



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Tracing the exchange networks in the eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Late Bronze Age: Levantine amphorae as markers of maritime dynamics

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Abstract

The Late Bronze Age marks a period of intense connectivity across the eastern Mediterranean, with the Levant deeply engaged in maritime trade linking it notably with Cyprus, Egypt, and the Aegean. Among these exchanges, Levantine amphorae were widely used to transport various commodities such as oils, resins, honey, wine, and other semi-fluid goods. These ceramic containers provide invaluable evidence of the circulation of perishable goods, the growth of maritime activity, and the dynamics of exchange networks during this era. Within the ComPAS project framework, this study traces Levantine amphorae as markers of multiple maritime routes established at the end of the 2nd millennium BCE. Through a typological approach combined with capacity analysis, we present two networks, involved with Cyprus, exporting ovoid biconical and conical amphorae. Initially distributed side by side, such as within the Uluburun shipwreck cargo, these different types of amphorae later diverged along distinct paths. This shift suggests evolving networks and changing distribution patterns, shedding light on the restructuring of maritime trade routes at the end of the Late Bronze Age. This study aims to enhance our understanding of the exchange dynamics, regional needs, and the continuity and transformation of trade networks.

Keywords

Levant, amphora, Mediterranean trade, exchange network, Maritime transport container

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