

Pinterest Board showing Trade in Bronze Age Cyprus
Gwenllian Anthony 1404702



Figure 1: Bull Diadem recovered from Hala Sultan Tekke. It is made of gold and depicts the motif of a bull, which is traditionally viewed as a symbol of masculine power and divine authority in the Levant. With the importation of gold from Egypt, and the adoption of Levantine iconography, it is evident that this artefact is a symbol of Cypriot trade (Fischer, P.M. 2026).



Figure 2: Mycenaean stirrup jar recovered from Hala Sultan Tekke. The double-handled and narrow-necked design was created to transport olive oil and perfumed oils in bulk within and outside an Aegean area. Having been found across Anatolia, Nubia, Sardinia and Syria, it is an important vessel for trade (Leonard, A. Et al. 1993).



Figure 3: Gold earrings styled with granular bull heads. During Cyprus' thriving copper producing era, Cypriot copper as well as dyed textiles and pottery were exchanged for luxury items such as lead, ivory and gold (Fischer, P.M. 2026). As gold is non-indigenous to Cyprus, artefacts such as these earrings show the result of raw material conversion to transportable high-status wealth.



Figure 4: Bird-headed ceramic figurine whose origin is thought to be Syria, where female terracotta figurines were prominent in the Middle Bronze Age (Budin, S.L. 2026). This artefact demonstrates the exchange and trading of ideas and beliefs between the Cypriots and the Syrians, beyond raw materials.



Figure 5: Tomb SS from Hala Sultan Tekke showing a multi-generational burial chamber. The open spaces and alcove around the articulated skeletons suggest that there were areas for grave gifts. During the excavation, more than 400 intact objects were found, which include Cypriot, Mycenaean, Minoan and Anatolian wares (Fischer, P. 1998).



Figure 6: Late Bronze Age cylinder seal excavated from Hala Sultan Tekke. Cylinder seals arrived in Cyprus before the turn into LC IA from the Near East. They were used for administrative purposes with regard to property and commerce and they enabled the emerging Cypriot elite to express authority and elite identity whilst enhancing their political-ideological status (Humphrey, T. 2023).



Figure 7: A Bronze toggle-pin produced in Cyprus and found in Vounous, Cyprus and dates from 2400 to 2201 B.C (The Fitzwilliam Museum (2026). The Early Cypriot Age saw the rise of Cyprus' complex metal industry, and this artefact captures the rise of Cyprus' specialised metallurgical industry. Cyprus would become a mass exporter of copper to the Near East and Aegean and would have resulted in substantial wealth for the traders (Webb, J.M. 2006).



Figure 8: Gold and carnelian bead necklace from Late Bronze Age recovered from Enkomi. Neither gold nor carnelian occur naturally on Cyprus, the necklace serves as a sign of long-distance trade links: gold predominantly from Egypt and carnelian from India and the Eastern desert of Egypt. The carnelian is also shaped into elongated, biconical Harappa-type beads which are considered non-Aegean (Pieniazek, M. 2016).



Figure 9: A bronze knife with ivory handle recovered from Hala Sultan Tekke. Ivory found at the site is primarily elephant but also includes hippopotamus ivory. These were mostly imported from Egypt and possibly Syria (Fischer, P.M. 2023). This knife not only represents local metal industries, but also reflects long-distance raw material trade networks.



Figure 10: Base-ring bull-shaped vase which was produced in Cyprus and used for pouring liquids such as scented oils. These were found across Cypriot households but have also been excavated from sites in Egypt and the Levant. This presents proof of trade beyond the exporting of copper to the exporting of manufactured substances to international consumers (Steel, L. 2020).



Figure 11: The Kition faience vase dated to the 13th century BC. This rhyton is of Aegean style with north Levantine decoration and polychrome enamel inlays which are characteristic of Egyptian workshops (Peltenburg, E.J. 1974).



Figure 12: Ashlar-built chamber from the Late Bronze Age. Built and tholos tombs are believed to be inspired by Near Eastern and Aegean types, especially those found in Ugarit (Crewe, L. 2009). The labour and wealth required to build such monumental tombs are substantial, which could be a reflection of the thriving raw material industry in Cyprus during the Bronze Age.

Self Reflection

The process of creating a Pinterest board to show the evidence of trade in Bronze Age Cyprus was challenging and informative. Moving away from traditional essay writing to creating a digital portfolio allowed me to explore image analysis and to interpret material culture in an engaging and creative way.

To truly explore the trade of Bronze Age Cyprus, it was important to choose images that represented imported and exported artefacts, as well as looking beyond grave goods at the tombs themselves. I selected the Mycenaean stirrup jars and gold-carnelian necklaces to represent the importation of luxury goods and raw materials into Cyprus, and I selected the base-ring ware vessels and copper toggle-pins to represent the Cypriot production that funded the imports. This visual contrast allowed the exploration of how Cyprus converted its raw copper production into trading luxury foreign goods.

It was difficult to condense complex archaeological arguments into short captions, especially with regard to artefacts like the ivory-bronze knife, whose presence reflects intersecting trade routes. However, it felt beneficial to the academic studies that I am able to find and highlight the most relevant information for the work.

Ultimately, this assignment has helped develop my analysis skills and has taught me a more unconventional and creative way of engaging with archaeological data. The Pinterest board is a medium where complex archaeological data has been curated in a way that is accessible to the general public, allowing people from all backgrounds to engage with archaeology and material culture.

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