I am grateful to the Archaeological Research Facility, UC Berkeley and the Stahl Endowment Fund for their support of my work with the Upper Tigris Archaeological Research Project (UTARP), founded and directed by Prof. Bradley J. Parker of the University of Utah. Since 2000, UTARP has excavated at the site of Kenan Tepe, a 4.5 hectare multi-period mound located within the Ilısu dam area approximately twenty kilometers west of the Tigris-Batman confluence in Diyarbakır Province, southeast Turkey. The site is composed of a high mound rising 32 meters above the river valley and a lower town that has been heavily eroded by the changing course of the Tigris River. Excavations have revealed that Kenan Tepe was occupied over five broad, non-consecutive periods ranging from ‘Ubaid (ca. 4650 BCE), Late Chalcolithic (ca. 3650-3000 BCE), Early Bronze (ca. 3000-2890 BCE) Middle Bronze (ca. 2890-2000 BCE) (con’t. on back)
1800 BCE), and Early Iron (ca. 1050-900 BCE). Work at Kenan Tepe has dovetailed well with UTARP’s broader research goals to elucidate the nature of ancient imperialism, colonialism and culture contact in an area that was essentially a frontier zone between the centralized states of southern Mesopotamia and the less centralized, but nonetheless complex, communities of southeast Anatolia during much of ancient Near Eastern history.

During the 2008 season UTARP team members processed over 15,000 ceramic sherds, produced over 300 drawings, and took nearly 4,000 artifact photographs. Analysis of the human remains and ground stone was completed, while intensive work continued with the chipped stone assemblage. I was also able to finalize my dissertation research that has focused on the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age settlements at Kenan Tepe. Specifically I take a household archaeological approach to investigate domestic economies—the daily production and consumption activities of households—and how they reflect socio-cultural developments in the larger community and/or region. In order to chart these trends in household economies, I look at multiple lines of evidence for activities such as craft production, food preparation, and trade that are inherent in both macro and microartifacts (<1 cm in size) excavated within and surrounding domestic spaces. Thanks to the Stahl Endowment, I was able to further analyze these important data in the summer of 2008 including microarchaeological samples collected in previous seasons.

Large thanks also go to UTARP team members for their hard work and enormous stamina during our intense month-long season: Kristen Butler, Lynn Dodd, Elizabeth Healey, David Hopwood, Marie Hopwood, Jason Kennedy, Bradley Parker, Ashley Sands, Mila Tzvetkova-Hover, Barış Uzel, and Jonathan Vidar. I would also like to thank our government representative Suat Şahin.

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Archaeological Research Facility
2251 College Building, #1076
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-1076