

## PREFACE

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In some ways it is perhaps strange to devote an entire Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> volume to one particular style of pottery, rather than including it with the other ceramic finds already published by one of the authors. There are several reasons, however, for devoting a monograph to Tell el-Yahudiya Ware. Tell el-Yahudiya Ware – generally in the form of brown or black polished juglets with punctured decoration – is widely distributed throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Thus if it would be possible to produce a chronologically workable typology for this ware, which is confined to the first half of the Second Millenium BC., then it can be seen as an important tool in establishing datum lines between different sites. Through a careful analysis of previous research in the study of this ware, and the cataloguing of more than 650 pieces found in controlled stratigraphic excavations at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, we believe we are now at a stage to produce such a chronologically workable typology, and, as such, we feel more than justified in devoting an entire monograph to the Tell el-Yahudiya Ware found at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>.

We have divided this book into four parts as the material seems to dictate. Firstly we review previous research in the topic (Part One), which clearly indicated that a new classification of this ware was sorely needed. In response to this need, we have established a new classification of Tell el-Yahudiya ware, based on fabric, form and shape attributes, style of decoration and distribution patterns (Part Two). As a result of this analysis, it can be seen that, following the first appearance of such pottery in the northern Levant during the Middle Bronze IIA period, Tell el-Yahudiya Ware developed along distinctive lines. Firstly the earliest vessels – the Primeval group – evolved into a northern and a southern group, differentiated by decorative styles. For the sake of argument, and based on the findspots of these pots, these groups may be termed Levantine and Early Palestinian respectively. Whilst the Palestinian group continued to evolve through Middle and subsequently Late Palestinian styles, the northern group split into a Levantine (Syrian) group, and an Egyptian

one, the latter presumably arising out of attempts by potters in Egypt, possibly of Near Eastern origin, to copy Levantine imports. At first the true Levantine vessels and their Egyptian copies were very similar and the term Levanto-Egyptian can truly be applied to these pots. During the later Middle Bronze Age, however, Syrian and Egyptian types developed along their own distinctive paths so that typically Late Egyptian forms differ markedly from their Late Syrian contemporaries. The Tell el-Yahudiya Ware from Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, is then catalogued according to this new typology (Part Three), and thence chronological implications are drawn from this material (Part Four). We have also been fortunate to have received contributions from Lawrence Stager and Ross Voss, Aren Maier and Robert Mullins, and Hanan Charaf and Mary Ownby, on Tell el-Yahudiya vessels from Ashkelon, Beth Shan and Tell Arqa. These we have gathered as Part Five, a view from the north, followed by a short appendix, an analysis of content of Tell el-Yahudiya and other vessels from Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, which has been done in 1986 by R. Rottländer, but has not yet been published.

Finally it remains for us to thank Paul Åström (†) for permission to reproduce various drawings from Maureen Kaplan's *The Origin and Distribution of Tell el-Yahudiyeh Ware*, and the Austrian Academy for permission to reproduce Part One which, in an earlier version, was previously published in M. BIETAK and E. CZERNY (eds.), *The Bronze Age in the Lebanon*, Vienna, 2007, 165–194: To all of the colleagues who have shown us various jugs over the years, and freely discussed their findings with us we are very grateful. To mention them all by name would be to give a complete compendium of everyone who has worked in the Levant over the past forty years. They know who they are, and we hope this book will be a token of our gratitude.

David A. Aston  
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