

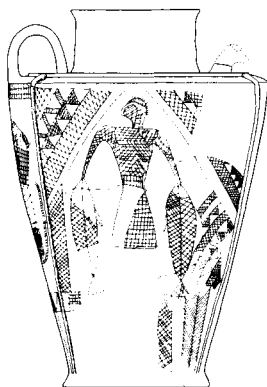
A R C H E O L O G Y

Helene J. Kantor

Chogha Mish and Chogha Bonut

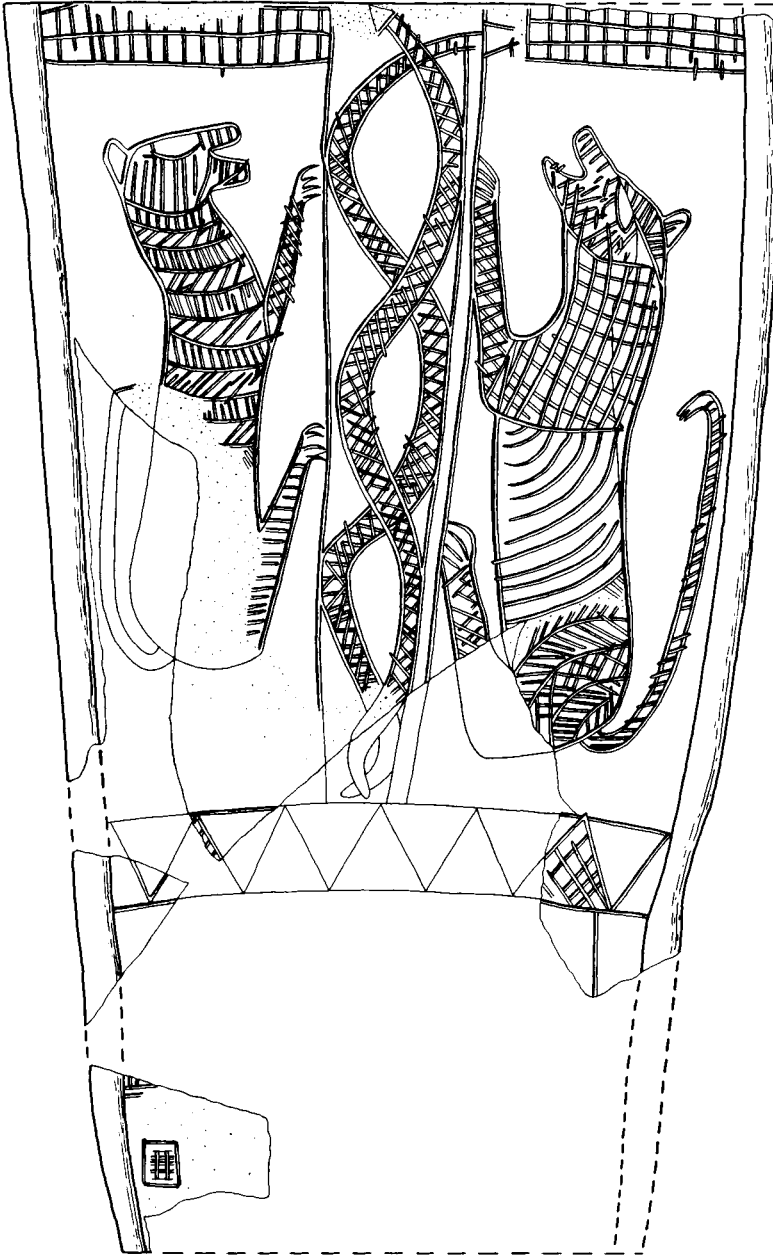
International circumstances again prevented field work at Chogha Mish and Chogha Bonut during 1979–80. Fortunately for the future of the project, the expedition house, with its equipment and accumulation of artifacts awaiting study, is under the protection of a trustworthy guard, who began work with the expedition in its first season, 1961. In the meantime, in Chicago, the preparation for publication, both of the forthcoming volume covering in detail the first five seasons at Chogha Mish and of other reports, has been carried on. Among the latter was a report on the second season (1978) of excavations at Chogha Bonut sent to the Iranian Centre of Archaeological Research in accordance with the terms of our excavation permit.

One of the main tasks this year has been the preparation for the forthcoming volume of a descriptive index of the loci, that is, the individual areas and architectural structures excavated. Such a section was not included in the original manuscript since it was planned as a preliminary report (Oriental Institute Communication). However, the expansion of parts of the manuscript beyond the scope of an OIC necessitates the volume's appearance as an Oriental Institute Publication



Ch.M. III-225: Protoliterate vessel with incised decoration (drawing by Abbas Alizadeh)

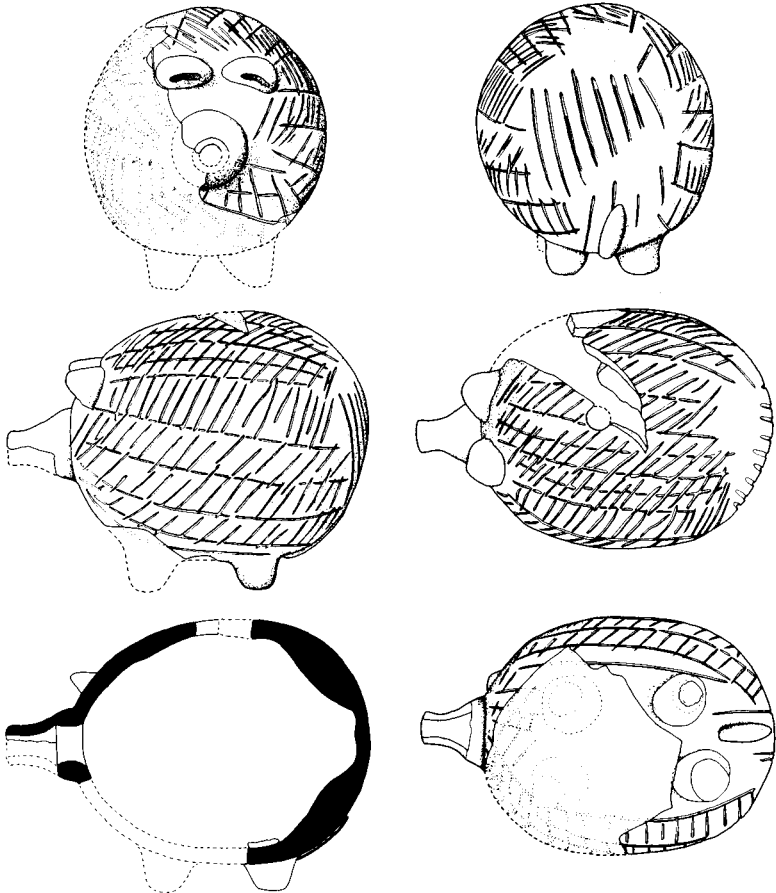
CHOGHAMISH



Detail of incised decoration on Ch.M. III-225 (drawing by Abbas Alizadeh)

A R C H E O L O G Y

(OIP). The descriptive index gives the essential data both for the loci specifically mentioned in the text and for many others appearing either on plans or as the proveniences of objects. In addition, all the objects published in the volume are listed in stratigraphic order under their respective loci. The index of loci, by documenting in detail the evidence upon which the conclusions as to the cultural sequence and the nature of individual areas are based, adds to the definitive character of the forthcoming volume. Throughout the preparation of the index I have had the invaluable and untiring aid of Mrs. Carolyn Livingood and Mr. Guillermo Algaze.



Ch.M. X-1: Protoliterate hedgehog vase with incised decoration (drawings by Richard LeFevre and [section] Abbas Alizadeh)

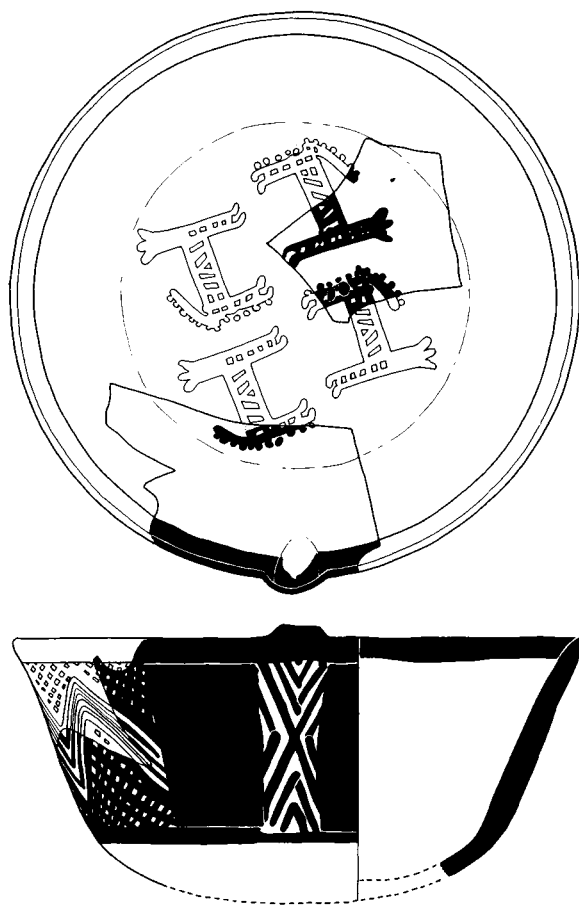
C H O G H A M I S H

The time-consuming process of producing illustrations for the publication is almost complete. The negatives for most of them have gone through several stages of correction by the engraver. In addition, drawings of one of the most important objects to be published in the forthcoming volume have been prepared with meticulous accuracy by Mr. Abbas Alizadeh. This is a vessel from the period of the earliest urban civilization in the Susiana area and southern Mesopotamia (Protoliterate Period, ca. 3400 B.C.). It belongs to a rare class of vessel characterized by the presence of both four lugs and a loop handle. Unlike other examples of its family, Ch.M.III-225 has an elongated body divided into four panels by extensions of the lugs. Each panel is covered with incised decoration. On one a man holds two large fish; another has intertwined serpents and couchant felines. Among Protoliterate vessels this Chogha Mish vase is unique in the complexity of its incised decoration and the prominence of representational motifs. Some of the latter occur in other contexts of the Protoliterate period, for example, the intertwined serpents on a small scale on cylinder seals and the leopards in large-scale paintings of the temple of Tell Uqair in southern Iraq. Furthermore, the vessel provides significant parallels for later works. The Scarlet Ware, typical for the Early Dynastic I period in southern Mesopotamia, is characterized by representational paintings covering the body of the jars. A striking prototype for these characteristics is provided by the earlier Chogha Mish vase although the decorative technique used is incision rather than paint. In addition, the iconography of the Chogha Mish vase has specific links with later works. Successors of the man carrying two large fish appear in the Early Dynastic III period on votive plaques and on the famous standard from the royal tombs at Ur.

The incised vase is one of the major finds from the excavations at Chogha Mish. It presumably had served a ritual purpose until eventually its broken fragments were abandoned in the pit in which we found them. Another vessel with a special function, probably the pouring of libations, is the hedgehog-shaped jar found in a Protoliterate context during the tenth season at Chogha Mish. The final drawings of the hedgehog, prepared this year, provide another example of all-over incision, this time used to suggest the spines of the animal.

Also completed this year are other drawings of objects which represent stages of development much earlier than the Protoliterate civilization. Already in the Early Susiana period around the turn of the sixth to fifth millennium B.C., a representational motif was used as a decoration. Most of the bowl's ornament is geometric, but the designs on the interior of the base represent animals with large tails.

A R C H E O L O G Y



Ch.M. 6.022: Early Susiana bowl with painted decoration (drawing by Donald S. Whitcomb, Helene J. Kantor, and Abbas Alizadeh)

The very style of rendering can be traced back to designs of the preceding Archaic Susiana period.

These examples of what has been done this season in Chicago by the Chogha Mish project can hardly be as exciting as a report on new finds just revealed after millennia underground. Nonetheless, the checking and analysis of data and the preparation of plans and illustrations of individual objects for publication represent a culmination of work in the field. It is with such tasks that the Chogha Mish project is occupied while it awaits the opportunity to return to its unfinished work in Iran.