

The surface of the oasis plain was taken as datum, and the position of the floor of the pits above or below this datum was determined daily. Such objects as vessels, fireplaces, and skeleton-burials were photographed *in situ*, and all fragments of pottery and bones of animals that had served the ancient inhabitants as food were, in each pit, placed in baskets which bore tags marked with the date and the name of the pit. Thus the height above the base of the mound and position in the horizontal plane of every object found was recorded. Much of the earth was sifted to save small objects.

All small objects were produced for record-entry each evening. These were simple articles, chiefly beads, whorls, small implements of flint, ornaments and implements of copper, generally wholly altered to carbonate or oxide; to these were added toward the end small, rough, terra-cotta figurines of woman and of cow or ox.

These simple objects had little beauty; the interest they aroused lay in the fact that we were unearthing cultures of a remote past and in an untouched field, far distant from the sites of classical civilization. We realized, therefore, that since the whole mound consisted of the slowly upward-growing débris of town life every object had played its part in the daily life of vanished peoples; that considered collectively, in connection with their observed positions in the column of débris (culture-strata), they formed a continuous record—precious documents of a long-continued pre-history.

The importance of considering even apparently insignificant objects as documents containing a story, and of recording their vertical and horizontal position in the column of culture-strata, became evident at every stage of the analysis of our results. It was, for instance, this procedure that enabled Professor Duerst to trace the transition of the *Bos namadicus*, pig, and sheep from the wild to the tame state and to date, in terms of stratigraphic growth of the mounds, the beginnings of domestications and the establishment of successive breeds of these animals.

Again, it was the appreciation of the potential possibilities latent in everything so recorded that caused Dr. Duerst to send to Professor Schellenberg a small porous fragment of burnt clay that was accidentally present in a bag of bones. In this apparently worthless clod that botanist found the evidence that the people of the oldest Anau settlement were cultivators of wheat and two-rowed barley; and my consequent search in our carefully labeled potsherds showed the casts and siliceous skeletons of the chaff of these cereals in pottery from the base of the mound. From this Dr. Duerst and I were able to draw independently the inference that the agricultural stage preceded domestication and the nomadic shepherd stage of civilization.