

## Pazuzu

**I. Introduction.** *Hybrid Mesopotamian demon.* According to literary sources P. represents a ferocious wind that brings destruction to cultivated land, cattle, and humans. This wind was originally identified with a hot, southwesterly wind due to an incorrect understanding of a Sumerian incantation (LENORMANT 1874: 48), but recent research (CHARLIER 1992; HEEBEL 2002: 2, 62-66) shows that an identification with a cold, wintry, northeasterly wind is much more consistent with the textual evidence.

Representations of P., usually in the form of small heads, were extremely popular since his image was used to ward off other demonic beings. P. served particularly as the antagonist of the baby-snatching demon →Lamashtu, and was a favourite amulet of pregnant women and young mothers. P.'s popularity is also illustrated by the distribution of images outside Mesopotamia, which were found in Susiana, Luristan, Samos, and the Levant including Palestine/Israel.

The earliest known images from the 8th cent. display a fully developed iconography that does not undergo any significant changes through five cents. until the last attestations in Seleucid times.

The identification of representations with P. is based on a number of objects bearing a standard incantation (Sumerian *gá-e Pa-zu-zu* or Akkadian *anāku Pa-zu-zu* "I am P.") and is proven beyond doubt by an inscription on a clay P. head (14) starting with *annū qaqqad Pazuzu* "this is the head of P."

The following description of phenotypes is based on a selective catalogue of 30 from 164 representations of P. discussed in HEEBEL 2002. Added to this are the P. heads from Beth-Shean (20\*) and (30) Ḥorvat Qitmit.

### II. Typology

#### II.1. Phenotypes

1. COMPLETE FIGURE 1.1. Attacking (1-7)  
1.2. Standing (8-10) 1.3. Crouching (11-12) 2. HEAD  
2.1. Single-faced head (13-26) 2.2. Janus head (27-32) 3. UNCERTAIN

**GENERAL REMARKS.** The standard iconography and the few detectable variations are considered here before the different phenotypes are discussed. Images of P. show a rather distinct iconography with only very few deviations. His head consists of mixed anthropomorphic and theriomorphic elements. Most distinctive are the rectangular form of the head; the canine jaws with the teeth and tongue

shown; and large, round, deep-set eyes under thick eyebrows. Animal horns, a horizontally cut human beard, human ears, round bulges on his head, and a throat marked by horizontal lines are further characteristic features of this demon. An elongated, small, canine body with the ribs clearly visible, human shoulders and arms ending in the claws of a predator, and human or animal thighs which turn into bird's talons form the body. Two pairs of bird's wings on his back, a *penis erectus* ending in a snake's head, and the tail of a scorpion complete P.'s hybrid iconography. Regardless of the pose P. is presented in, these parts of his iconography are shown on all elaborate pieces.

A variation of this standard iconography is found on the reverse of a Lamashtu-amulet (2) portraying a demon with cow ears, closed human mouth, a long snake-like tail, and the left arm raised, not the right as usual. As the other elements are characteristic of P. this figure can still be interpreted by MOOREY (1965: 34) as "a local iconographic variant, rather than another demon," as opposed to WIGGERMANN'S (1992: 179) identification of it as a "deviant →*kusarikku*." Another alteration in P.'s iconography is the curly beard shown on several images (23-25), that gives P. a →Bes-like appearance (HEEBEL 2002: 22).

A slight variance can also be detected on a representation of P. on a fibula with an attached stamp seal from Megiddo. The small head on one arm of fibula 21\* displays several of P.'s features, such as the canine jaws, the rectangular head, bulging eyes, and horns. However, the ears that stick out are not human, but resemble the cow's ears of 2. A very similar fibula, unfortunately not found in a regular excavation, with the same cow ears and an attached stamp seal also depicting a horned animal (22), shows that this deviation is not restricted to a single case and cannot be taken as evidence for a local variation.

#### 1. COMPLETE FIGURE

**1.1. Attacking.** Most statuettes depict P. *en face* in an attacking posture, with the right arm raised in smiting pose and the left leg put forward in an advancing stride (1\*). An attacking P. with his left arm raised (2) is unusual. Some statuettes show a sitting (3\*) or kneeling (4) position, but nevertheless with the right arm raised in attack. On amulets P. is seen in side view in the same posture (5-7).

**1.2. Standing.** Images of P. on the reverse of →Lamashtu-amulets (8\*-9) render a tranquil picture of the demon viewed from the back, with both claws positioned at

the edge of the amulet and the head looking over the rim. One foot is put forward as if striding but the clutching of the rim shows P. as standing, frozen in movement, and looking in the direction of the viewer. A statuette, supposedly from Tanis (San el-Hagar), portrays P. in a standing position with both arms raised and both talons set side by side (10). BRAUN-HOLZINGER (1984: 77) suspects that this statuette was modeled after a representation on a Lamashtu-amulet without knowledge of three-dimensional images.

**1.3. Crouching.** A statuette from Sultantepe (11) depicts P. in a crouching position, sitting with his legs drawn up and both arms resting on his knees. A similar statuette delineates him on his knees, both arms on his thighs, and his wings folded on his back (12).

## 2. HEAD

**2.1. Single-faced head.** Far more numerous than full-figure representations are detached P. head-pendants that were used *pars pro toto* for the demon (13\*-20\*). Attached to other objects, they appear on fibulae (21\*-22) or amulets (23-25). Although the heads vary considerably in their general form of appearance, with each head having a distinct air, which adds to the personality of the demon, the iconography of the heads remains remarkably stable. The only detectable variations on detached heads concern the canine jaws that are sometimes exchanged for a human mouth, and the beard that can end in two points at the chin (26). Very small heads, especially those made of bronze or stone, sometimes display a smaller number of iconographic features, usually only the most important, as the limited size made the handling of the pieces difficult.

**2.2. Janus head.** One head (27); three seals (28-29), of which one comes from Ḥorvat Qitmit in the Negev (30\*), inscribed with the name *šwbnqws*; and one statuette (31) show a Janus-head iconography with a face of P. on each side. A mace head from Samos even depicts a P. face on all four sides (32).

## 3. UNCERTAIN

Four amulets (9 and HEEBEL 2002: nos. 20, 29, 32) of →Lamashtu depict a figure that strongly resembles P. The creature displays the rectangular-shaped head, the horizontally cut beard, and round bulges on the back of the head distinctive of P. However, other characteristic features like the horns, the canine jaws, and the round eyes are missing. Furthermore, the iconography of the body is different from P.'s, showing a naked human body with raised

hands. This figure is always accompanied by a P. head right above it, which indicates that the figure itself is not P. Since the figure of a man in lion's hide is depicted at the same position on another amulet, it can be surmised that this is not the demon P. but a human, probably an exorcist, who is using the accompanying P. head, and who is drawn similarly to the demon, or even wears a mask (HEEBEL 2002: 18f).

## II.2. Associations

1. ASSOCIATED WITH DEITIES/DEMONS  
1.1. Lamashtu (2, 8-9, 16) 1.2. Ugallu and Lulal (5-6, 15, 23) 2. ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMALS AND HUMANS: Bird, woman's bust, and caprid

### 1. ASSOCIATED WITH DEITIES/DEMONS.

**1.1. Lamashtu.** P. is pictured on the back of several amulets (2, 8\*-9) with the female demon →Lamashtu as central figure; and on two amulets (HEEBEL 2002: nos. 23, 25) three-dimensional heads of P. are placed on the upper edges. Furthermore, on some Lamashtu-amulets P. is also depicted on the obverse next to Lamashtu, once in full-figure in an attacking pose (8\*), and several times only in the form of a head in side view (9). The broken stamp seal in the form of P. from Sultantepe (16) shows on the base the lower half of a demon with bird's talons that FARBER (1980-83: 443 §3c) has identified as Lamashtu. Literary sources that reflect P.'s association with Lamashtu are scarce; only two passages in Lamashtu incantations refer to P. (HEEBEL 2002: 74f).

**1.2. Ugallu and Lulal.** Four out of five known amulets with P. as the main figure depict two additional figures: a hybrid creature with a lion's head, human body, and bird's talons, a dagger in the raised right hand and a scepter in the left; and a human figure with raised fist and the horned helmet of divinity. Each is clad in a kilt. These two figures, better known from a large panel from the north palace in Niniveh (CURTIS/READE 1995: 90, fig. 32), have been identified as →Ugallu and Lulal (WIGGERMANN 1992: 63f). On the obverse of amulet 6\* P. is placed between them; on the other three amulets they are rendered on the rev. (23, 5; HEEBEL 2002: no. 18). Furthermore, Ugallu and Lulal are drawn on the reverse of two clay P. heads (16; HEEBEL 2002: no. 153). It remains uncertain whether the single image of a demon on the reverse of other clay heads such as 15 is to be identified with Ugallu (HEEBEL 2002: 83, no. 11).

**2. ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMALS AND HUMANS: Bird, woman's bust, and caprid.** All known fibulae with P. heads attached on one arm display either a bird or

a woman's bust on the other arm (21\*-22; HEEBEL 2002: nos. 49-50, 52-59), once even combining all three images (HEEBEL 2002: no. 47). These fibulae also show an association to caprids, which appear on the stamp seal attached to a fibula (21\*). Caprid horns are depicted on the arms of several fibulae that also show P. heads (HEEBEL 2002: nos. 49-50, 53-54).

### III. Sources

**III.1. Chronological range.** The first images of P. appeared in large numbers in Assyria and Babylonia in the 8th cent. Attempts to identify a second mill. precursor (HOWARD-CARTER 1983) have proven unsuccessful (GREEN 1985: 75f). The first delineations that can be securely dated are two heads (HEEBEL 2002: nos. 89, 157); a fibula (HEEBEL 2002: no. 47); and a necklace with 15 P. heads and three small P. statuettes (18) from the tombs of the Assyrian queens at Nimrud, which date to the end of the 8th cent. (HEEBEL 2002: 27). The oldest literary sources mentioning P. date around the year 670 (HEEBEL 2002: 30f).

From the 7th to the 6th cent. representations of P. are regularly found in Assyria and Babylonia; later attestations are less frequent. However, some heads can be dated to the Achaemenid period (HEEBEL 2002: nos. 139, 66 [Achaemenid-Seleucid], 137 [Late Babylonian-Achaemenid]), and the most recent piece was found in a Seleucid stratum (HEEBEL 2002: no. 65; cf. also no. 23). Moreover, literary sources from Seleucid times mention P. It is possible that P. representations were still used in Parthian times, but the evidence for this is ambiguous (HEEBEL 2002: 23-33).

### III.2. Geographical distribution.

The vast majority of provenanced representations of P. come from Babylonia (46 objects) and Assyria (27 objects). Only seven depictions of P. were found outside of Mesopotamia: a head (HEEBEL 2002: no. 68) and a seal with attached head (28) from Susa, as well as a head from Nush i-Jan (HEEBEL 2002: no. 67) illustrate the distribution to the east into Susiana and Luristan. A mace head from Samos (32), a head from Beth-Shean (20\*), a head attached to a stamp seal from Ḥorvat Qitmit (30\*) and to a fibula from Megiddo (21\*) attest to his dissemination to the west. Depictions of P. were possibly circulated in Egypt, as some were purchased by museums in Luxor and Cairo, but conclusive evidence for this is still lacking (HEEBEL 2002: 35-39).

**III.3. Object types.** P. is depicted on a large variety of object types. Most

common are heads of P. made of metal (bronze, copper, gold), stone, clay, bone, or faience (13\*-20\*, 26). Heads attached to seals (27-30\*), fibulae (21\*-22), or amulets (23-25) demonstrate P.'s use as an apotropaion on personal ornaments, as do small heads on a necklace (18). The appearance of a head on cylinder seals (HEEBEL 2002: nos. 36-37) and the use of P. heads on the sides of a mace head (32) are confined to single examples. Full-figure representations appear as statuettes (1\*, 3-4, 10, 12, 18), on amulets (2, 5-9, 23), and as a figurative stamp seal (11). Molds for heads (19; HEEBEL 2002: nos. 43, 45-46) and an amulet (HEEBEL 2002: no. 44) illustrate that P. images were fabricated in mass production, which is also emphasised by duplicate P. heads from the same model (HEEBEL 2002: 45).

**IV. Conclusion.** The relatively sudden advent of P. images with fully developed iconography gives rise to the question of the origin of this demon. Due to some iconographical parallels with the god →Bes, Egyptian influence on the iconography has been tentatively proposed (GREEN 2000: 247; differently HEEBEL 2002: 21f).

In the 7th-6th cent. P. was immensely popular as his images were used for a variety of purposes, e.g., as a personal apotropaion, on amulets against the demon →Lamashtu, as protection for the house against the entrance of other supernatural beings (cf. KÜHNE 1993/94: 270-272), and in healing rituals against "anything evil" (*mimma lemnu*, HEEBEL 2002: 69-74). P.'s iconography as an attacking demon (1-7) reflects this usage. However, literary sources reveal a more ambiguous attitude toward P. (HEEBEL 2002: 66-69). Although his image is used as an apotropaion against diseases brought about by demonic beings his presence is also feared, as the cold wind, which P. represents, brings destruction. This ambiguity is expressed on the iconographic level, most clearly by the demons →Ugallu and Lulal accompanying and thereby checking an attacking P. on amulets (6\*). Other depictions, such as crouching P. (11-12), may signify the same idea - that of P. being warded off. In this context it should be noted that the faces of a number of terracotta P. heads (14) are broken while the rest of the head, especially the inscription on the back, is intact. This could point to P. images being deliberately damaged in a ritual against this demon.

### V. Catalogue

1\* Statuette, bronze, 14.7 x 8.6 x 5.6 cm, 8th-6th cent. Paris, Musée National du Louvre, MNB 467. BRAUN-HOLZINGER

1984: no. 254; \*HEEBEL 2002: no. 12 **2** Amulet, bronze, 8th-6th cent. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 283; HEEBEL 2002: no. 27 **3\*** Statuette, bronze, 55 x 47 mm, 8th-6th cent. Frankfurt am Main, Städtische Galerie Liebieghaus (on loan). HEEBEL 2002: no. 6 **4** Statuette, bronze, 8th-6th cent. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 255; HEEBEL 2002: no. 10 **5** Amulet, stone, Assur, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 14 **6\*** Amulet, quartz, 48 x 48 x 12 mm, Babylon. 7th-6th cent. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1998.19. SAGGS 1959/60: figs. 3-6; \*HEEBEL 2002: no. 15 **7** Amulet, bronze, 8th-6th cent. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 261; HEEBEL 2002: no. 17 **8\*** Amulet, bronze, 13.3 x 8.4 x 2.5 cm, 8th-7th cent. Paris, Musée National du Louvre, AO 22205. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 281; \*HEEBEL 2002: no. 30 **9** Amulet, limestone, Nimrud, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 21 **10** Statuette, bronze, 8th-6th cent. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 260; HEEBEL 2002: no. 9 **11** Statuette, red stone, Sultantepe, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 1 **12** Statuette, jasper, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 11 **13\*** Head, bronze, 96 (l) x 64 (w) x 61 (h) mm, Nimrud, 7th cent. London, British Museum, ANE 93089. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 263; \*HEEBEL 2002: no. 61 **14** Head, clay, Assur, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 116 **15** Head, clay, Assur, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 118 **16** Head, clay, 8th-7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 150 **17** Head, serpentine, Zincirli, 7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 93 **18a** Head (15 items) on necklace, gypsum, 8th cent. HUSSEIN/SULEIMAN 2000: 219, pl. 16 **18b** Statuette (3 items) on necklace, gypsum, 8th cent. HUSSEIN/SULEIMAN 2000: 219, pl. 16 **19** Mould for a head, clay, Babylon, 6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 42 **20\*** Pendant, 30.8 x 8 x 9 mm, Beth-Shean, 8th-6th cent. Beth-Shemesh, IAA Storehouse. ORNAN 2006: 517-519, figs. 14.7-8 **21\*** Fibula, bronze, 49 x 35 mm, Megiddo, 8th-7th cent. Jerusalem, Palestine Archaeological Museum, 36.930. LAMON/SHIPTON 1939: pl. 71:72; CURTIS 1994: 50; SALJE 1997: no. 131; PEDDE 2000: no. 1097; \*HEEBEL 2002: no. 48 **22** Fibula, bronze, 8th-6th cent. CURTIS 1994: 50; PEDDE 2000: no. 1101; HEEBEL 2002: no. 51 **23** Amulet, limestone, Niniveh, 7th cent. London, British Museum, ANE 91899. HEEBEL 2002: no. 16 **24** Amulet with attached P. head, magnetite, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 162 **25** Amulet with attached P. head, chalcedony, Assyria, 8th-7th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 163 **26** Head, bronze, 8th-6th cent. BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984: no. 262; HEEBEL 2002: no. 81 **27** Stamp seal with attached head, bronze, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 41 **28** Stamp seal with attached head, bronze, Susa, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 33 **29** Stamp seal with attached head, tin-bronze, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 34 **30\*** Stamp seal with attached head, bronze, Horvat Qitmit, 7th-6th cent. \*BEITH-ARIEH 1995: 264-267, 270f; BEITH-ARIEH 1996 **31** Statuette, bronze, 8th-6th cent. HEEBEL 2002: no. 5 **32** Mace head, bronze, Samos, 7th cent. JANTZEN 1972: pl. 51; HEEBEL 2002: no. 161

#### VI. Selected Bibliography

MOOREY 1965 • BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1984 • HEEBEL 2002

*Nils P. Heebel*

## Bibliography

- BEIT-ARIEH I., 1995, Horvat Qitmit. An Edomite Shrine in the Biblical Negev, Tel Aviv.
- 1996, A Seal Bearing an Inscription from the Edomite Shrine at Horvat Qitmit: EI 25, 59-64, 89\*.
- BRAUN-HOLZINGER E.A., 1984, Figürliche Bronzen aus Mesopotamien, Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Abteilung I, 4. Band, München.
- CHARLIER P., 1992, Pazuzu et le froid, in: M. BROZE M./TALON P., eds., L'atelier de l'orfèvre, Fs. P. Derchian, Leuven, 31-35.
- CURTIS J.E., 1994, Assyrian Fibulae with Figural Decoration, in: CHOLIDIS N./DIETRICH M., eds., Beschreiben und Deuten in der Archäologie des Alten Orients. Fs. R. Mayer-Opificius, Münster, 49-62.
- CURTIS J.E./READE J.E., 1995, Art and Empire, London.
- FARBER W., 1980-83, Art. Lamaštu, in: RIA 6: 439-446.
- GREEN A., 1985, A Note on the 'Scorpion-Man' and Pazuzu: Iraq 47, 75-79.
- 2000, 'Hell's Angels': Zur Ikonographie des Todes in der neassyrischen und neubabylonischen Bildkunst: AoF 27, 242-250.
- HEEBEL N.P., 2002, Pazuzu. Archäologische und philologische Studien zu einem altorientalischen Dämon (AMD 4), Leiden.
- HOWARD-CARTER T., 1983, An Interpretation of the Sculptural Decoration of the Second Millennium Temple at Tell al-Rimah: Iraq 45, 64-72.
- HUSSEIN M.M./SULEIMAN A., 2000, Nimrud. A City of Golden Treasures, Baghdad.
- JANTZEN U., 1972, Samos VIII, Bonn.
- KÜHNE H., 1993/94, Archäologische Forschungen in Syrien (5): AfO 40/41, 195-306.
- LAMON R.S./SHIPTON G.M., 1939, Megiddo I (OIP 42), Chicago.
- LENORMANT F., 1874, Magie chez les Chaldéens, Paris.
- MOOREY P.R.S., 1965, A Bronze 'Pazuzu' Statuette from Egypt: Iraq 27, 33-41.
- ORNAN T., 2006, An Amulet of the Demon Pazuzu, in: MAZAR A., ed., Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989-1996. Volume I: From the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval Period, Jerusalem, 517-519.
- PEDDE F., 2000, Vorderasiatische Fibeln von der Levante bis Iran, Saarbrücken.
- RLA = EBELING E./EDZARD D.O., eds., 1932-, Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie, Berlin.
- SAGGS H.W.F., 1959/60, Pazuzu: AfO 19, 124-127.
- SALJE B., 1997, Siegelverwendung im privaten Bereich: «Schmuck» - Amulet - Grabbeigabe, in: Klengel-Brandt E., ed., Mit sieben Siegeln versehen. Das Siegel in Wirtschaft und Kunst des Alten Orient, Mainz, 124-137.
- WIGGERMANN F.A.M., 1992, Mesopotamian Protective Spirits (CM 1), Groningen.