

## PREFACE

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The existence of this first volume presenting the late Middle Kingdom settlement in the Area A/II owes a great debt of gratitude to MANFRED BIETAK, who allowed me to work on this large amount of material he had excavated in the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s first under the auspices of the Austrian Cultural Department of the Austrian Embassy in Cairo and then by the Cairo Branch of the Austrian Archaeological Institute, which he had founded. MANFRED BIETAK then followed the growth of the project with steady interest and constant institutional support as director of the Cairo Branch of the Austrian Archaeological Institute, the chair of the Institute for Egyptology at the University of Vienna, and the chairman of the then Commission of Egypt and the Levant of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

I always felt very deeply the importance of bringing this part of the late Middle Kingdom settlement at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> to a wider audience, firstly, because there are still so few settlements excavated in Egypt in general, sometimes in very small exposures and the chances to explore areas of a similar size become slimmer every year. The prospect of being able to use ca 3000 m<sup>2</sup> of settlement area plus finds in three phases for a variety of analysis seemed extremely enticing. Secondly, in contrast to most of the known settlements of the Middle Kingdom, Area A/II was not laid out in an orthogonal plan but seems to have developed in a self-organised way. At the same time it became very clear that the design of the settlement, which began in Phase G/3 and more specifically in Phase G/2–1, was kept later on, as the super-positions of the courses of walls in the same position were frequently observed. Even after the settlement ceased to exist as such (in Phase F) and was replaced by a sacred complex and surrounding cemeteries (Phases F–E/3), the orientation of the buildings remained the same, as well as the placement of the main thoroughfare and, in one case, even the placement of one of the later temples. Thirdly, there is hardly any modern publication of an Egyptian settlement, which combines the archaeological report with the complete find assemblages and not just typologies, and it was my particular wish and ambition to see this task

fulfilled here. I was born too late to be a member of the original excavation, but it was possible to present the settlement and its development in a systematic way with the help of MANFRED BIETAK and the records kept in the joint archives of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Cairo Branch of the Austrian Archaeological Institute.

Finally I would like to stress that the main objective of this book is the final publication of the archaeological record and the findings made in the various loci of the western part of the settlement in Area A/II and not their interpretation. Some interpretation, analyses and some aspects of the settlement have already appeared in print in the form of articles (see bibliography), others are still in press and no doubt others will follow, once the second volume of the excavation report with the eastern part of the settlement in Area A/II is finalised.

The funding necessary to conduct this research came from three different projects and funding bodies in the years 2006 to 2014, namely project no 11847 financed by the ‘Jubiläumsfonds’ of the Austrian National Bank: *Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>/Avaris (Egypt) and its Environment in the late Middle Kingdom (ca 1800–1700 BC) Economy–Immigration–Acculturation*; the Intra-European Marie Curie Fellowship project no 040625 *A Bridge to Canaan* (European Commission) conducted at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge and project no V147–G21 *Foreigners in Egypt – The Archaeology of Culture Contact in an Egyptian Settlement* as Elise Richter Fellow at the University of Vienna financed by the Austrian Science Fund.

I would like to thank the Principal Investigators PETER JANOSI (OENB) and GRAEME BARKER (Univ. of Cambridge) for taking on the project and me. A special word of thanks is due to GRAEME BARKER, who continued to be interested in the project and my further career even after I had left Cambridge, for encouraging me to engage in the widely interdisciplinary research landscape at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, which I thoroughly enjoyed and of which I benefited immensely in a professional and personal sense. Here mention must be made of

at least a few of the people, who were always helpful and happy to discuss research in a wide variety of ways, namely JANINE BOURRIAU, LISA FRENCH, PETER FRENCH, SUSANNE HAKENBECK, OLIVER HARRIS, MARTIN JONES, PAUL HEGGARTY, DEE KUNZE, IAIN MORELY, JOAN OATES, MARY OWNBY, GWIL OWEN, JACKIE PHILLIPS, KATE SPENCE, LAWRENCE SMITH and RHIANNON STEVENS.

The last project (Elise Richter) was directed by myself and conducted at the University of Vienna. For the favourable reception at the Institute for Egyptology and constant support I would like to warmly thank E. CHRISTIANA KÖHLER, who had just succeeded to the chair of the institute at the time of the award of my project. For many interesting discussions on identity, migration and many other topics I would like to thank JAMES GOFF, GERALD MOERS and CHRISTIAN KNOBLAUCH. IRENE KAPLAN always helped with any other query, be they administrative or related to finding specific books.

The finishing touches were put to this volume during the START project no Y754–G19 *Beyond Politics – Material Culture in Second Intermediate Period Egypt and Nubia*, conducted at the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, whose director, BARBARA HOREJS, I would like to thank for hosting it.

I recorded the finds in the years 2006 to 2010 at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> itself (two seasons per year) as well as at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Albeit I am not a specialist in either small finds or in animal bones, I should hope that the full presentation of all the finds per find locus will merit the space that was given to these find groups and enables specialists in these fields to form their own interpretations. This holds particularly true for the animal bones, identified and published by J. BOESSNECK for the material covered by this volume. Having drawn and recorded all small finds available, I gained first-hand experience in these. They did much to enhance my interest and expertise in the other object groups available beside pottery, which I have studied for more than twenty years. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn more about these objects and their materiality.

To the director of the Egyptian and Oriental collection of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, REGINA HÖLZL I would like to express my sincerest thanks for enabling access to the material even in difficult and time-constrained circumstances. I would also like to extend this ‘thank you’ to MICHAELA HÜTTNER, who arranged the visits and prepared the objects.

GÜNTHER KARL KUNST was a constant inspiring help with problems related to the identification of animal bones, which were sometimes provided only from photographs.

During the time I conducted this settlement project in the field the members of the Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> team must not be forgotten, who helped it along in various ways. Here I would like to mention specifically DAVID ASTON, VERA MÜLLER and MIRIAM MÜLLER. Also ERNST CZERNY, KARIN KOPETZKY and IRMGARD HEIN contributed to the completion of this project. I would like to thank MARIAN NEGRETE-MARTINEZ for drawing most of the chipped stone tools and NICOLA MATH for providing me with newly drawn plans of Area A/II made on behalf of one of MANFRED BIETAK’s projects (15554 Austrian National Bank (OENB) *Canaanite Cults and Religion in the Eastern Nile Delta – An Archaeological Approach*).

The current director of the Austrian Archaeological Institute Cairo Branch, IRENE FORSTNER-MÜLLER, also always contributed to the progress of the project through kind interest, institutional support and access to archival materials.

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My largest debt, however, I owe to my husband, DAVID, who shared a growing amount of records and diminishing space in the house, and put up with frequent and long absences during this seemingly never ending project. Thank you for not saying “I told you so”.

Bettina Bader  
Baden, September 2017