Hasanlu 1960

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As the rays of the rising sun brighten clouds above the eastern hills, the ammoniated smoke of the village fires casts a blue haze over the northern Solduz Valley. The stillness of the morning is pierced by the shrill cries of the garden watchers, cries which frighten hungry birds from the green vineyards. Big-wheeled carts drawn by ungainly water buffalo creak as loads of hay and straw make their way to winter storage. Sheep and goats bleat, stirring the dust as they go out to graze. Cattle and donkeys lend their voices to the ear as they too begin their daily search for sustenance. The village dogs, chickens, and geese add their barking, crowing, and quacking. The noise of an occasional tractor, truck, or car is the only dissonant note in this pastoral symphony that has for millenniums been a part of the life of the Solduz.

To the southeast, two men wield scythes to cut fresh green alfalfa. Others bunch and stack alfalfa that has already dried. At the nearby canal, the women and girls pound the village wash. To the north, the threshing floor is in full activity. Carts bring their burdens of unthreshed wheat and barley to be spread on the hard dry earth in great circles. From its heads the grain is trodden and beaten by plodding oxen pulling a steel-toothed implement akin to a rotary hoe. The grain is winnowed and sifted to rid it of chaff. Then the clean grain is measured for division to landlord and tenant. The straw goes to the villages for animal provender and for the preparation of dung cakes and sun-dried brick.

Tall slender poplars rise above garden walls where grapes grow to become raisins and wine. The borders of the vineyards are lined with low-growing quince trees laden with fruit. In adjoining gardens, giant green cucumbers, red tomatoes, purple eggplant, and many varieties of Persian melon are scattered. The melons are Persian because the locale is Azerbaijan in northwest Iran. The valley’s agriculture is sustained by the life-giving waters of the Gadar River flowing through a time-tested network of irrigation canals. Only on the slopes of the surrounding hills and low mountains are meager crops of wheat and barley supported by direct precipitation. Over the hills to the north, half an hour away, lies salty, landlocked Lake Urmia.

Our vantage point is the long-deserted citadel of an ancient city whose name is still unknown; the time is August 1960. The smoke comes from the fires of Hasanlu, the village just east of the tepe, or mound, the village that lends its name to a once proud fortress.

The circumference of the base of the citadel

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ON THE COVER: Samarkand vessels found in Nishapur.
Ewer, ix-x century. Anonymous Loan, L56.34.6.
Bowl, x century. Inscribed in Arabic: “Forbearance is at first bitter to the taste, but in the end sweeter than honey. Blessing.” Rogers Fund, 56.44
Above: A modern threshing floor near Hasanlu
Below: The entrance to the burned building excavated at Hasanlu in 1960
is an easy fifteen minutes' walk. The top of the citadel towers eighty-two feet—the debris of human occupation—above the floor of the surrounding valley.

In the eighteen- by sixteen-mile expanse of the Solduz, of which Hasanlu dominates the northern portion, lie forty mounds, small mounds which for the most part are the only remains of pre-Bronze Age (about 5000—3000 B.C.) villages. When Hasanlu was at the zenith of its power in the ninth century B.C., these mounds had long since been deserted, and the population of the valley radiated from a few larger towns to perform its labors. Nagadeh, the largest modern town in the valley, some seven miles to the south of Hasanlu, was, like the latter, one of these larger centers of political and economic administration. Intermittently, near or on many of the forty mounds, villages have stood within the past thousand years. Even today, the Solduz Valley has scarcely an ancient tepe which does not have a modern village counterpart in close proximity. In the case of Nagadeh the modern town rises on and around the ancient mound.

As little as thirty years ago, however, the tepe of Nagadeh was deserted. To the east of Hasanlu, Pisdeli, to the southeast, Hajji Firuz, and to the southwest, Dalma—all small present-day villages within easy seeing distance of Hasanlu—serve as reminders of the very old and the modern settlement patterns, for each lies near an ancient tepe. The village distribution in the valley five thousand years ago was not unlike that of today. Either precipitation was more plentiful long ago, or the Gadar, by means of canals, then as now made the valley green.

In such a setting as this, in the Solduz Valley between four and five thousand feet above the sea, surrounded by still higher hills and mountains, where the summer nights are cool and the high noons are blistering hot, the archaeological mission to Hasanlu labors.

The first digging at Hasanlu took place in 1936 under the leadership of Sir Aurel Stein. He worked for less than a fortnight, making trenches on the citadel slope and excavating some graves on the lower outer mound on the north. The
Iranian Archaeological Service dug other graves of the same type in the 1940s. In the spring of 1956, Mr. Robert H. Dyson, Jr. from the University Museum in Philadelphia made a ten-day sounding at Hasanlu upon the encouragement of Dr. M. T. Mostafavi, then Director of the Archaeological Service. The results of the test were most promising and resulted in a full-scale operation in the summer of 1957, a joint effort by the Iranian Archaeological Service and the University Museum. In the summers of 1958-1960 the excavations continued. In 1959 The Metropolitan Museum of Art was invited to participate, a participation made possible by the Rogers Fund. In 1960 the patronage of Mrs. Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff enabled the Museum to continue its efforts in northwest Iran.

Why was Hasanlu considered a site worthy of archaeological investigation? Its location was a great factor, for it was in an area where little serious digging had been done. Besides the small efforts just mentioned at Hasanlu itself, T. Burton Brown's excavations for six weeks in 1948 at Geoy Tepe some forty miles to the northwest had been the only other work. More decisive, however, was the fact that Hasanlu, a big tepe, had stood astride the ancient migration routes from the Caucasus down the valleys to the southern end of Lake Urmia and beyond. Where Hasanlu stands, nomads, settlers, and armies had to pass. From this point routes led in all directions: east into central Iran, southeast to Ecbatana, the capital of the Medes, south along the eastern face of the Zagros Mountains into Kurdistan and Luristan, and west through either the Kel-i-shin Pass or the Rowanduz Gorge into the plains of northern Mesopotamia. In these latter plains, at one time or another, stood Uribilum (modern Erbil), the Assyrian capitals of Assur, Nineveh, Kalhu (Nimrud), Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), and many other cities. In the early first millennium B.C., control of the Hasanlu crossroads was an important factor in local power politics. Situated in a small basin surrounded by hills and mountains, at a respectful distance from the Assyrians 160 miles to the west, the Urartians of Lake Van in eastern Anatolia 135 miles to the north-northwest, or the Medes 175 miles to the southeast, Hasanlu could not easily be dominated by its stronger neighbors. The mountain people, as rugged as the region in which they lived, resisted these greater powers with all their might.

For more than two centuries at the beginning of the first millennium B.C., a people called the Mannaeans maintained a precarious existence in the region that extended south from Lake Urmia into Kurdistan. Hasanlu served as one of their fortresses in their struggle for survival. In the late ninth century B.C., however, it was sacked and burned by an enemy whose identity remains unknown. Archaeologists always take delight in such a circumstance, because swift defeat and a subsequent great conflagration leave no time for orderly evacuation either of the inhabitants or their belongings. The skeletons of people killed by the onslaught or crushed by the collapse of the buildings, plus all their durable personal property—jewelry, weapons, tools, and noninflammable furnishings for their homes and public buildings—unless disturbed by later dwellers on the same site, remain where they were when the fire finished its work. The untimely death of the Hasanlu citadel is the good fortune of the Museum of Ancient Iran, the University Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum.

Although Hasanlu is best known for the burned stratum of the ninth century B.C., the tepe had its beginnings some three thousand to thirty-five hundred years earlier. A well dug in 1960 in the west central sector of the citadel in a depression thirty-odd feet below the mound's high point testifies to the ancient habitation of the site. A professional well digger from the modern village of Hasanlu protested when he came to inspect the proposed well location: “I

Fig. 1. Burial from the lower outer mound at Hasanlu, excavated in 1959
cannot guarantee to strike water from the top of this high place.”

“But we are not interested in water.”

“What other reason is there for requesting my services?”

“We want only potsherds. We wish to know how far down it is to clean soil where human beings have not lived.”

Unconvinced, he replied, “Well, all right—but I cannot guarantee water!”

Down he went for fifty-seven feet while men on the surface hoisted the results of his digging to the top—dirt and potsherds in the sequence that they had been buried in the earth through the centuries. At last his task was finished, but not because he had reached virgin soil. He had struck the water that he could not guarantee. In fact when he halted his labors the water was up to his waist! Although he did not reach virgin soil, the potsherds coming from the lowest level are dated tentatively, by comparison with known pottery types from this and other areas, to about 4500 B.C.

About the strata below and earlier than the burned level of the ninth century B.C. little is known, because the amount of digging at these depths at Hasanlu has been infinitesimal. About levels after the ninth century (and therefore higher in the mound) more has been learned. Building plans have been recovered for three later strata, but the artifacts discovered were few. It is from the burned level when the Hasanlu citadel was attacked and razed by fire that the excavators have learned most.

What were the ninth century inhabitants, the Mannaeans, like? Apart from the excavations, the written records of the Assyrians and the Urartians provide our only clues. In Assyrian annals the Mannaeans are first mentioned in the reign of Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.), when Assyria was looking eastward. Under Menua (810-781 B.C.) the Mannaeans first appear in Urartian records. Their last appearance in Urartu is in a record made by Rusa II (695-645 B.C.), and in Assyria in one by Assurbanipal (668-626 B.C.). In the Bible (Jeremiah 51:27) the Mannaeans are called the Minni. According to the place and personal names found in Assyrian and Urartian texts, the Mannaeans, or at least their rulers, spoke Hurrian, a non-Semitic and non-Indo-European language with no modern language connections. In the previous millennium, Hurrian had been spoken at such places as Mari and Alalakh in Syria. The kingdom of Mitanni used the Hurrian tongue. Documents from Nuzi near Kirkuk and from the recent Danish excavations at Shemshara near Rania on the Iraq-Iran border contain many Hurrian elements. Unfortunately, from Hasanlu itself no written evidence of any kind has so far come. The Medes wiped out the separate identity of the Mannaeans in the late seventh century B.C., thus removing one more pawn from the board.

The limited skeletal remains from the burned level of the ninth century and from the graves made just prior to the fall of Hasanlu tell us a little about the physical type of the people who made up the population. In the excavations the full height of three doorways is preserved. They range from four and a half to five feet high. From
them we gather that a man who stood five feet six inches was tall. Not many of the Turkish-speaking villagers of Hasanlu are taller than that today. The most forceful reminder that the modern stature is just like that of the ancients is the height of modern village doorways. No matter what instructions are given to a carpenter in Nagadeh, he will always make a doorframe five feet six inches high! Our only recourse was to have a doorsill a foot above the floor or to suffer bruised heads in spite of the red warning signs painted over the doorways in the expedition house.

The graves on the outer mound below the citadel were opened to investigate burial customs. Each grave, usually in open earth without any kind of burial container (see Figure 1), had a complement of pots of which one was always the long-spouted variety, accompanied often by one to three or more of other types. Some of these vessels must have contained food, if an occasional mouse skeleton found inside the pots is any indicator, and others probably drink. Near the head of the deceased, sheep bones indicate that the departed at least began his journey in the next world with meat to sustain him. The dead usually were buried lying on one side, knees flexed. Skeletons of women were accompanied by bracelets, anklets, rings, beads, and headdresses; those of men by daggers and spear- and arrowheads.

From the burned level of the citadel itself comes a much wider variety of material to aid in reconstructing Mannaean life. The remains of the citadel walls and of the walls of the great public buildings testify to an impressive achievement. Of the city walls there remain only the great stone foundations, almost ten feet in width and eight in height. The stone is undressed, but laid, nevertheless, with the care required to make a substantial if not beautiful base. While most of the foundation stones are small enough for easy handling, some are great slabs and boulders. One of the largest paving stones in a courtyard was approximately thirteen feet long, three and a quarter feet wide, and eight inches thick. Some of the varieties of stone used cannot be found closer than fifteen miles from the citadel.

Stone for building purposes was valued in ancient times and still is today. Any stone cast onto the expedition dumps soon disappears into the modern village. Motor trucks come from Nagadeh to salvage any available stone for use in construction there. Re-employment of used building materials has been the practice through the ages. The stone pavement in a local village dwelling may have come from a king’s palace of long ago!

The public buildings have so far demonstrated one prevailing type (see Frontispiece). From an open courtyard one enters through a doorway the first long but narrow room; another door leads to a second such room; and the third door—the three are not perfectly aligned—brings one into a huge, once covered hall as large as forty-nine by sixty-six feet. Column bases show where the wooden supports for the roof of the pillared hall stood. Around the walls of the hall

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**Fig. 3. Tripartite sweetmeat dish. Mannaean, 1X century B.C. Height 2\(\frac{3}{8}\) inches**

Rogers Fund, 60.20.60

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**Fig. 4. Pot with tab handles. Mannaean, 1X century B.C. Height 3\(\frac{3}{8}\) inches**

Rogers Fund, 60.20.39
and the rooms are mud-brick benches, and higher tables of the same substance. In the hall are hearths and freestanding platforms. Portions of the pillared hall and of the rooms are paved with stone slabs; perhaps the parts now unpaved were robbed of their slabs in antiquity. Beneath the floor runs a stone-lined and covered drain, a distinct improvement over the modern village at the foot of the citadel.

Sun-dried mud-brick superstructures rose from the stone foundations. The big mud-bricks—fifteen by fifteen by six inches—were doubtless made in wooden frames just as they are today. A frame open at top and bottom is placed on the dry ground. Loose clay, chopped straw from the threshing floor, and water are thrown into the hole from which the clay was dug, and there trodden to a thick consistency. The mixture is placed in the frame; then the frame is removed and wet with water to prevent the next mud from sticking, and the process is repeated. When the wet bricks have dried sufficiently—and it does not take long in a hot dry climate—they are stood on edge to allow the sun to complete its work. Modern bricks, which follow the Islamic brick sizes, are much smaller than the bricks of ninth century B.C. Hasanlu.

The walls of the burned level are usually about three feet thick and in the ruins they stand in many places more than six and a half feet high. After the fire, debris filled the space between the various walls and thus preserved them from destruction by the elements or by later builders, who did no more than surface leveling before digging trenches for their own foundations. The quantity of objects found several feet above floor level in this debris is proof that second stories were customary.

Observation of present-day practices shows how little building procedures have changed through the centuries. First, a trench is dug and stones are placed in it for the foundation. The trench allows the foundation to reach firm soil below the winter frost line and at the same time abrogates the necessity of dressing and fitting the stones. On this foundation rise sun-dried-brick walls with ordinary mud for mortar. Openings are left for doors and windows. When the desired ceiling height is reached, roof beams cut from slender poplars are laid across the top.

Sticks are laid crossways over the beams, a reed mat comes next, straw or other vegetation is put on top of the mat, and then on goes the final coat of mud plaster containing chopped straw. The outside and inside walls and floors are plastered with the same mixture. The roof is sloped, and wooden drain spouts are installed on the low side. If desired, a coat of white lime plaster may be applied to inside walls. The floor may receive a coat of hard cement. These practices have varied little in thousands of years. There is no reason why they should. The materials are readily available. The thick mud-brick walls provide a type of building admirably suited to the climate—cool in the hot summers and warm in the cold winters. Maintenance, in a region where
precipitation is small, requires only an annual coat of mud and straw plaster on the roof and the outside walls.

What were the means and materials of expression, other than architecture, for Mannaean culture? Clay, stone, and wood employed in building were used for other purposes. Bone, ivory, “Egyptian blue” (a kind of devitrified glass), and the metals, iron, bronze or copper, silver, and gold, are also represented in artifacts. The objects described in the following pages were selected, for their importance and their representative character, from the collections of all three of the participating museums.

In its basic essentials, the Iranian antiquities law provides that whenever a foreign expedition is involved the Iranian Antiquities Service may choose as many as ten unique objects from those discovered during each season’s digging. The remainder of the finds is divided into two equal groups, the Antiquities Service choosing one by lot. In the case of Hasanlu, the group allotted to the two American museums is divided between them in the way most useful to the collections of each.

From clay the Mannaeans fashioned a grayware pottery usually less distinguished for its beauty than its sturdiness. A very characteristic type is the long-spouted pitcher (see Figure 2), unpainted, but with simple designs. Occasionally a tripod stand, also of terracotta, is found in conjunction with this teakettle-like vessel. Our collections also include a tripartite sweetmeat dish with three feet (Figure 3), a buff tripod pot with three handles, a vase with animal-head lug handles. From the public buildings, but never from the graves, comes a thin, burnished, and sometimes polished, grayware fabric of high quality represented by a small tab-handled pot (Figure 4). Among our sherds are a variety of animal-head handles and spouts. A limited amount of pottery, usually small pieces, is glazed. Fragments of painted and glazed wall tiles are reminiscent of those from nearby Assyria. A small glazed “ash-tray” is strikingly modern in its design.

Stone tripod dishes are not uncommon. A marble macehead and a fine alabaster jar with vertical lug handles have been recovered. Since marble and alabaster are not common local materials, either the stone or the finished products must have been imported. Stone molds for casting bronze ingots and axes have been found, but no axes or ingots to match them. Why should there be none? An accident? Were the molds heirlooms? The finest art objects in stone are cylinder seals, a few still possessing the looped bronze pin that goes through the hole in the center. Several of the scenes on the seals deal with hunting. The style is Assyrianlike, with the mutations of local artists.

Even some recognizable remains in wood, charred wood, have been recovered. In 1959 these were limited to parts of pieces of furniture.

Fig. 6. Egyptian-blue lion bowl, with the original gold leaf preserved on portions of the piece. Mannaean, IX century B.C. Teheran Museum
condition. The vase fragment (Figure 5) preserves in low relief a well-modeled ibex, or perhaps a goat, standing up to the sacred tree, a common motif in Near Eastern art. After the discovery of the one piece, a diligent search was made for the rest of the vase, but, alas, without success. From the second-floor debris came the superb lion bowl (Figure 6), use uncertain, in the form of the forequarters of a lion clutching in his outstretched paws a bowl three and a quarter inches in diameter. A hole through a short stem pierces the bowl through the wide-opened mouth of the lion. The stem back of the lion is meant to fit into some other piece. On the front of the bowl, in relief, are a pair of winged sun-god figures, Assyrian style, and on the bottom the representation of an outstretched human hand—a motif common in north Syria. The inlaid eyes of the lion and the fingernails of the hand are missing, but much of the gold leaf that covered the lion, the pair of sun-gods, and a rosette in the back of the hand remains. The quality of workmanship and the state of preservation are excellent.

Most of the objects recovered are of metal, as we should expect from the area’s reputation for fine metal craftsmen. Unfortunately, the Iron Age had already begun at Hasanlu by the ninth century. After three thousand years in the ground, iron objects are an archaeologist’s nightmare, especially if there is sufficient moisture in

**Fig. 7.** Bronze ram’s-head rhyton, with silver band and Egyptian-blue inlays. Mannaean, ix century B.C. Teheran Museum

In 1960 charred remains showed horses and riders in relief. The latter are said to be the oldest preserved wood reliefs in Iran.

Bone and ivory provided still other mediums of expression. Curious bone objects, sometimes called handles, have been discovered in quantity. No remains of blades in any material have been associated with them, although a hole does pierce the length of each piece. On the larger end are sometimes four small projections which may have served as feet or legs if the object was meant to stand. The decoration is restricted to simple geometric patterns. Bone arrowheads appear in several types.

In the debris from the second floor of the burned-level building excavated in 1960, many small fragments of carved ivory were discovered. Tons of dirt were sifted in order that no single piece might be lost. In spite of all the care, not even one complete ivory appeared. In the fragments are represented guilloche borders, horses, people, and in one a fraction of the siege of a city.

In Egyptian blue, beads, borders and inlays, cylinder seals, a fine vase fragment, and an impressive lion bowl rewarded the expedition’s endeavors. The lack of durability of Egyptian blue disqualifies it as a good cylinder seal material—or at least none of the 1960 examples was well preserved, although one from 1959 was in fine

**Fig. 8.** Bronze rhyton in the form of a horse’s head. Mannaean, ix century B.C. Teheran Museum
the soil, and there was at Hasanlu. Great quantities of iron spearheads, arrow points, daggers, bosses of many designs and sizes, buttons, nails, and rivets were found. Except for the best examples, which were saved to show types, most of the iron was discarded after drawings and statistics as to the number of types and sizes were recorded. The best art object in iron, a disk about eight inches in diameter, preserves the recognizable form of a winged horse.

Bronze (or copper—the difference can be determined only by analysis and we make no distinction here) was also a metal favored by the Mannaean. Fortunately, it stands the ravages of time better than iron. Bronze was used in various types of weapons and armor. A few spear- and arrowheads have been recovered, and daggers with bronze handles and iron blades are not uncommon. At least four types of bronze maceheads, with numerous examples of the starred mace, have been recorded. The most rewarding armor finds were helmets of two different kinds: crested and pointed. The four crested helmets (two very poorly preserved) may be divided into two groups: with bronze crest and cloth or leather cap, and with bronze crest and bronze cap. Each type presumably had metal cheekpieces, of which one set in bronze and one in iron are preserved. One of the crested helmets with metal cap had an elaborate geometric design on the crest and snipes on the cap. The crest of one of the helmets preserves traces of cloth still recognizable. The pointed helmets are very much alike. One is more gracefully shaped, perhaps only because it was not flattened in the earth like the other. Both are very reminiscent of the pointed helmets of Urartu and Assyria.

Bronze strips with punched designs, perhaps fastened to leather and used as belts, bronze bosses, buttons, and rivets appeared in masses. Some bronze strips had iron rivets; some iron strips had bronze rivets. Shallow bronze fluted bowls and one ovoid bowl of a heavier bronze were found. A single bronze plaque in repoussé shows a mighty man, like the Mesopotamian Gilgamesh, stabbing one lion with a dagger in his right hand while holding another lion by the tail with his left hand. This piece had an iron loop attached.

The most outstanding bronze piece found in 1959 was a rhyton in the form of a ram’s head (Figure 7) with eyes, eyebrows, and strips above the nostrils inlaid in Egyptian blue and perhaps another material. Just below the rim of the cup was a silver band containing rosettes and animals. The ram’s horns were also originally covered with silver. In 1960 two other rhyta were recovered. The first, in the shape of a calf’s head, is in a deplorable state of preservation; the second, of a horse (Figure 8), while broken, can become a fine exhibition piece in the hands of a skilled restorer. The modeling of the head, the face and nostrils, and the mane is most sensitive. A comparable but more stylized example is reported from the Urartean center Karmir Blur in Soviet Armenia.

On the floor in the middle of a doorway, where it had probably been discarded in the rush to escape the burning of the city, was a shallow thin bowl about fifteen inches in diameter. A pair of striking bird handles of heavy cast bronze was riveted to it. The thin-gauge bowl, beset by disintegration, did not survive the rough journey to Teheran, but one of the bird handles, since cleaned at the Museum to reveal its delicate chased decoration, is shown in Figure 9.

Forty-four female skeletons were found in the second long and narrow room of the 1960 burned
building and the great pillared hall adjoining; the women had obviously been killed on the spot, whether by weapons or by falling masonry and timbers we do not know. Among the skeletons were fifty-eight bronze lion pins (see Figure 10). The lions range in length from a little more than an inch to more than four inches, and each of them originally had an iron pin projecting from three to six inches from its hindquarters. The iron pins were placed in molds and the lion figures were cast around them. Several of the pieces have a small bronze chain running to a bronze loop near the tail. The lions are stylized to the highest degree and in no way display the sensitive realism of the horse rhyton. What was the purpose of these lion pins, and why were they found with the female skeletons? Perhaps they were used to fasten and to adorn heavy garments. Or might they have been votive pins stuck into the walls of the rooms?

In silver and gold the finest pieces were found in the 1958 season. A silver cup with gold appliqué figures and the now famous Hasanlu golden bowl in the Iranian museum—an heirloom older than the ninth century B.C.—have been the subject of much study and discussion. The 1960 harvest of gold objects was small, of silver ones nil. The gold consisted of five simple punched necklace pendants; a piece of polished banded agate 1½ by 1½ by ¾ inches, bound on the edges in barite, one edge faced with gold and showing a beaded design; and a cloisonné knife handle with the figure of a bearded warrior in the center.

From the skeletal remains we have gleaned information about the physical type of the Mannaeans inhabiting of Hasanlu. The architectural remains and the artifacts have added a great deal to our knowledge of this little-known region of western Asia. The written records of the Assyrians to the west and of the Urartians to the north and west frequently mention military campaigns against the Mannaeans. Since the material culture of the Mannaeans in many of its features compares not unfavorably with that of those same Assyrians and Urartians, is it conceivable that the Mannaeans had no scribes to record their business transactions and their political activity? Even if they wrote for the most part on perishable materials, did they write nothing on some more permanent medium like clay or stone? So far, no written evidence has been recovered at Hasanlu, but may this not be accidental? One recalls that Professor Mallowan on the third day of his excavations at Chagar Bazar in North Syria was within twenty feet of a hoard of cuneiform tablets which he was not destined to find until three years later!

After more than four seasons of digging at Hasanlu, the ancient name of the city is still unknown. The greatest and most valuable treasure for which the excavators hope is an archive. So far, operations have been limited, with the exception of some digging on the outer mound, to the southwest quarter of the citadel. Will the northwest quarter, the quarter most likely for future excavations, produce the archive? No one knows—and in those three words lies much of the fascination of archaeological endeavor.