

Exploring the inception, apogee and transformation of Cypriot connectivity in the Late Bronze Age

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Cyprus, acknowledged as the island of copper already during ancient times, plays an integral part in discussions involving Mediterranean connectivity in the 2nd millennium BC. Research of recent years, including advances made by the project ComPAS, funded by the European Research Council, has acknowledged that Cypriot involvement in interregional commerce and intercultural connections can be distinguished into three broad cycles. The first concerns the inception of the Late Bronze Age and the first establishment of regular and intensive commercial and other links between the Cypriot and other Mediterranean communities (ca. 1750-1450 BC).

The second corresponds to the mid-15th to the 13th century BC, the period that is considered as the apogee of Mediterranean connectivity, characterised by the large-scale transport of goods, undertaken mostly, but not exclusively, under the auspices of centralised authorities. And finally, the last horizon concerns Cypriot participation to commercial strategies during the period that ensues the collapse of this construct, during the so-called ‘Crisis years’ of the 12th century BC. The lecture aspires to examine Cypriot connectivity from the standpoint of Cypriot communities and elucidate the involvement of the island within the oscillating character of Mediterranean long-distance trade.

