

# ICONOGRAPHICAL IMAGES

## CHAPTER 12 FROM HIPPOPOTAMUS TO ‘GENIUS’ IMAGE

### IN EGYPT

The hippopotamus was native to swampy areas of the Nile River, in particular the Delta, until quite recently;<sup>748</sup> its habits and character were well known in the earliest periods, and depictions of hippopotamus hunting are a standard theme in ancient Egyptian art. The hippopotamus was worshipped from the earliest dynasties (if not before) as both a beneficent and belligerent force, a dichotomy probably rooted in the peaceful nature of the female and aggressive character of the male animal.<sup>749</sup>

The name of the goddess most familiar to modern scholars in association with the hippopotamus, Taweret (*T3-wrrt*), did not appear until the early New Kingdom.<sup>750</sup> Taweret (‘The Great One’) is a beneficent aspect of its worship and one of numerous minor deities in the Egyptian pantheon. She is an apotropaic power most closely associated with women wishing to conceive, during pregnancy and childbirth, and of new-born children, probably because the female hippopotamus apparently gives birth without pain or complication and is extremely protective of its young. Her activities, functions and iconography also are accorded earlier deities identified as Ipy (*Ipy*, in the Middle Kingdom *Ipt*, often translated as ‘wet-nurse’ or ‘midwife’) and Reret (*Rrt*, ‘the Sow’). Additionally, her iconography also appears with Ashaheru (*ʿš3-hrw*, ‘the Many-faced One’) and Debiher (*dbi-hr*, ‘Hippopotamus-face’).<sup>751</sup> The number of deities involved is uncertain, but the

first two are identified in texts as female and the last two as male in gender. Every one of these ‘names’ can be interpreted or at least understood as an epithet, possibly even of the same deity in masculine and feminine forms. Although the two male names disappear after the Middle Kingdom, the name Taweret was employed in the New Kingdom and beyond, concurrent with the continued use of Ipet and Reret. One inscribed Dynasty XXII statue identifies her as all three goddesses, Reret, Taweret and Ipet.<sup>752</sup> All are represented as a composite of several zoomorphic but virtually no anthropomorphic features, classically depicted as a standing hippopotamus with leonine paws and feet, dorsal appendage and sometimes a crocodile on its back. The iconography or iconographies developed as features became more definitive, and not all are original.

A complete detailed study of the deity or deities is lacking, although several scholars have investigated them.<sup>753</sup> The dissertation by ALTENMÜLLER (1965) incorporates the major iconographical study of the standing hippopotamus deity on Middle Kingdom ‘magic wands,’ since augmented by WEINGARTEN (1991)<sup>754</sup> for other Middle Kingdom material with similar iconography. The vast majority of Dynasty XVIII and earlier representations are not identified by name, a problem that only adds to the confusion.

### Taweret

The feminine deity Taweret is first identified by name in Dynasty XVIII.<sup>755</sup> Faulkner has identified a

<sup>748</sup> KRZYSZKOWSKA 1988:227 n. 48. Interestingly, in view of the subject matter of the present chapter, an early species of hippopotamus was known on Crete in the Pleistocene era, but had become extinct long before the Bronze Age; see SPAAN 1996.

<sup>749</sup> See SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH 1953:46–47; VERNER 1969:52–54. One of the earliest Egyptian amulets known is that of a bound hippopotamus in shell from a Badarian grave at El-Badari; see ANDREWS 1994:36, 64, fig. 3.b.

<sup>750</sup> *LÄ*:VI.4:495, although a single private name Taweret is known (without divine determinative) on a Middle Kingdom private stela from Edfu; see RANKE 1935–1977: I: 355.13; WARD 1978:63. See below, n. 756 below for discussion of the problematic translation in *Coffin Text* Spell 652.

<sup>751</sup> Yet another name appeared in the Fayum during the Late Period, the goddess Hedjet (*hdt*, ‘The White One’); see *WB* III:212.3. A ‘Feast of the White Hippopotamus,’ probably

the same female deity, is known as early as Dynasty IV, where she is depicted as a hippopotamus on four legs; see SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH 1953:45–55.

<sup>752</sup> PORTER and MOSS 1960–II:291.

<sup>753</sup> MEEKS in *LÄ* III.2:172–176 (‘Ipet’); SCHLÖGL in *LÄ* V.2:243–244 (‘Reret’); GUNDLACH in *LÄ* VI.4:494–497 (‘Thoeris’); see also FISCHER 1987:18–19; ANDREWS 1994: 40–41.

<sup>754</sup> I am very grateful to Judith Weingarten for a draft copy of her paper (WEINGARTEN 1991) prior to publication. ALTENMÜLLER’s dissertation (1965) was not directly available for the present study, but the pertinent developmental points of Taweret’s iconography in the Middle Kingdom he established are outlined elsewhere by ALTENMÜLLER (1983; 1986) and by Weingarten. She specifically investigates the transformation from Egyptian Taweret to Minoan ‘genius.’

<sup>755</sup> See PORTER and MOSS 1960–I–II:passim.

seated hippopotamus deity with a snake on its head and female determinative in the text of a unique *Coffin Text* spell on the Dynasty XII inner coffin of Iker from Gebelein (now in Turin) as 'Thoueris,'<sup>756</sup> but there is no particular reason to do so. Her major iconographical attribute is the *s3* sign of protection (V 17), and her apotropaic influence was directed towards women in childbirth and the newborn. Taweret apparently presided over the purification ceremony of *St-mw*, documented in the New Kingdom. Several round stone basins found in and around the Dynasty XIX votive chapel #1213, probably dedicated to Taweret, at Deir el-Medineh were inscribed "A boon which the king gives, that Taweret, pure of water, may give life, prosperity and health ...."<sup>757</sup>

### Ipet

The feminine deity known as Ipet is first mentioned, but not illustrated, as *Ipy* in the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts,<sup>758</sup> where she is invoked by the Pharaoh to suckle him with her divine milk and is called his 'mother.' By the Middle Kingdom, this name had been provided with the feminine ending '-t,' as *Ipt*, and this form appeared as private names complete with divine determinative of a standing hippopotamus figure.<sup>759</sup> She appears to have been Heliopolitan in origin, but by the time of Thutmose III (Dynasty XVIII) also was worshipped at Karnak and was identified as the mother of Osiris in the Theban theology. She was considered mother of the gods, perhaps through this association. Another of her functions was to provide heat and light for the dead. The third month of *Snw* was named after her by Dynasty XVIII,<sup>760</sup> and a major annual festival in her honour was celebrated by the time of Hatshepsut.<sup>761</sup> In the

papyrus *Book of the Dead* of Nebseny from Memphis (Dynasty XVIII), "Ipy, lady of magical protection" is depicted and identified in a vignette setting fire to a bowl of incense on a stand.<sup>762</sup> She is further attested in Dynasty XIX and later.

### Reret

The feminine deity Reret is first attested in the Middle Kingdom as a hippopotamus-type goddess,<sup>763</sup> but seems more related to pigs than hippopotami.<sup>764</sup> Nonetheless, her later iconography and attributes cannot be disassociated with those of Ipet and Taweret, for she is depicted as a standing hippopotamus with leonine limbs and crocodile head, and *s3*-sign (V 17) attribute. In the Late Period, she is identified as an apotropaic force for women in childbirth and 'confinement' and for newborn children, although nothing is specified earlier. At this time also, and possibly earlier, she is associated with the sky-goddess Nut (*Nwt*), and in this guise she is considered the mother of the gods.

### Ashaheru

This deity is mentioned in *Coffin Text* Spell 1179 as an apotropaic force, who "created thunder, who mounts up to Re and repels the strength of 'Apep, who splits open the sky and drives away storm, and who nourishes the crews of Re."<sup>765</sup> This text, written in the first person, identifies him as male. The inner coffin of Djehutyhotep from El-Bersheh, dated to Dynasty XII, illustrates the text of this Spell with a white-painted standing hippopotamus having a long dorsal appendage and holding a long broad knife in one hand.<sup>766</sup> On the coffin of Sepi III, dated to the reign of Senwosret III (Dynasty XII) and also from El-

<sup>756</sup> A hieroglyphic transcription of the hieratic text is in DE BUCK 1935–1961:VI:274 (652d); the figure is unlike any other representation of the hippopotamus-deity. 'Thoueris' is the hellenised spelling of her name, and often is found in the literature. The translation is in FAULKNER 1973–1978: II:226 (Spell 652). See also n. 750, above.

<sup>757</sup> BRUYÈRE 1930:20–23, fig. 2:10–12. Others of similar date also are known. Several images of the goddess were found in and near the temple; see *Ibid.*:20 fig. 1. An unnamed painted relief figure also found there included no attributes. See also PORTER and MOSS 1960–:I.2:690.

<sup>758</sup> "Oh my mother Ipy, give me this breast of yours, that I may apply it to my mouth and suck this your white, gleaming, sweet milk." Translation of FAULKNER 1969:I:78 #381–382 (Utterance 269); see also *WB* I:68:8.

<sup>759</sup> RANKE 1935–1977:I:22.4, both male and female private names on stelae; see also *Ibid.*:280 #19, 285 #20–23; FISCHER 1987:18. GARDINER 1957 does not list this determinative.

<sup>760</sup> *Urk* IV:44.17, on the lunar calendrical list of Papyrus Ebers, dated to Year 9 of Amenhotep I (Dynasty XVIII). Later this month was identified as Ip-hemetes (*Ip-hmt.s*) (PARKER 1950:21 #103, 45–46 #230), a name already archaic by the reign of Ramesses IX (Dynasty XX).

<sup>761</sup> PORTER and MOSS 1927–1952:II:66–67.

<sup>762</sup> BM 9900, illustrating Spell 137B; see ALLAN 1974:115 n. 232.

<sup>763</sup> *WB* II:438:10 and *LÄ* V.2:243 note her appearance during Dynasty XVIII, but *LÄ* III.2:173 (citing ALTENMÜLLER 1965:I:148; II:45) identifies a Middle Kingdom origin.

<sup>764</sup> The words *rrī* and *rrt*, with different determinatives, also translate as '(male) pig' and 'swine' (as a collective) in addition to the translation of 'sow' (*WB* II:438.7; FAULKNER 1962:151).

<sup>765</sup> DE BUCK 1935–1961:VII:517 (1179); FAULKNER 1973–1978: III:188 Spell 1179. This is the text quoted by WEINGARTEN 2000:116, and mistakenly credited to Taweret.

<sup>766</sup> CM JE 37566. See DE BUCK 1935–1961:VII:plan 14:49'.

Bersheh, *Coffin Text* variant Spell 1069 is illustrated with the same figure, this time painted red.<sup>767</sup> The Egyptian colour convention of red-painted male and yellow-painted female figures is not an infallible guide to gender here. The deity himself does not survive into the New Kingdom. Interestingly, in the Dynasty XVIII *Book of the Dead* papyrus of Nunu, the developed text of this Spell ascribes some of these powers to the deceased individual ('Osiris N.') for whom it was written.<sup>768</sup> Ashaheru's *milieu* then is the stormy sky, specifically associated with control of the storm and rain and thus Nun (*Nwn*, the chaotic primeval waters) in which the dead, like Re, are purified as they cross to the Netherworld.<sup>769</sup>

### Debiher

Another male deity – or a second epithet of the same male deity – in the *Coffin Texts* is called Debiher,<sup>770</sup> one of two associated with an obscure and problematic word translated by Faulkner as “lustral basin(?)”<sup>771</sup> and by Barguet as “pool.”<sup>772</sup> The noun is transliterated both as *ḥ3sw* and *š3sw*.<sup>773</sup> This term is ambiguous but its determinative is that of a physical object, specifically a container of some sort. Certainly in some, but not all, spells the suggestion of purification within it is implied. Unfortunately, neither the figure or container is illustrated, other than as a con-

ventional hieroglyph determinative, and again neither survive into the New Kingdom.

All these names are associated with at least two standing hippopotamus deities, one male and the other female. The male seems connected to purification by water, and the female to protection especially at childbirth, an association that, in several senses, is also related to purification. The deity occasionally was identified as a Northern constellation in the form of a hippopotamus with crocodile on its back, holding a long cord to which was attached the *mshtyw* ('Foreleg of Seth').<sup>774</sup> The vast majority of standing hippopotamus deity representations are not identified by name, and in the past have been identified collectively as Taweret or its hellenised variant, 'Thoueris.' More recent literature often has regarded the deity on pre-Dynasty XVIII examples as Ipy or Ipet, since the name Taweret is not attested prior to the New Kingdom, but the possibility that at least some representations may have been of Reret or even one of the two male deities also must be considered.

The standing hippopotamus deity is represented as early as the late Old Kingdom on crude amulets<sup>775</sup> and cylinder seals,<sup>776</sup> and on rare FIP-early Middle Kingdom scarab face designs,<sup>777</sup> dates early enough to suggest that only Ipy/Ipet would be the deity repre-

<sup>767</sup> CM CG 28083/J 32868. DE BUCK 1935–1961:VII:332 Spell 1069, plan 1:40; FAULKNER 1973–1978:III:143 Spell 1069. Faulkner's translation of “lizard” (ʃ3) must be in error; the text can only be a corrupted or incomplete writing of Ashaheru. Compare hieroglyphic transliterations of the spells in De Buck. Spell 1069 is a variant text of Spells 1176, 1178–1179 as a group. For correlations of variant texts and plan figure references to spells, see DE BUCK 1935–1961:VII:xiv–xvi.

<sup>768</sup> Compare with ALLAN 1974:122 Spell 144:h.S.

<sup>769</sup> FRANKFURT 1948:154.

<sup>770</sup> DE BUCK 1935–1961:VII:320 (Spell 1062), 512 (Spell 1170); FAULKNER 1973–1977:III:141 Spell 1062, 186 Spell 1170. As with the spells related to Ashaheru, Spells 1062–1064 are a variant text of Spells 1170–1171 and 1173–1174 as a group. Unlike them, however, the illustrations related to these spells do not include a hippopotamus-type figure.

<sup>771</sup> FAULKNER 1973–1978:III:141 Spell 1062, 186 Spell 1170, also variant texts; see also *Ibid.*:II:131 n. 6 (Spell 151). The other deity is called 'Dog-face'; see *Ibid.*:III:142 Spell 1064, 186 Spell 1171, also variant texts. The same word also appears in *Ibid.*:II:130–131 Spell 151; VII:186–187 Spell 1174. The original text is transliterated by DE BUCK 1935–1961:II:257b; VII:320b, 323b, 512i, 513b, 514b.

<sup>772</sup> 'Mare'; see BARGUET 1986:634, 678, 679. In one spell, the word is translated as 'fondrière' ('bog' or 'quagmire'), p. 134.

<sup>773</sup> Spells 151, 1064, 1171 and 1174 are written *ḥ3sw*; Spells

1062 and 1170 as *š3sw*. One version of Spell 1062 is written *ḥ3sw*. The two words may or may not have the same exact meaning, but if not are strongly related. Note that these are not spelling errors: the differences are due to entirely different hieroglyphic signs being employed and probably are due to phonetic scribal variation.

<sup>774</sup> NEUGEBAUER and PARKER 1969:III.1:189–190. Few pre-Dynasty XIX texts exist (*Ibid.*:9–14). The hippopotamus deity is inferred on the earliest (Dynasty XI) unfortunately badly preserved text. Two mid-Dynasty XVIII scenes depict both dorsal appendage and crocodile, holding the long broad knife in one paw and a crocodile in the other; the accompanying text in one of them identifies her as *Ist-d3mt ḥb-pt*, but the identification is ambiguous and probably only associative. Inference of association with Isis (*Ist*) would intensify in later periods.

<sup>775</sup> ANDREWS 1994:40; see PETRIE 1914:47 #236, pl. XL:236:a–c; BRUNTON 1928:pls. XCV–XCVI:21.

<sup>776</sup> KAPLONY 1981:I:539 #49, II:pl. 148:49; SAMBIN 1989:80 fig. 4. WEINGARTEN 1991:6 n. 16, fig. dated this to the Middle Kingdom, and I am inclined to agree as it seems far too developed an image for the earlier date. Old Kingdom examples are KAPLONY 1981:II:pls. 158:40, 165:86, 168:107, 132, 138, 182:200. Note that none of these images have a provenance.

<sup>777</sup> WARD 1978:53 n. 202, pl. VI:180.

sented, on textual evidence. Later Middle Kingdom face designs are unknown but amulets remained common,<sup>778</sup> especially amuletic beads on necklaces<sup>779</sup> and a girdle<sup>780</sup> strung together with numerous other apotropaic amulets often in no particular order. They seem limited to graves of women and children. The widely varying but rarely detailed quality of the amulets are not conducive to identifying stylistic dating or development of the figure, but more detailed examples tend to be of later rather than earlier date. Small flat cut-out types were the norm until the New Kingdom when larger, three-dimensional and more detailed examples appear.<sup>781</sup> The majority are drilled through the body rather than having a suspension loop, or were not intended to be strung as a suspension hole is lacking. The image of the deity also returned in large numbers as scarab face designs in the New Kingdom,<sup>782</sup> when it is shown with a variety of attribute combinations, including the long broad knife held in one hand and sometimes at the forward foot and the *s3*-sign (V 17) in front.

Several other types of Middle Kingdom objects occasionally were adorned with the apotropaic hippopotamus-deity image, including hairpins,<sup>783</sup> fertility figurines ('paddle dolls'),<sup>784</sup> ceremonial axe heads,<sup>785</sup> scaraboids<sup>786</sup> and other seals,<sup>787</sup> a child's feeding cup and a glazed steatite box.<sup>788</sup> Figurines in its image also were made.<sup>789</sup> It also is depicted (back-to-back) on the throne of a seated statue of Pharaoh Sobekemsaf I (Dynasty XVII),<sup>790</sup> paralleled in a similar statue of Hatshepsut from the Deir el-Bahri temple and on some small amulets.<sup>791</sup> Its

likeness is carved on an early Dynasty XVIII head-rest<sup>792</sup> and painted on the headboard of a New Kingdom model bed,<sup>793</sup> and at least one Dynasty XVIII *Gravidenflasche* incorporates unmistakable characteristics of the hippopotamus deity,<sup>794</sup> while others are strongly suggestive. A number of Dynasty XVIII kohl pots in the form of a monkey supporting a miniature vessel are engraved with a standing hippopotamus deity complete with dorsal appendage, amongst other figures<sup>795</sup> and it appears on a kohl tube together with a cat and Hathor head.<sup>796</sup> Attributes include the long broad knife in one hand or foot and the *s3*-sign (V 17), sometimes both and sometimes neither and none.<sup>797</sup> Occasionally, an *ḥ*-sign (S 34) replaces the *s3*-sign. One kohl pot, of black steatite, actually is in the form of the deity.<sup>798</sup> Numerous figurines of the standing hippopotamus deity are known in the New Kingdom, almost all without attributes, including late Dynasty XVIII–XIX hollow statuettes with one or both breasts perforated to allow a liquid to drip or dribble out.<sup>799</sup> Unfortunately, none of these representations in the various media are identified by name, but usually they are called Taweret in the literature.

The major Middle Kingdom medium for the standing hippopotamus representation is the 'magic wand,' a long flattened curved 'stick' of hippopotamus ivory of late Dynasty XI–XIII date engraved with a series of apotropaic figures including the standing hippopotamus, baboon, cat and an assortment of real and imaginary beings having inherent meaning to the owner. The same figures also are

<sup>778</sup> PETRIE 1914:47 #236, pl. XL:236:g, XLV:236:o2, o3; HAYES 1953–1959:I:237; WARD 1978:63 n. 281; BOURRIAU 1988:156 #176.e.

<sup>779</sup> See ANDREWS 1981:102 ('Thoeris'); also AM EE 123; MMA 10.130.2297–2299.

<sup>780</sup> D'AURIA, LACOVARA and ROEHRIG 1988:118 #44.

<sup>781</sup> E.g., BRUNTON and ENGELBACH 1927:pl. XLII:9:D–L; HERRMANN 1985:41–43 #135–139.

<sup>782</sup> HORNUNG and STAHELIN 1976:435 ('Thoeris').

<sup>783</sup> HAYES 1953–1959:I:240.

<sup>784</sup> RIEFSTAHL 1944:12–13, fig. 15; WEINGARTEN 1991:19 #1, pl. 13.

<sup>785</sup> KÜHNERT-EGGEBRECHT 1969:pl. XX:1–2 (FIP–SIP), pls. XVII:3, XXIX:5 (New Kingdom); BOURRIAU 1988:163 #190. Paired confronted standing hippopotami decorate the blades of several axes, also back-to-back and single figures.

<sup>786</sup> HAYES 1953–1959:I:239.

<sup>787</sup> E.g., MARTIN forthcoming:ms. 45 #85.

<sup>788</sup> WEINGARTEN 1991:19 #3–4, pls. 6, 15.

<sup>789</sup> HAYES 1953–1959:I:227; WEINGARTEN 1991:19–20 #2, 5, 7, pls. 14, 16.b, 17.

<sup>790</sup> BM EA 871; DAVIES 1981:3–4, pl. 4:B, 6. The deity is identified only by function, not name, in the accompanying text: 'All protection and life around him.'

<sup>791</sup> ANDREWS 1994:41, fig. 39.c–d.

<sup>792</sup> BROVARSKI *et al.* 1982:74–74 #46.

<sup>793</sup> The bed is part of a 'woman-on-a-bed' figurine; see D'AURIA, LACOVARA and ROEHRIG 1988:137 #74, fig. 77.

<sup>794</sup> MURRAY 1911:pl. XXIV:46, although human-headed, she has leonine legs and holds the *s3*-sign (V 17). See also Chapter 17.

<sup>795</sup> See SPARKS 2006:246 fig. 4.a; see also Chapter 13.

<sup>796</sup> HAYES 1953–1959:II:192, fig. 108:right.

<sup>797</sup> E.g., REISNER 1904–1907:I:1224–1225 #18586–18591, 18593–18594, pl. IX:18586–18588, 18590–18591, 19594. The crocodile on the back does not appear. See also Chapter 13.

<sup>798</sup> PETRIE 1937:pl. XXXII:808.

<sup>799</sup> BORCHARDT 1910:130, fig. 177; MURRAY 1911:45 #80, pl. XXV:80; ENGELBACH 1915:13, pl. IX:16; see also MILLER 1918:138–139; BRUYÈRE 1939:107; VERNER 1969:53 n. 9; BROVARSKI *et al.* 1982:293 #404 n. 5.

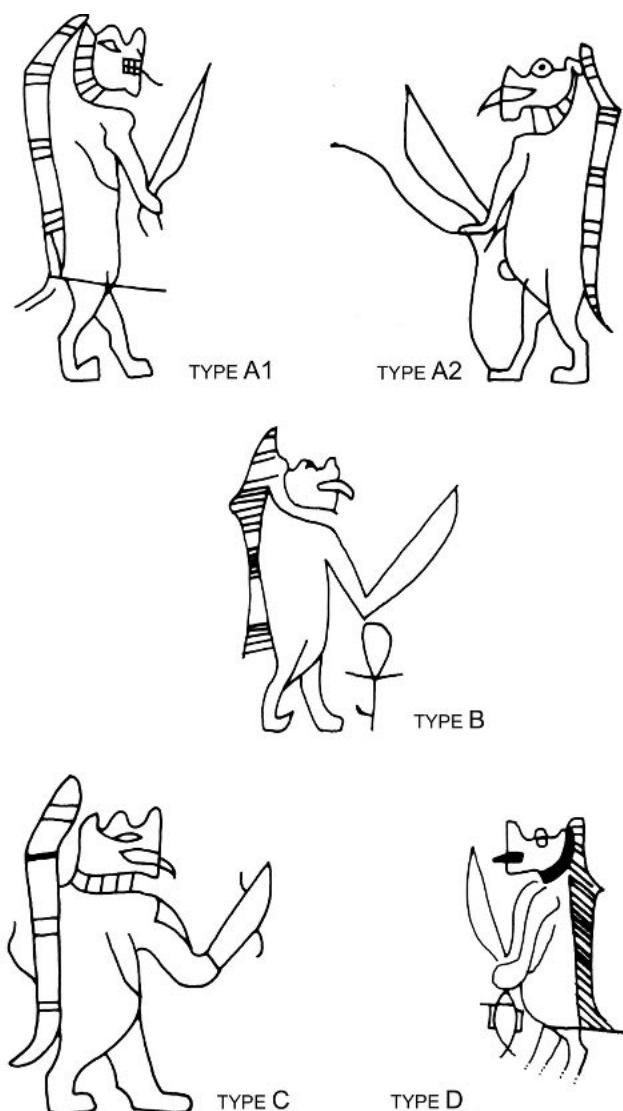


Fig. 17 Typology of the standing hippopotamus deity, as illustrated on ‘magic wands’ (based on ALTENMÜLLER 1965 and WEINGARTEN 1990): Type A1 (LEGGE 1905:pl. XI:18); Type A2 (ALTENMÜLLER 1983:31 fig. 5); Type B (note *nh*-sign in front) (ALTENMÜLLER 1965:fig. 14); Type C (ALTENMÜLLER 1965:fig. 18); Type D (note *s3*-sign in front) (ALTENMÜLLER 1965:fig. 25)

found in *Coffin Text* vignettes and decorate objects of daily use in the Middle Kingdom and later; other apotropaic beings seen on the ‘wands’ also illustrate objects similar to those mentioned above with the standing hippopotamus.<sup>800</sup>

Fortunately ‘magic wands’ are the most detailed

and, although the figures illustrated are not identified by name, have short texts to provide some idea of their mostly apotropaic functions. The majority of inscriptions are protective, and directed to a named individual, usually the *nbt-pr* (‘lady of the house’) but also to children.<sup>801</sup> Typical inscriptions are “We have come that we may afford protection to [name, presumably of the deceased]” and “Protection by day and protection by night.”<sup>802</sup> They were used primarily during childbirth but also for resurrection of the dead, being placed in graves for this reason, and in rituals for allowing the soul to enter its cult-statue.<sup>803</sup> Altenmüller has identified a developmental typology for the hippopotamus deity on ‘magic wands,’ which Weingarten has shown also to be valid for representations in other media during the Middle Kingdom.<sup>804</sup> Its basic typology is illustrated as Fig. 17 and develops as follows:

“The earliest Middle Kingdom hippopotamus demon (ca. 2000) [end Dynasty XI] is slender in figure, but the familiar enlarged belly appears quite quickly (by ca. 1950) [early Dynasty XII]. Breasts, if shown at all, are always pendulous (though it is uncertain if this is a sign of pregnancy or *even* of her [*sic*] female nature). Another early characteristic is the lion’s mane outlining her [*sic*] head; it tends to diminish, though it does not disappear, after ca. 1800. Other leonine features, however, become more pronounced over time, until her [*sic*] body becomes assimilated to that of the lion-demon in the years between 1750 and 1650.

Without doubt however, the most useful – and precise – feature for charting her passage through the Middle Kingdom is the changing contour and decoration of her [*sic*] dorsal appendage.”<sup>805</sup>

“**Type A1 + A2** (ca. 2000–1950) [late Dynasty XI–first quarter Dynasty XII]: usually decorated by sets of three horizontal dashes, the appendage is attached to the back of her [*sic*] head, runs down the back, and ends in a pointed tail at the rump.

**Type B** (ca. 1900–1800) [second half Dynasty XII]: attached to the back of her [*sic*] head but rising slightly above it; it has a strongly tapered peak on the outside just below shoulder height, ending in a short tail at or below the rump; filled in with oblique dashes.

<sup>800</sup> See also Chapters 13; 15.

<sup>801</sup> One is held in a woman’s hand in a tomb painting from El Bersheh (Dynasty XII). See NEWBERRY n.d.:pl. XXX.

<sup>802</sup> See HAYES 1953–1959:I:249; BOURRIAU 1988:113 #102.

<sup>803</sup> ALTENMÜLLER 1986:26.

<sup>804</sup> WEINGARTEN 1991.

<sup>805</sup> WEINGARTEN 1991:5. Quoted, with additions of the present author in square brackets.

**Type C** (ca. 1750) [early/mid-Dynasty XIII]: extended high over the head but not touching the back of the head, runs parallel to her [*sic*] body from shoulder height to rump; filled in by irregular sets of dashes.

**Type D** (ca. 1750–1650) [mid–late Dynasty XIII]: as C but mostly thinner, the peak usually well below the shoulder, and the top often with pointed tip; filled in with dashes.<sup>806</sup>

By far the most common attribute of these figures is the long broad knife (T 30) held in the paw, followed by the combination of the knife and *s3*-sign (V 17) of protection. A third common feature is an additional long ‘string’ emanating from the mouth or held in the hand, sometimes with a small head identifying it as a snake.<sup>807</sup>

A leonine deity with similar attributes also is found on the ‘magic wands,’ in addition to the hippopotamus deity. Characteristics of the latter seem to have begun to bifurcate about mid-Dynasty XII, some figures becoming more leonine in appearance and others retaining the original hippopotamus features; both continued to co-exist into the New Kingdom and even beyond without apparent differentiation.

The crocodile on its back was not introduced as a motif on ‘magic wands’ until late Dynasty XII<sup>808</sup> and on Dynasty XVIII representations of the Northern constellation mentioned earlier. In each case, the crocodile does not replace the dorsal appendage but rather stands on it, and is found in conjunction with the knife and *s3*-sign (V 17).

The numerous unnamed figures and illustrations of the standing hippopotamus deity, combined with the few examples of early named examples and the communal use of attributes and functions of the various names of the deities, only serve to underline the problem of identification. Clearly, however, two distinct

deities can be isolated, one an aggressive male and the other a beneficent female. The knife carried by the male Ashaheru (and Debiher?) on the two coffins is also found on the presumably singular deity illustrated on the ‘magic wands’ which by its function can be associated with the protection of women and children, presumably including childbirth, as well as a journey to the Netherworld. Thus, presumably, the female deity (Ipy/Reret/Taweret) need not necessarily be illustrated on the ‘magic wands’ and other objects. The association of Ashaheru with the primeval waters of Nun can easily be related to childbirth and its preliminary amniotic fluid, as the newborn emerges from its ‘primeval waters,’ in addition to its purifying function for the dead. Thus the unnamed figure(s) on the ‘magic wands’ and many other Middle Kingdom objects cannot be identified specifically as either male or female. The male deity seems not to survive the Middle Kingdom, at least by name, and must have simply been absorbed by the increasingly dominant female deity either before or very early in the New Kingdom.<sup>809</sup>

#### ON CRETE

The term ‘genius’ is used to identify the representation of a standing wasp-like figure, normally but not always associated with a single-handled vessel that it holds in front with both hands.<sup>810</sup> This figure variously has been identified as resembling a lion, pig or donkey depending on the particular example cited, but is always acknowledged as an imaginary, ‘fantastic’ or ‘monstrous’ creature. The term has long been employed in Aegean archaeology and derives from its perceived identity as an apotropaic deity or demi-deity in the Minoan pantheon, based on modern interpretation of its position and imagery. It is now beyond question that the Minoan ‘genius’ developed on Crete, and later was adopted on the Mainland,

<sup>806</sup> As developed by ALTENMÜLLER 1965:I:45–46. Quoted, with additions of the present author in square brackets including dynastic dates, from WEINGARTEN 1991:18. She acknowledges the idealisation inherent in any typological classification, *Ibid.*:5 n. 14.

<sup>807</sup> E.g., BROVARSKI *et al.* 1982:74–75 #46.

<sup>808</sup> ALTENMÜLLER 1986:*passim*, especially pp. 11, 25, pl. IV:6–7; see also HAYES 1953–1959:I:227. There are few examples but the iconography is clear. The crocodile on the back is seen on some cylinder seals apparently dated to the late Old Kingdom; see KLAPONY 1981:II:pl. 182:204; SAMBIN 1989:80 fig. 4.a. I would be more inclined to date this to sometime in the Middle Kingdom; see comments in n. 776, above.

<sup>809</sup> Note also that none of the standing hippopotamus deities are amongst the one male and three female deities (all of whom are named) who attend Queen Ruddedet at the

birth of her children. *Papyrus Westcar*, the SIP copy of a Middle Kingdom original on which this tale is preserved, is translated by LICHTHEIM 1975–1980:I:220–222; see also n. 1186, below.

<sup>810</sup> The following dubious or incomplete identifications of Minoan ‘genii,’ suggested as possible by REHAK 1995:231 #80–82, are not included in the present catalogue or considered in the following discussion: BETTS 1967:30 #4 (if a ‘genius,’ then the only example with bent knees, indicating the figure is running or falling backwards), 31 #5 (possible dorsal appendage, but the lines behind and bulbous ‘leg’ in front would be unique), and 38 #36 (possible, but more likely a “lion raised on its haunches” as stated by Betts). REHAK’s (1995:231 #79) other possible genius remains as yet unpublished to my knowledge, so cannot be commented upon.

other Greek islands and Cyprus. The earliest prototypes and developed images appear on Crete; elsewhere none can be dated earlier than the Late Bronze Age. Numerically, of those with known provenance, twice as many are known on Crete as from the Mainland, and three times as many on Crete as on Cyprus and the Greek islands combined. The vast majority of images appear on seals (and sealings); only two non-seal images have been recovered on Crete {372; 440}, although frescoes and other objects elsewhere depict the ‘genius’ figure.<sup>811</sup>

Its origin in the iconography of the Egyptian deity Taweret initially was proposed by Winter<sup>812</sup> and a decade later Evans connected the deity (arguing for Reret rather than Taweret) with the ‘Mycenaean daemon.’<sup>813</sup> GILL (1964; 1970), VAN STRATEN (1969) and WEINGARTEN (1991; 2000) recently have investigated the image and origins of the Minoan ‘genius.’ Gill and van Straten considered iconography and style. Weingarten’s study focuses the earliest images, whilst YOUNGER (1973) confined himself to the Late Bronze Age.<sup>814</sup> The following considers the iconography of Minoan ‘genius’ seal images found on Crete in their chronological and stylistic development.

#### *Pre-Palatial*

Only one imported scarab on Crete, from Platanos {476}, depicts the standing hippopotamus deity image. The deity itself seems to have made no cultural impact on the island, although the scarab is one of many recovered in similar circumstances and date. It should not be considered as a prototype for the later Minoan image.

#### *Proto-Palatial*<sup>815</sup>

Three Proto-Palatial seal impressions depicting the Minoan ‘genius’ are known, two from the MM IIB

Room 25 deposit of the First Palace at Phaestos {448–449} and another associated with the generally contemporary MM IIB (III?) ‘Hieroglyphic Deposit’ at Knossos {159}. All are relatively similar in image, depicting a standing leonine-hippopotamus creature with some tall object behind it, holding a single-handled jug known as the *Schnabelkanne* by its handle and base in what can only be described as a ‘presentation’ position.<sup>816</sup> Individualities are noted, including the lack of teeth on {448}, the ‘mane’ on {449} and the different objects in the background spaces. Weingarten, who studied the individual features of these early images in detail, has (almost certainly correctly) concluded that they represent two distinct images of the Egyptian hippopotamus deity at two nearly contemporary stages of its iconographical development just before and just after “ca. 1750” [i.e., within Dynasty XIII]. She associates {159} and {448} with the earlier hippopotamus-headed prototype of elongated form (Type C), and {449} with the later, more leonine-headed variety having a shorter blunted profile (Type D).

These earliest known Minoan images of the ‘genius’ already indicate some previous internal development from the Egyptian prototype, as the *Schnabelkanne* held by each is a decidedly Minoan form unknown in Egypt itself.

#### *Neo-Palatial*

Surprisingly few examples of the Minoan ‘genius’ image date to this period.<sup>817</sup> A disputed seal depicting the ‘genius’ holding an apparently dead agrimi was found in an LM IIIA tomb at Kalyvia {87}. It has been dated both to MM III and LM IIIA on various bases, and arguments for both dates have merit.<sup>818</sup> The image of the ‘genius’ presented is quite close to that of

<sup>811</sup> See GILL 1964:passim; 1970:passim; SYMEONOGLOU 1973:48–52, pl. 70–75.

<sup>812</sup> As related by PUCHSTEIN 1890:108. See also NILSSON 1950:380.

<sup>813</sup> EVANS 1901:168–169, 169 n. 2. Evans, usually the first to spot foreign iconographic connections, connected the later ‘genius’ figure with the Egyptian image, based on Winter (see n. 812, above), even noting that Reret “has perhaps a better claim.” Nonetheless, he seems to have missed entirely the relationship between the Egyptian image and his sealing from Knossos {158}, excavated at the beginning of the century. He did, however, connect virtually all early known Minoan images of the ‘daemon’ with Taweret, *PM* IV.2:430–467, including the cushion seal from Kalyvia (‘Phaestos’) {87}.

<sup>814</sup> In his study of the *Schnabelkanne*, STÜRMER 1985 cites dates for some scenes of the ‘genius’ holding the vessel. Not all are correct.

<sup>815</sup> See Distribution Map 25. Note this also includes the Platanos scarab {476}.

<sup>816</sup> I am particularly struck by its resemblance to the military ‘present arms’ position.

<sup>817</sup> See Distribution Map 26.

<sup>818</sup> YULE 1981:138 places it in MM III; YOUNGER 1973:I:85 n. 22 sees no reason to do so. KENNA 1963b:333–334 suggested two separate dates for the two seal faces, the ‘genius’ earlier and the reverse later. The large double-drilled eye is found earlier on seals only on cat-head images of MM IB–II; see Yule 1981:pl. 7:Motif 9. Even if – as is possible although less likely – {87} is an LM IIIA seal, the figure



the three Proto-Palatial ‘genii,’ and the ‘cushion’ shape of the seal is known from MM I onwards.<sup>819</sup>

Clearly of LM I date are sealings from Aghia Triadha {12} and Kato Zakro {112}, both found in large sealing deposits preserved in the LM IB destruction level, as well as the long nodule from Khania {127.A}, again in an LM IB destruction context. The stone triton shell-rhyton from Malia {372} is also of LM I date. Less certain are several recovered in later contexts or without context: The roundel {128} and seal {129} from Khania were found in a rubbish deposit not later than LM IIIB and a pit not later than LM IIIA (early), although an LM I date should be preferred for both as well as for {308} from Knossos, as the roundel format was not employed after LM IB. Knossos sealing {141} has a stratigraphical context within LM IB–IIIA1, although a Neo-Palatial date should be preferred for the seal that originally made the impression stamped upon it, as possibly also those of others {309; 309A; 309C; 309F?} of unrecorded context at Knossos.<sup>820</sup>

By this period, the function of the ‘genius’ has been enlarged not only to holding the *Schnabelkanne* {141; 308} in a ‘presentation’ pose,<sup>821</sup> or in that pose without the vessel {127.A; 309C?; 309F?}, but also to physically pouring a liquid from it {372}.<sup>822</sup> It also clasps a lion cub or protome (possibly a small lion skin) to its breast on sealing {12} antithetically ‘guards’ a central object {307A; 524} and, in the only ‘action’ scene, singularly attacks or repels a bull with a spear over a pile of

stones of probable religious significance (perhaps to be interpreted as a ‘betyl’-like object?) {112}.<sup>823</sup> The small ‘genius’ figure on Khania lentoid {129} may or may not be interacting with the much larger goat that is the only other figure shown, whilst those from Knossos {309; 309C?} are unlikely to be interacting. A few of these Minoan ‘genii’ have a ‘spiked’ back at this time, terminating in a circular ‘ball’ {112; 127.A}, but most still have only a defined tactile covering with undulating border that appears to drape the back of the body from head to legs, apparently supported by or held between the ears. The spiking may be a Mycenaean innovation, as it is found on the Mainland on seals from the LH IIA tomb at Vaphio and the famous LH IIA gold ring from Tiryns, amongst the earliest ‘genius’ images beyond Crete.<sup>824</sup> The leonine head, facial features, legs and paws are retained, although sealing {12} does not have bared teeth. The waist has shrunk and, although not yet entirely ‘wasp-waisted,’ already wears a loose double- or triple-belt in this period.<sup>825</sup> If an MM III dating for the presumed prototype of the Kalyvia seal {87} is correct, the fundamental changes of form and attributes were introduced sometime during but not at the beginning of Neo-Palatial, but we have no intermediary representations.

#### *Final Palatial*<sup>826</sup>

In addition to the Khaniote seal {129}, two others of LM IIIA1 date and context were recovered from Knossos palace {141; 174}. One seal from Kalyvia

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rightly should also be considered here, for the image itself must have been copied from an earlier model dated either to the Proto-Palatial or early Neo-Palatial.

<sup>819</sup> YULE 1981:44–46 Class 8; YOUNGER 1973:II:168–170.

<sup>820</sup> Sealings {206–208}, also known only from sketches, seem to have come from LM III contexts in the Little Palace at Knossos, although there is the slight possibility they may also have been of LM IB destruction debris. Olga Krzyszkowska (personal communication 09 May 2003) notes that the number of Final Palatial sealings stamped by seals of earlier date is considerable. It is possible that some at least of these Knossos ‘genius’ images also date to the Final Palatial period. Three sealings from Malia {370; 389–390} are not considered here, for reasons stated in their respective catalogue entries.

<sup>821</sup> Also held by the earliest Mainland ‘genii,’ *CMS* I:#231–232 from LH IIA Vaphio. *CMS* XII:#212, there dated to LM I, also is LH IIA. Although not in GILL’s catalogue, she noted (1964:14) the forehead curl on the ‘genius’ to be a Mycenaean feature; YOUNGER 1973:II:378 n. 178 concurs. Another is GILL 1964:17 #18, from LCyp I Kourion on Cyprus. LH IIA and LCyp I are generally contemporary with LM IB on Crete.

<sup>822</sup> GILL 1964:7 noted “it never tilts the jug to pour libations

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over plant or altar, but always holds it vertically, implying rather than stating its ritual function.” The Malia triton shell-rhyton {372} was found almost two decades later; so far this scene is unique.

However, the image of the ‘genius’ in static pose holding the jug is known from Neo-Palatial Crete, so this image must have continued through LM I.

<sup>823</sup> Another suggested active ‘genius’ is HM 1042 (BETTS 1967b:30 #4); a misidentification despite YOUNGER 1988a:216, the figure manifestly is humanoid. Note that Younger does not include sealing {111} as a ‘genius.’ HM 1025 (BETTS 1967b:31 #5) might be, but is too fragmentary for inclusion; if so, it would be datable to LM III by the diagonal filler lines on the lower body/appendage; see further below. NMA 4551, a probable LH IIIA glass plaque from Mycenae, depicts antithetical ‘genii’ holding jugs over a similar pile of stones (GILL 1964:17 #20).

<sup>824</sup> *CMS* I:#231–232. See most recently REHAK 1995:225–226 on the date of the Tiryns ring.

<sup>825</sup> All these features also can be observed on the dated contemporary Mainland and Cypriote images.

<sup>826</sup> See Distribution Map 27. Note that End Palatial examples also are indicated on this map.

{88} is dated by tomb contents to LM IIIA. Another {554} is no earlier than LM IIIA1 by its conoid back face, and another, from Zapher Papoura {266} can be dated not only by its incipient conoid back but also by the date of its surrounding tombs, to LM IIIA.<sup>827</sup> Additionally, sealings {206–208} found in loosely dated and apparently LM III contexts of the ‘Little Palace’ at Knossos should also be dated to this period on stylistic grounds, as well as those without context at Knossos {309A?; 309C?; 309D; 309F?}. An ivory mirror handle {440} also depicts multiple ‘genius’ figures.

Younger<sup>828</sup> notes that, with the exception of {87} in LM IIIA2,<sup>829</sup> the ‘genius’ is not found in Minoan contexts later than LM IIIA1. If this seal is not a ‘survivor,’ then it must have been copied from a much earlier model of Proto-Palatial date, probably in LM IIIA1. The deer it carries, and the figures on the reverse scene, have the large drilled eyes commented upon above, suggesting at least a Final Palatial date.<sup>830</sup> The lack of parallels on Crete argues for a date of manufacture earlier than the End Palatial, and it most likely is Final Palatial, but its very uniqueness weakens any argument.

While contextual evidence is paltry, a number of other seals found without context may also be dated to this period on the basis of style. The use of large double-drilled eyes on datable seals {88; 266} suggest a similar dating for others without context {64; 433; 557}, the last is dated stylistically to LM II–III A1 in the *CMS*.<sup>831</sup> Pini also has dated the Cypro-Minoan cylinder seal {555} to the Final Palatial period.

The ‘spiked’ back, without a circular ‘ball’ at the end, appears at Zapher Papoura {266} and in the Knossos palace {174}. Suggestively then, the seals without context from Knossos {309B; 309D; 309F?; 318} and Central Crete {523},<sup>832</sup> also possessing this

feature, should not be earlier than Final Palatial. Whilst the ‘spike-and-ball’ also is found in Final Palatial, all Neo-Palatial examples with a ‘spiked’ back also have the ‘ball’ termination. Another seal {558} also belongs here stylistically.

Two very worn seals {303; 503} both employ diagonal hatched lines for depicting the lower body of the ‘genius.’ This feature also is found at Knossos {174} and Kalyvia {88}, and the others almost certainly also are Final Palatial.

It seems that the archetypal Minoan ‘genius’ does not develop fully until after the palace destructions at the end of LM IB. It is only then that the true ‘wasp-waist’ makes its appearance, although not universally. Occasionally still leonine in appearance {318; 554}, the ‘genius’ develops during Final Palatial into a creature strongly resembling a standing wasp. The dorsal appendage is confined more or less to (or rather has become) the abdomen, resembling coattails, although the spiked back often also continues above on the upper half of the body. The legs lengthen to thin, straight upright poles, which seem to start just below the waist where they are partially hidden by the top of the abdomen. The double-drilled eyes add to the illusion.

The standard pose holding a *Schnabelkanne* is maintained, but most other images seen in Neo-Palatial such as the ‘fighting’ genius {112} and one actively pouring water {372} do not continue.<sup>833</sup> In lieu, several new iconographies emerge:

- 1) The ‘genius’ carries defeated or dead animals: an agrimi {64; 266; 557} and two lion skins on a pole {558}.<sup>834</sup> It also is associated with (but does not carry) an apparently dead agrimi {318}.<sup>835</sup> Curiously, no defeated bulls are represented on Crete, unless this is the animal carried on fragmentary sealing {207}, although several of unknown but

<sup>827</sup> The cemetery extends to LM IIIB, but the seal should not be dated so late. It most likely is LM IIIA1.

<sup>828</sup> YOUNGER 1973:II:378.

<sup>829</sup> Thus, he would place this seal within the ‘Post-Palatial’ period; I leave it here as it clearly belongs within the Final Palatial group of ‘genii.’ Note, however, that sealing {130} can have no earlier a context date than LM IIIA2; see also the ‘End Palatial’ section below.

<sup>830</sup> GILL 1964:3 first suggested an ancient engraver may have copied an earlier design, as explanation for the distinctly early type of ‘genius’ portrayed. YOUNGER 1973:I:85 n. 22 also notes its stylistically later dating. However, no early parallel for the deer is known; the earliest similar image is the LM IB sealing from Aghia Triadha {12}. It is possible that the artist did not equate the earlier hippopotamus

image with the ‘genius’ as he knew it. It is an odd piece altogether.

<sup>831</sup> If, as is unlikely, seal {532} is not a modern forgery, it also would belong here.

<sup>832</sup> Also seal {557}, with large drilled eyes.

<sup>833</sup> This is probably due to the paucity of examples. Some of the scenes evident in Final Palatial could have originated in Neo-Palatial, while some of the earlier images probably continued after the destruction of the palaces. As so many are without context, it is difficult to be certain; they might only be judged stylistically.

<sup>834</sup> Possibly a development of seal impression {12}, or perhaps {129}. In the latter, the twisted form of the goat might be interpreted as indicating lack of life.

<sup>835</sup> This is reminiscent of the proto-image on seal {87}.

- probable Mainland origin are known, but it does lead a live bull on seal {554}, paralleled elsewhere.<sup>836</sup> These are direct continuations of Neo-Palatial themes {12; 87; 129?}.
- 2) A single 'genius' before an incurved altar with what must be a *Schnabelkanne* above it {141; 303; 309F?}. Another continuation from Neo-Palatial {127.A; 308}.
  - 3) Antithetic 'genii' (with and without *Schnabelkanne*) in the 'presentation' pose as 'guardians' of an altar or column {309B?; 503}, a tall plant or tree {440; 523}, a vessel {309A?}, or nothing at all {88}.<sup>837</sup> Another continuation from Neo-Palatial {524}.
  - 4) A 'genius' (with and without *Schnabelkanne*) as part of a procession before a tall altar/pillar or plant/tree in obvious ritual scenes, on two cylinder seals {433; 555}.
  - 5) 'Genius' standing behind a 'lion-man' before two floating bull's legs, on a lentoid seal {174}.
  - 6) The sketch of a lost fragmentary sealing shows what almost certainly is a 'genius' before a bull's head {206}. Whether this should be associated with defeated animals (1) or with altars (2) is problematic, a problem also for another sealing {208} where it may stand before a betyl-type object; effectively, in any case, this again is a continuation of the Neo-Palatial theme.

#### *End Palatial*<sup>838</sup>

Five further seals without, and one with, context may be regarded as late, degraded versions of the Minoan 'genius' {130; 309E; 435; 556; 559; 560}, where the presentation of the figure is so distorted as to be virtually unrecognisable and its details have become the dominating factor in its representation.<sup>839</sup> The 'spikes' and hatch lines of earlier 'genii' have become the sole features of the tubular bodies in four cases, and in the last only the body and eyes are represented. In all but one case, they stand antithetically before a tall thin

central column, a continuation of the Final Palatial Type 3 iconography, the exception being {130} that itself appears to include no central image at all. Arms either are stubs or non-existent. The dorsal appendage has become a long crest more or less stemming from the top of the head. A final example, from Tylosos {516} reduces the figure even farther to a horizontally banded vertical body, possibly flanking a female figure instead of the column.<sup>840</sup>

On Crete itself, the 'genius' clearly had become an unknown quantity, reduced to its simplest form.<sup>841</sup> Its degeneration appears rather quickly, especially if we assume<sup>842</sup> the 'earliest floor' of the LM IIIA2-B (early) structure at Khania is in fact of LM IIIA2 date, as seal {130} already is quite well removed from recognition. An intermediate stage seems not to be represented, unless two {309E; 556} are considered earlier than the others. An enormous difference in representation can be seen between those examples dated to LM IIIA1 (discussed above) and the presumably LM IIIA2 Khaniote example here {130}. It may be that only in certain areas was depiction of the 'genius' figure continued at all, and we have no way of isolating this area since so many examples are without context.

The roundel {128} found in rubbish deposit up to LM IIIB clearly is much earlier in date, certainly not later than LM IB.

#### *Post-Palatial*

No examples can be cited from Crete.

#### COMMENTARY

In tracing the development of the 'genius' on Crete, several points become obvious. First and foremost, there is nothing specific to indicate that the deity whose image was adopted on Crete was in fact female, or indeed that the Minoan image itself was female. The pendant breasts of the Egyptian image do not necessarily indicate pregnancy, as the few known images of pregnant women do not possess them. Nor

<sup>836</sup> GILL 1964:19 #30.

<sup>837</sup> Another, *CMS* XII:#302, possibly is from Crete as it was part of the Seager collection. It is not worn, and suggests a probable original image for the other seals. Note also *CMS* XI:#196, entirely without provenance, where two goats having long horns and spikes down the back flank a similar column. They might be seen as misunderstood 'genii' or as a hybrid animal combining features of both creatures.

<sup>838</sup> See Distribution Map 27. Note that Final Palatial examples also are indicated on this map.

<sup>839</sup> Younger did not discuss these seals or {516} in any of his seminal *Kadmos* articles during the 1980s, so he appears not

to have considered these figures as representations of 'genii.' See the Final Palatial section and n. 828, above.

<sup>840</sup> The seal is worn and badly damaged, and interpretation is uncertain. Too little of the image on sealing {309E} is preserved to identify its iconography, but it likely also is of this design.

<sup>841</sup> This is not true of the Mainland. The figures on the LH IIIB2 sealing from Pylos (NMA 8552; *CMS* I:#379), LH IIIB1 ivory plaque from Kadmeion Thebes (Symeonoglou 1973:pl. 73) and LH IIIB stone mould from Mycenae (GILL 1970:406 #59) remain instantly recognisable.

<sup>842</sup> Until the excavators provide its detailed publication.

do they even indicate femininity, for fecundity figures of the consistently male god Hapy (*H<sup>c</sup>py*), personification of the annual Nile flood, universally have similar pendant breasts. Virtually all known Aegean representations are in non-chromatic media. The only coloured depictions of the ‘genius’ are on two Mainland products, strongly reminiscent of donkeys and later in date.<sup>843</sup> Both are painted white, which would suggest the female figure in Aegean art by colour conventions similar to that in Egypt. Nonetheless, the colour employed in these illustrations more likely represents the animal than its gender, for zoomorphic figures are unaffected by gender colour convention in Mycenaean art.<sup>844</sup> Furthermore, Middle Kingdom images representing male figures are painted both red and white on Middle Kingdom coffins. Nonetheless, the careful distinction between the ‘good’ protective goddess and ‘evil’ male figure throughout the entire Egyptian dynastic period more strongly suggests a female image is presented in Minoan art – on the assumption that Egyptian iconographical inferences were transferred to Crete together with the image – but the male deities too are protective and associated with purification and liquid that are basic traits of the ‘genius.’ Some Minoan images, especially in Neo-Palatial, also could be interpreted as a belligerent force, or were intended to represent a belligerent force protecting ‘things’ from human interference. Baurain, in discussing the two interacting ‘genii’ on the Malia stone triton {372} and other Neo-Palatial images, concludes that ‘genii’ are male, having changed sex from the female Taweret in their transition to the Minoan figure.<sup>845</sup> If the Egyptian figure adopted on Crete was one of the male deities, his proposed transition is not so radical. Some figures and their settings may simply illustrate an individual scene in a mythological narrative demonstrating this force, well known to Minoans but of which we know nothing.

Second, none of the standard attributes of the Egyptian deity – the knife, *s3*-sign (V 17) and long ‘string’ – were ever adopted on Crete. Only the figure itself attracted Minoan attention. Although a large iconographical debt to Egyptian images of the standing hippopotamus deity is clear, it is equally obvious that the earliest representations known on Crete already have been strongly ‘minoanised.’ They show the ‘genius’ holding a particular type of jug, the

*Schnabelkanne*. The jug is a definitely Minoan attribute, not found in Egypt or elsewhere. The image continues, through visual development of the ‘genius’ figure, on Crete from the Proto-Palatial through at least to the Final Palatial period, and even later on the Mainland and Cyprus. By LM IA it is shown employing the *Schnabelkanne* with demonstrably cultic function, pouring some liquid into the paws of a second (and larger) ‘genius,’ who seems about to drink it, on the triton shell-rhyton from Malia {372}. The sole ‘action’ scene of this genre, it is proof enough that the ‘genii’ – certainly imaginary and fantastic creatures – are at least demi-deities, that the *Schnabelkanne* held by the one is of ritual or cultic significance and did contain a liquid, and that some form of libation was involved. VAN STRATEN’S (1969:114) conclusion that “they perform the duties of priests or cult-attendants and are pictured in similar contexts as human priests (priestesses) and worshippers” is based on similar scenes of priest(esse)s holding the same vessel form and places no value on the ‘monstrous’ appearance and alternative actions of the ‘genius.’ It may be instead that the priest(esse)s perform one of their duties in the role of ‘genii,’ and are depicted as ‘genii’ only when performing it. The immediate interpretation of the role performed by ‘genii’ as well as priest(esse)s would involve purification of some kind, the details being wide open to interpretation according to one’s personal viewpoint and imagination. The ‘genius’ becomes more leonine in certain major details, as does one branch of development in Egypt, but with a more constricted but not yet ‘wasp’ waist.

The scene becomes antithetic and formal, and often the confronted pair of ‘genii’ act as apotropaic guardians to some central object, a rare image in Egypt although they are more commonly found as a confronted pair without central attribute. It is a more posed but no less ritual aspect of the cult involved which introduces other objects of equal if not greater cultic significance, the column, ‘tree’ and altar. Other creatures in the Minoan cultic pantheon flank such objects, but none, it should be noted, are depicted holding the *Schnabelkanne*. The foliage, often considered ‘filler’ elements in the early compositions, takes on greater significance in light of the occasional depiction of the central ‘tree’ element. The foliage growing out of the jug held by the early ‘genius’ from

<sup>843</sup> LH IIB. See GILL 1970:404, 405 #55, Ill.1, from Pylos; MINISTRY 1988:181–182, #150, from Mycenae.

<sup>844</sup> They seem unaffected by any colour convention. Contemporary Mainland frescoes depict animals in such unrealistic

colours as pink, violet, yellow and blue; see HOOD 1978:81, fig. 64:B.

<sup>845</sup> BAURAIN 1985:110–111.

Phaestos {449} cannot be accidental, nor can the appearance of foliage of some type in later illustrations be fortuitous. No such association is made in Egypt; again, this is Minoan construct.

The singular 'genius' continues in its standard pose, holding its *Schnabelkanne* (whether actually depicted or not) before or above a recognisable – and again definitively Aegean – altar. The *Schnabelkanne* itself is not always depicted in Final Palatial representations, suggesting that – on Crete at least – cultic iconography no longer required its physical presence. The 'genius' also develops less leonine characteristics and becomes more of an insect, the dorsal appendage merging with the body to evolve as the insect's abdomen and 'spiked' back, the limbs becoming rigid. By or in End Palatial times on Crete, the 'genius' has become so schematic it is barely recognisable. No *Schnabelkannen* are indicated (presumably they are there nonetheless), and virtually the only pose is antithetic flanking of a central column. While the 'genius' enjoys a far longer life on the Mainland,<sup>846</sup> the image is not maintained on Crete. It is even uncertain if End Palatial Minoan seal-makers even knew what they were depicting.

The other iconographical image, the 'genius' as 'Master of Animals,' apparently is of later origin and is an entirely indigenous Minoan development. It bears some resemblance to the belligerent aspects of the Egyptian standing hippopotamus deity in its obvious (depicted or implied) combative nature but, as the Egyptian concept involves no other zoological figures as an opposing or defeated force, it seems hardly credible to propose any association. We know nothing of any possible myths or cultic reasoning for the Aegean scenes, but the Egyptian evidence merely emphasises the protective nature of the deity, who has no specific opponent except those of whom the male deities speak, but who are not illustrated, in the *Coffin Texts*.

The only exception known is recorded in *The Contendings of Horus and Seth*, where the gods fight each other in the guise of two hippopotami, but neither of them is associated with the standing deity figure.<sup>847</sup> The only 'early' image of the 'genius' as 'Master of Animals,' the seal from Kalyvia {87}, is problematic but appears most likely to be an MM III scene. The two other earliest datable images of this type, both LM I, may depict similar or completely different aspects of this aggressive force: one static 'genius' holds a lion cub or skin, suggesting some form of protective or – more likely – domineering role {12}, and the other {112} violently contends with an equally combative bull. The association with – and dominance over – other animals expands and is depicted in the past tense in Final Palatial, a theme not found in Egypt. When appearing with a third party, the 'genius' returns to its apotropaic role of protector; hence its position behind the central – and main – character in Knossos sealing {174}.<sup>848</sup> The ultimate victor is the 'genius,' who then must be considered a force superior to or dominant over the zoological world as represented by both naturally aggressive animals (e.g., lion, bull) and others that never were domesticated (e.g., agrimi).

If any original Egyptian iconographical or associative meaning was transferred to Minoan conception of the standing hippopotamus deity, it was not retained in its attributes. Its physical appearance evolved more slowly, but by LM I was far removed from the original representation. The only apparent adoption seems to have been the association with purification through use of a liquid – hence the *Schnabelkanne* – attested on the Egyptian side both with the concept relating the waters of Nun and of childbirth for the three female deities, and the obscure references to FAULKNER'S (1973–1978) Egyptian "lustral-basin" (*š3sw/h3sw/h3sw*) associated with the male Debiher.<sup>849</sup>

<sup>846</sup> Apparently also Cyprus and possibly the Greek islands; see GILL 1964; 1970; REHAK 1995 for a catalogue of 'genius' representations.

<sup>847</sup> The tale is preserved on *Papyrus Chester Beatty I*, dated to the reign of Ramesses V (Dynasty XX); see LICHTHEIM 1975–1980:II:218.

Egyptian scenes of hippopotamus-hunting (i.e., man against hippopotamus) are unrelated. They are found as early as the Naqada I period, and fall within the genre of the 'marsh scene,' although they too can have religious overtones; see SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH 1953 and Chapter 15. YULE 1981:139 saw a hippopotamus represented on the face design of Proto-Palatial seal (HM 1303) from Malia, but YOUNGER 1988b:188 n. 2 and others correctly have identified it as a bull. Likewise, Evans saw a 'rude' drawing of a

hippopotamus on the face of {529}, but this too is an unlikely identification.

<sup>848</sup> GILL 1964:12 notes the presence of the bull's thighs in these sealings, which recall the constellation in that form identified as the 'Foreleg of Seth' (as well as the odd foreleg on the face design of Platanos scarab {476}), but pronounces it "probably fortuitous." Any possible association would have to explain the role of the 'lion-man,' not found in related Egyptian iconography. See NEUGEBAUER and PARKER 1969:III.1:189–191 on the 'Foreleg'; it is represented as bull-headed and is unrelated. The 'genius' plays a similar role on the Kakovatos cylinder seal, placed behind a warrior fighting a lion (*CMS XI:#208*).

<sup>849</sup> See n. 774, above.