

Entanglements



LBA Pottery Trade

Trade in Bronze Age Pottery

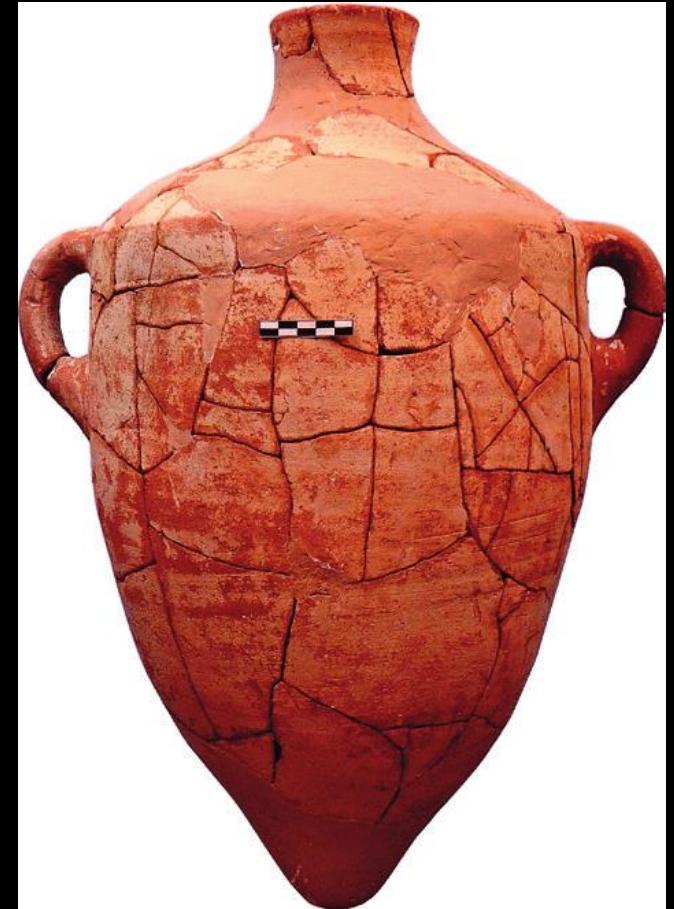
- Movement of pottery around East Mediterranean:
 - Contents (residue analysis)
 - For the vessel itself
- Very distinctive ceramic style around region:
 - Possible to accurately chart exchanges / partners
 - Provenance analysis
- Commodities?
 - Kopytoff – situational entities temporarily entangled in new social codes
 - Exchangeability = salient feature



Late Minoan III transport stirrup jar
Episokopi

Bulk Transport of Pottery

- Bulk transport of liquids:
 - Canaanite jars
 - Transport stirrup jars
 - Egyptian amphorae
- Alienable objects:
 - Economic exchange without social relations
 - “self-contained value, capable of being owned & circulated as property without reference to the social sources of production” (Strathern 1990, 152)



Canaanite jar: Maa-Palaekastro

Commodity Branding

- Largely preliterate communities: how to make assurances:
 - Product authenticity
 - Quality
- Distinctive form & decoration of certain forms:
 - Product labelling
 - Advertises contents



Mycenaean stirrup jar, Klavdhia

Base Ring Ware

- High quality tableware & small juglets
 - “The technical ceramic standards manifested by a significant quantity of Base Ring Ware represented a remarkable achievement by potters” (Vaughan 1994: 86)
- Highly prized in Levant



Carinated cup



Jug

Base Ring in Levant

- Large quantities throughout Levant:
 - Ugarit to 'Ajjul
 - Particularly in tombs
- Small juglets particular popular:
 - Opium trade?
- Some bull askoi:
 - Libation vessels?
- Local imitations: jugs



Juglet (bilbil)



Bull askos

Base Ring as Gifts?

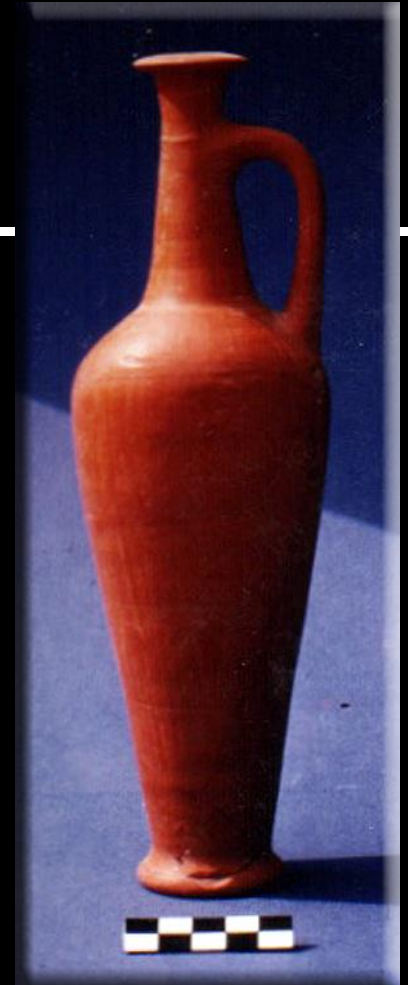
- Desirable exchange objects, valued for their lustrous finish
- Base Ring vases of exceptional quality from Niqme-pa's palace at Alalakh Level IV
 - Dining set: kraters, jugs and cups
 - Incorporated in elite dining practices
- "Some unique vessels may well have been created to satisfy this elite clientele's desire for exceptional objects" Bergoffen 2005: 13)



Base Ring krater, Alalakh

Red Lustrous ware

- Widely distributed:
 - Cyprus, Levant, Egypt, a few in the Aegean, central Anatolia & Cilicia
- Place of production?
- Primarily containers for precious substance:
 - Flasks, spindle bottles, arm vessels
- Contents?



Spindle bottle



Arm vessels

Mycenaean Pottery in the East

- LM/LH I: only small quantities in Levant, Cyprus, Egypt
 - Alalakh, Ugarit, Byblos, Tell el-'Ajjul
 - Ayia Irini, Morphou, Enkomi
 - Lower Egypt: Saqqara, Memphis, Gurob
- Primarily alabastra & pithoid jars
- Difficult to distinguish between Minoan & Mycenaean imports



Alabastron from Armant, Egypt

Mycenaean Pottery in the East

- LH IIIA-B: main influx of Mycenaean imported pottery
 - More than 100 sites in Levant
 - Most LBA sites in Cyprus
 - Mainly distributed along coast
 - Tell Abu Hawam, Ugarit & Enkomi appear to be gateway trading communities
 - Major deposit of Mycenaean imports at Amarna, Egypt
 - But only minute quantities in Hittite Anatolia



Stirrup Jar, Arediou

Mycenaean Pottery in the East

- Main shapes: flasks & stirrup jars
- Distribution of pottery & range of shapes represent a fundamental change in organisation of long-distance maritime trade:
 - Bulk commodity mercantile trade
 - Targeted marketing

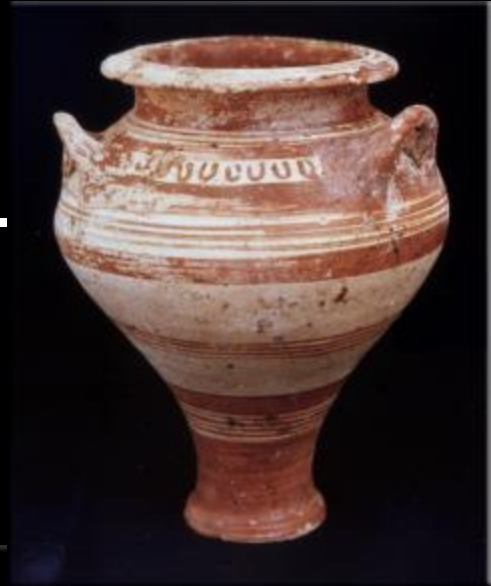


Mycenaean pilgrim flask

Commodity Trade

- Preference for closed shapes
- Pithoid jars: large containers for bulk transport of specific commodities
- Suggested contents: oils, honey?
- Ulu Burun: organic studies suggest movement of fruits & nuts, such as olives, pomegranates, figs, almonds, pistachios

Pithoid jars



Perfume Trade

- Alabastra, flasks & stirrup jars
- Pylos archives: specialist production of perfumed oils
 - Sage, rose, cyperus, iris
 - **ar-re-pa-za-o** (aleiphazoös): unguent boiler
 - 2 grades of oil:
 - **po-ro-ko-wa** (prochoë) – pourable liquid
 - **we-a-re-po** (aloiphë) – “for smearing on”
- Distinctive product, highly valued in the East



Alabastron



Stirrup jar

Value of Perfumes

- Texts reiterate importance of perfumed oils:
 - Hittite text: “Behold I have no perfumed oil for anointing”
 - Annals of Tuthmosis III: “sweet oil & green oil from Syria”
 - Seti II: lists various oils from Alashiya, Khatti, Syria “to anoint his [pharaoh’s] army & chariotry”
 - Mycenaean texts associate oils & textiles: textiles anointed as part of ritual practices
 - Ugaritic texts refer to the use of oils & unguents in funerary ritual: anointing the body

Oils to Egypt

- Olive oil (& stirrup jars) particularly prized in Egypt
 - Amarna period: olives taken to Egypt as item of gift exchange
 - Egyptians imitations in faience & calcite
 - Saqqara necropolis: Amarna period stirrup jars carefully curated & buried in Ramesside period
 - Tomb of Ramesses III: representations of high status trade objects includes 9 stirrup jars



Faience stirrup jar

Table Wares

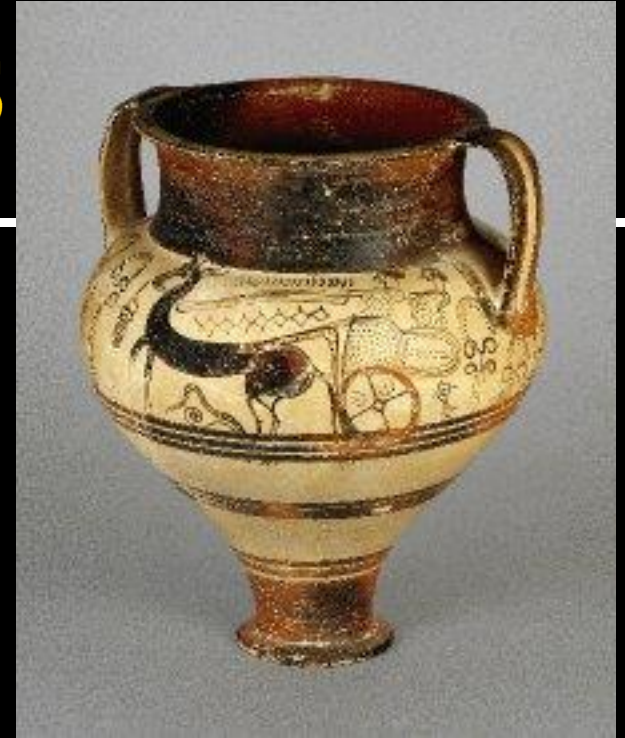
- Tableware is less common
- Limited range of open shapes, in small quantities:
 - Cups, kylikes, shallow bowls
 - Levant: preference for Cypriot tableware
- Incorporated within patterns of consumption within the settlement & in funerary ritual
- Exported for its innate properties rather than for contents
- Sailor trade?



Cups from Kalavassos

Amphroid Kraters

- Central element of dining set
- Iconography designed to appeal to aristocratic tastes in Near East
- Ugaritic mode of serving wine: *marzeah*
- Particularly popular in Ugarit & on Cyprus
- Targeted marketing



Chariot Kraters

- Kraters typically decorated with **chariot procession**:
 - Very schematised representation of chariot
 - Very schematised pair of horses
 - Typically two robed charioteers
- Filling motifs: mix of rocky landscapes & abstract fill



Chariot krater, Cyprus

Ritual Vessels

- Rare: unusual exports to Near East
- Primarily found at Ugarit & on Cyprus
- Conical rhyta: filtered flavoured beverages (wine & barley beer)
- Animal rhyta: liquid libations



Ugarit bull's head rhyton

Ritual Vessels

- Ugarit: found in buildings with cultic associations
- Cyprus: incorporated within funerary practices
- Local imitations in faience & clay



Rhyton
Enkomi

Base Ring rhyton
Ugarit



Diverse Context of Use

- Ugarit: greatest quantities of pottery, incorporated into daily life & funerary ritual
- Cyprus: primarily funerary but some evidence for use in daily life
- Egypt: primarily in high status or official contexts, such as palaces, forts. Also in domestic & funerary contexts
- Widely available to mercantile classes:
 - Valued but not a luxury



Targeted Markets?

- Decorated Mycenaean pottery very rare in Aegean contexts
- Pictorial pottery created specifically for Near Eastern market:
 - Chariot kraters
 - Pictorial & “plain” shallow bowls
- Aegean potters aware of Near Eastern tastes & specifically target these



Chariot krater



Shallow bowl

Local Production

- 13th century evidence for local production in Levant & Cyprus
 - Cypriot pastoral style
 - LH IIIB “simple style”:
- Why?
 - Movement of potters?
 - Demand for Mycenaean goods outstrips supply?
 - Breakdown in Mycenaean supply?



Pastoral Style krater, Enkomi



Simple Style stirrup jar

Summary

- Pottery widely exported around East Mediterranean:
 - Contents
 - Value of specific wares as tableware
- Cypriot pottery highly valued in Levant as a product in its own right
- Mycenaean pottery: first large-scale mercantile maritime trade & targeted marketing
- Clear evidence for localised patterns of consumption:
 - Various incorporated within material habitus & social praxis
- Impact of imported pottery on local production