our study collections to about 130 boxes, and these were transported to the museum. Finally, we closed up shop, with the bulk of the dig supplies acquired by the museum (by Turkish law), and a small amount donated to Bosphorous University.

Five seasons of fieldwork entailing 27 weeks of excavation now permit us to give a fairly good outline of the history of the site and our region. In December, Bruce Verhaaren and Guillermo Algaze took on the task of organizing a symposium in conjunction with the ASOR meetings in Chicago, held at the Palmer House hotel. There, the staff members gave progress reports on the work that had been done so far. These reports have now been submitted together as an interim report which will be published shortly by our Dutch colleagues at the Netherlands Archaeological and Historical Institute in Istanbul.

Our last remaining task is publication. Although it was our intention to have the first two of three volumes ready by the end of this summer, it now appears that the survey volume will be delayed until the Autumn. The second volume is still on schedule, and we are optimistic that by next year, at this time, it will be in print.

Finally, our last report would be remiss in not acknowledging the Oriental Institute members who have been so supportive of the project over its relatively brief history, and of the colleagues both in this and other countries who have extended their aid to us. The list would be too long for this report, but to all of them, we hope that our initial publications will serve as an indication of our gratitude for the trust that they placed in us.