The female figurines found almost universally in early prehistoric cultures are normally interpreted as reflections of the concern of early agriculturalists with fertility, whether of their fields, flocks, or themselves. Chogha Mish is no exception to the rule; female figurines are prominent in the early prehistoric periods, but rare or non-existent in the later ones. Levels of the Early Susiana period, datable to the early part of the fifth millennium B.C., yielded parts of terracotta figurines representing women standing or sitting with outstretched legs. Head and torso fragments that did not originally belong together (Figs. 1–4) can be combined into a composite reconstruction of a standing figure (Fig. 5; drawing by Abbas Alizadeh). The execution is quite elaborate. On the head pellets of clay represent eyes and eyebrows; paint emphasized the features of the face and ornamented it with diagonal and vertical bands. Horizontal stripes of paint on the waist and vertical ones on the lower body indicate a patterned robe. Good parallels for the Chogha Mish torso fragments were found in the Early Susiana settlement at Jaffarabad near Susa (G. Dollfus, "Les fouilles à Djaffarabad de 1972 à 1974," Cahiers de la Délégation française en Iran, Vol. 5 [1975], Fig. 32: 1, 3). Related figures occur across the modern Iran/Iraq border in the Mandali area of the Upper Diyala at Choga Mami in deposits of the Samarra culture (Joan Oates, "Prehistoric Investigations near Mandali, Iraq," Iraq, Vol. XXX [1968], Pls. I, II A [heads] and "Choga Mami 1967–1968: A Preliminary Report," Iraq [1969], Pls. XXVI A–F).

In prehistoric studies comparable objects are of great value since frequently they are the only clues to the relationships and relative chronology of different sites and cultures. The presence of the same figurine types at Chogha Mish and Jaffarabad is part of the evidence identify-
Fig. 5. Composite reconstruction of an Early Susiana figurine based on various fragments (Figs. 1–4). Drawing by Abbas Alizadeh.

Fig. 2. Fragment of the upper torso of an Early Susiana terracotta figurine (Ch.M. 8.695). Photograph by Diana Olson Rasche.

Fig. 3. Fragment of the lower body of an Early Susiana figurine (Ch.M. VII–84). Field photograph.
breasts but almost filled in at the waist (Fig. 2). It is likely that many of the figurines at Chogha Mish were made in two lateral halves which were then pressed together to make the cylindrical figure. This seems to be a purely technical feature, with the discovery of individual halves showing that the welding of the two parts was not always done tightly.

The features just described for Chogha Mish are matched by figurines of the Middle Neolithic period from the northern Peloponnesus (Lauren E. Talalay, "Rethinking the Function of Clay Figurine Legs from Neolithic Greece: An Argument by Analogy," American Journal of Archaeology, Vol. 91 [1987], pp. 161–169; compare her Figs. 3–6, two figures from Franchthi cave, with our Figs. 3, 4, 6, 7). As far as the chronology goes, these figures also belong somewhere in the fifth millennium B.C. They occur in a far distant country in a culture totally different from and unrelated to Early Susiana. Nonetheless, examples from the Franchthi Cave painted with vertical stripes (ibid., pp. 164–165, Figs. 3–4) are practically interchangeable with Figs. 3, 4, 6, 7 from Chogha Mish. Furthermore, the Greek fragments occur as lateral parts, in two instances with a lump indicating that they had once been joined to a second leg (ibid., pp. 166–167, Figs. 5–6).

An ingenious proposal has been advanced to explain the discovery of separate figurine legs in the neolithic Peloponnesus. After citing ethnographic analogies and written evidence from classical Greece, Lauren Talalay suggests that the function of the figurines was to serve as "contractual devices or identifying tokens" rather than to invoke the forces of fertility. Among her examples from classical Greece and Rome is the retention of the parts of irregularly broken tokens by each party to an agreement or by families linked by ties of hospitality. The gap from the classical period back to the Neolithic is huge, but
nonetheless the suggestion is an attractive one. The striking similarity between the single figurine legs from Chogha Mish and neolithic Greece must be completely fortuitous. Still the function Lauren Talalay proposes for the legs from Greece indicates the possibility of explanations other than mere technique of manufacture.

The Early Susiana figurines from Chogha Mish enlarge our knowledge of the representational style and preoccupations of the period. The apparently exclusive production of female figurines and the emphasis on the breasts and pubic triangle indicate the strong concern with fertility, though there is no reason to identify the figures as fertility goddesses rather than as human women. In addition, the comparisons both with adjacent areas in western Asia and the coincidental similarity with figurines far removed geographically add more dimensions to the significance of these objects.