ISLANDERS
THE MAKING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Large print
INTRODUCTION
We journey between Cyprus, Crete and Sardinia, across four thousand years. What did it mean to be an islander?

Objects and materials provide glimpses into ancient communities on three of the largest islands in the Mediterranean Sea. Distinctive identities emerge, shaped by the specific environments on Crete, Cyprus and Sardinia. These communities shared an openness to embracing new ideas, technologies and styles, as traders, migrants and settlers moved across the sea. Architecture, art, food, writing, religion and burial traditions were repeatedly refashioned. These were creative, adaptable and dynamic communities. Open not insular.

On this journey, we might also wonder: what does it mean to be an islander today?
ISLANDS & THE SEA

From Erimoupolis, Crete (c.525 BCE)
Grey limestone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.11854
Islanders were surrounded by the sea, and objects provided one way to express their connection to it. This naturally curving rock – resembling a dolphin fin – has been carved with an image of a dolphin or large fish. A short Greek text states ‘... drew me’. Though the individual’s name is lost, we glimpse how a person sought an association with the sea and its creatures. Dolphins were seen by the Greeks as animals sacred to Poseidon and Apollo, and symbols of friendship and solidarity.
Boat models

Boats allowed traders and migrants to move between islands and the mainlands, carrying materials, ideas and new traditions. Critical to the survival and success of these islands, images of boats played a prominent role in the visual culture of these communities. Dedicated in the sanctuary of Orroli, Sardinia, the bronze boat features a tall central mast and smaller columns, each topped by birds. These may evoke the tall towers (nuraghe) found across Sardinia. The later terracotta boat is an example of models left in the tombs and sanctuaries around Amathus on the south coast of Cyprus.
Model of a boat, from Orroli Sardinia
(1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 45038

Model of a warship, from Cyprus
(333 – 200 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Loan Ant.103.11
Double figurine

The maker has replaced the arms of a human figure with another, smaller, horizontal human figure. This double figure may represent the fusing of two deities, a mother and daughter, or even dual gender. Such figurines are distinctive of prehistoric Cyprus, and may have been worn suspended from necklaces, as talismans to encourage fertility and childbirth.

From Salamiou-Anephani, Cyprus
(c.3900 – 2800 BCE)
Stone (picrolite)
Cyprus Museum, no: 1959/XI-3/6
This warrior with four arms, four eyes and two shields was an offering left at the Iron Age sanctuary of Abini Teti, along with bronze rings, swords, bracelets and daggers. Many other figurines with spears, shields and helmets, or of people at prayer, were also dedicated, reflecting the mixture of warrior and religious identity that characterised Sardinia at this period.

From the sanctuary of Abini, Teti, Sardinia (c.1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 20817
Male worshipper

Bronze figures of both men and women were dedicated at open-air sanctuaries and caves in the mountain peaks on Crete. Raising one hand to his face, this figure might show someone in worship. Religious activity was an important way of creating a shared identity amongst island communities.

From Psychro Cave, Crete (c.1800 – c.1450 BCE)
Bronze
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.595
Bronze figures of both men and women were dedicated at open-air sanctuaries and caves in the mountain peaks on Crete. Raising one hand to his face, this figure might show someone in worship. Religious activity was an important way of creating a shared identity amongst island communities.

Male worshipper
From Psychro Cave, Crete (c.1800 – c.1450 BCE)
Bronze
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.595
Possibly from Enkomi, Cyprus
(1200 – 1100 BCE)
Copper alloy
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1971.888
Islanders’ sense of place was informed both by a practical experience of their local landscape and the things it offered, as well as imagination and spirituality. Ideas were constantly absorbed and adapted from newcomers – whether invaders, migrants or traders – but always in a way that maintained distinctive identities on each island.

This figurine shows a Cypriot version of the goddess Astarte, worshipped for thousands of years across the Levant, Egypt and Cyprus. Depicted nude in her guise as a fertility goddess, she stands on a metal ingot. This is shaped like the hide of an ox, similar to the full-size ingots traded across the Mediterranean. Probably deposited in a late Bronze Age shrine, the donor may have hoped Astarte would ensure the continued productivity of the copper mines.
BEGINNINGS & EXPANSIONS

From the earliest times, islanders developed distinctive local cultures and forms of self-representation. They engaged actively with their environment, making skilful use of local resources and minerals, and developing distinctive visual traditions. As people moved into larger settlements, nature and the landscape remained an important focus of religious activity, with traces found high on mountaintops and deep within caves. Islanders were also resourceful, some producing sculpture in clay where there was no stone.
Burnishing tool or sling stone

Found at one the most important prehistoric sites on Cyprus, the function of this object remains unclear. Was it a burnisher, used to polish ceramic vessels? Typically made of hard stones such as slate, basalt and diorite, tools of this type were found across the Mediterranean. Or was it a stone fired from a sling, used as a weapon?

From Erimi, Cyprus (c.3800 – 3500 BCE)
Stone (diorite)
The Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1935.695
Figurine in the form of a cross

By this period, more naturalistic figurines were created that clearly depicted the hands, torsos and feet of men and women. The soft stone picrolite, quarried in southwestern Cyprus, was easily carved to represent these fine details. Small figurines may have been worn or carried as talismans, and thought to encourage fertility and protect childbirth.

From unknown location, Cyprus (3900 – 2800 BCE)
Stone (picrolite)
Cyprus Museum, no: W292
A mother goddess

This object provides a glimpse into how the early communities on Sardinia projected their identity through burial offerings. The standing female figure, with eyes and eyebrows indicated with a T-pattern, has an enlarged chest and legs. Such figures were deposited alongside pottery and tools in cave tombs in western Sardinia.

From Cuccuru S’Arriu, Cabras, Sardinia, tomb 410 (5000 – 4500 BCE)
Stone
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 180229
Early human figurines

The two very rare carvings (left) are among the earliest known artworks from Cyprus. These are often sexually ambiguous representations of the human form, combining female and male characteristics. The middle figure has both phallus and breasts.

Later, figurines, such as that on the right, became more common. This was one of a series depicting the body in different stages of growth, placed in a ritual deposit and perhaps related to childbirth.
Incised stone object, from Choirokoitia-Vouni, Cyprus (9000 BCE)
Stone (diabase)
The Cyprus Museum, no: MLA46

Human figurine, from Agia Varvara-Asprokremmos, Cyprus (9000 BCE)
Stone (diabase)
The Cyprus Museum, no: G848

Clay birthing figurine, from Kisonerga-Mosfilia, Cyprus (3500 – 2500 BCE)
Ceramic
The Cyprus Museum, no: KM1475
Hunting and warfare

These arrow-heads would have been used to hunt deer, wild boar or the now extinct Sardinian pika. Communities relied on hunting and fishing as well as farming to survive, and such weapons may also have been used in warfare when competing for control of land and resources. Shell, flint, metal and glass were also used for making arrowheads. Obsidian was a particularly desirable material, traded across vast distances.

From unknown provenance, Sardinia (4400 – 3500 BCE)
Stone (obsidian)
Hunting and warfare

These arrow-heads would have been used to hunt deer, wild boar or the now extinct Sardinian pika. Communities relied on hunting and fishing as well as farming to survive, and such weapons may also have been used in warfare when competing for control of land and resources. Shell, flint, metal and glass were also used for making arrowheads. Obsidian was a particularly desirable material, traded across vast distances.

Stone tools
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 18148x; 154069; 154073; 154068; 181469; 181462; 181483; 154076; 181485; 154229; 181488; 181481; 181480; 1814xx; 181478; 181479; 1814x7; SNI 002; 154100; 181473; 181475; 181476; 181474
Before the Nuragic culture

These objects shed light on some of the earliest Sardinian communities, in the centuries before the Nuragic culture. The mother goddess figurine is distinctive of the Filigosa culture, who worshipped warrior ancestors and built megalithic tombs and monuments. The bull-head was a common motif in underground and stone tombs across the island. Complex necklaces produced by the Bonnanaro culture, such as this example of shell and deer tooth, were placed with the dead alongside pottery cups, bowls and tripods.
Mother goddess, from Porto Alghero cemetery, Sardinia (3000 – 1900 BCE)
Marble
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 62476

Bull head relief, from Porto Alghero cemetery, Sardinia (3000 – 1900 BCE)
Stone
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: SNI 001

Necklace, from Is Calitas Someminis, Sardinia (3000 – 1900 BCE)
Tooth, Shell
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 159034
Before the Nuragic culture

These objects shed light on some of the earliest Sardinian communities, in the centuries before the Nuragic culture. The mother goddess figurine is distinctive of the Filigosa culture, who worshipped warrior ancestors and built megalithic tombs and monuments. The bull-head was a common motif in underground and stone tombs across the island. Complex necklaces produced by the Bonnanaro culture, such as this example of shell and deer tooth, were placed with the dead alongside pottery cups, bowls and tripods.

“Domus de Janas” tomb, Chiaramonti, Sardinia

ID 163199523 © Mirko Maier | Dreamstime.com
Before the Nuragic culture

These objects shed light on some of the earliest Sardinian communities, in the centuries before the Nuragic culture. The mother goddess figurine is distinctive of the Filigosa culture, who worshipped warrior ancestors and built megalithic tombs and monuments. The bull-head was a common motif in underground and stone tombs across the island. Complex necklaces produced by the Bonnanaro culture, such as this example of shell and deer tooth, were placed with the dead alongside pottery cups, bowls and tripods.
Bird-faced woman

Figures of the goddess Astarte first emerge in northern Syria in the mid second millennium. Cypriot sculptors created their own versions, reflecting the mixture of different iconographies, object types and styles present on the island. Here, the handmade and hollow figure is shown with a bird-head, breasts and a clearly defined pubic triangle, with eyes surrounded by rings and two pierced ears. She holds an infant in her arms.

From Denia-Kafkalla, Cyprus (c.1550 – c.1200 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1953.244
A female worshipper

The human-shaped bronze figurines of Archaic Cyprus are less well known than the stone or terracotta images produced at the same time. Wearing a tight-fitting robe, this may have represented a worshipper or religious official. The distinctive hairstyle echoes Egyptian imagery, underlining the cosmopolitan character of Cypriot communities in the first millennium BCE. Similar figures were found at the famous sanctuary of Hera on Samos Island.

From unknown location, Cyprus (700 – 600 BCE)
Copper alloy
Fitzwilliam Museum no: Gr.151.1864
Offerings on a mountain peak

Pilgrims visited open-air sanctuaries high up on mountains to leave offerings. At Petsofas, where these male and female clay figurines were found, these donations included animal figures and models of altars and buildings. The third object, from the peak sanctuary at Piskokefalo, juxtaposes two faces.
Male with dagger, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.990

Head of a female figurine wearing a tall hat, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1020

Vase in form of janiform head, from Piskokefalo, Crete (1000 – 900 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1102
Male with dagger, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.990

Head of a female figurine wearing a tall hat, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1020

Vase in form of janiform head, from Piskokefalo, Crete (1000 – 900 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1102

Offerings on a mountain peak
Pilgrims visited open-air sanctuaries high up on mountains to leave offerings. At Petsofas, where these male and female clay figurines were found, these donations included animal figures and models of altars and buildings. The third object, from the peak sanctuary at Piskokefalo, juxtaposes two faces.
Male with dagger, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.990

Head of a female figurine wearing a tall hat, from Petsofas, Crete (2100 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1020

Vase in form of janiform head, from Piskokefalo, Crete (1000 – 900 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.1102

Offerings on a mountain peak
Pilgrims visited open-air sanctuaries high up on mountains to leave offerings. At Petsofas, where these male and female clay figurines were found, these donations included animal figures and models of altars and buildings. The third object, from the peak sanctuary at Piskokefalo, juxtaposes two faces.

Petsofas peak sanctuary, Crete
Olaf Tausch, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Crawling baby

The maker of this figurine has captured a baby struggling to crawl forward. It is a rare depiction of a child among Minoan objects, one of many offerings left by donors at a sacred cave, alongside miniature double-axes, knife-blades, needles and figurines. The caves of Psychro and Ida are the only ones where human figurines are found.

From Psychro Cave, Lasithi plateau, Crete (1600 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1938.1162
Multiple uses: a coin of Alexander the Great

The goddess Athena is accompanied by an inscription stating ‘coin of Alexander’. The coin probably came to Crete as payment for mercenaries or looted by pirates – the Cretans excelled at both. Later, it entered the treasury of Polyrrhenia in western Crete, with the city’s name also inscribed on the coin. Centuries later, it was used as a very unusual form of offering, left in sacred cave.

From the Idaean Cave, Crete, (Issued 317 – 311 BCE, offered early 1st century CE) Gold
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: N2535
Mythical creatures

A carved cylinder, designed to roll over wet clay, was used to impress a seal on a container or doorway, to mark ownership or to control goods. This technology was introduced from Mesopotamia. Here a procession of human and mythical creatures known as ‘Minoan demons’ are depicted, perhaps drawing on Egyptian images of the goddess Taweret.

From Palaikastro, Crete (1450 – 1350 BCE)
Stone (black steatite)
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Σ-Κ 233
Mythical creatures

A carved cylinder, designed to roll over wet clay, was used to impress a seal on a container or doorway, to mark ownership or to control goods. This technology was introduced from Mesopotamia. Here a procession of human and mythical creatures known as 'Minoan demons' are depicted, perhaps drawing on Egyptian images of the goddess Taweret.

From Palaikastro, Crete (1450 – 1350 BCE)

Stone (black steatite)

Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Σ-Κ 233
Jewels from Minoan Crete

Skilled Minoan jewellers created distinctive styles that incorporated foreign materials and motifs.

The ivory animal seal and pendant were found in the beehive-shaped tomb (*tholos*) at Marathokefalo, one of the richest Minoan burials. Scarabs from Egypt must have been gifts or arrived with traders.
Jewels from Minoan Crete

Skilled Minoan jewellers created distinctive styles that incorporated foreign materials and motifs.

The ivory animal seal and pendant were found in the beehive-shaped tomb (tholos) at Marathokefalo, one of the richest Minoan burials. Scarabs from Egypt must have been gifts or arrived with traders.

---

**Scarab, from Phaistos, Crete (2200 – 1650 BCE)**

Faience  
Heraklion Museum, no: Σ-Κ 44

**Scarab, from Phaistos, Crete (2200 – 1650 BCE)**

Stone (sardonyx)  
Heraklion Museum, no: Σ-Κ 48

**Animal shaped pendant and seal, from Marathokefalo, Crete (2200 – 1650 BCE)**

Ivory  
Heraklion Museum, no: Σ-Κ 1218; Σ-Κ 1220
Divine revelations

In Minoan Crete, the revelation of a god is often linked with natural landscapes. A kneeling figure, perhaps a priest, clasps a sacred rock while a standing figure shakes a tree and a bird flies overhead. Signet rings were status symbols and identity markers used to stamp containers and to make impressions on clay documents. The worn surface of the decoration suggests this was heavily used in life by the individual buried with it.

From Kalyvia cemetery, Tomb 11, Phaistos, Crete (1525 – 1425 BCE)
Gold
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: X-A 45
Divine revelations

In Minoan Crete, the revelation of a god is often linked with natural landscapes. A kneeling figure, perhaps a priest, clasps a sacred rock while a standing figure shakes a tree and a bird flies overhead.

Signet rings were status symbols and identity markers used to stamp containers and to make impressions on clay documents. The worn surface of the decoration suggests this was heavily used in life by the individual buried with it.

From Kalyvia cemetery, Tomb 11, Phaistos, Crete (1525 – 1425 BCE)

Gold

Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Χ-Α 45

Enlargement of ring engraving.
Heraklion archaeological museum, 2022
Man with helmet

This male figure is shown wearing a helmet with cheek protectors. Thousands of such statues were made by skilled Cypriot potters, who had to use skill to ensure the large figures did not crack while drying or during firing. Traces of black paint are preserved on the eyes and eyebrows.

From Salamis, Toumba, Cyprus (c.600 – 500 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.25.1890
Fashioned in clay

Life-size terracotta statues were produced in large numbers from the 8th century BCE, to meet the need to furnish temples such as Salamis with offerings. The young, bearded male would originally have been brightly painted, with traces of red and black pigment still visible around the eyes and cap.

From Salamis, Toumba, Cyprus (c.750 – 600 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1909.837
Offerings to the gods

In 1929, the Swedish Cyprus Expedition discovered over 2,000 terracotta figurines in a sanctuary: human figures, sphinxes, minotaurs, priests with bull-masks and chariots. These examples belong to the last phase of use of the sanctuary and include a rare depiction of a chariot drawn by four horses, with three riders. The fantastical centaur figure combines a horse’s body with a human torso and breasts.

From Agia Eirini sanctuary, Cyprus (750 – 600 BCE)
Ceramic
Clay male figure wearing a helmet
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1566

Clay figure holding an animal
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 96

Clay model of a chariot
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1781+798

Clay figure representing a Centaur
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1690
In 1929, the Swedish Cyprus Expedition discovered over 2,000 terracotta figurines in a sanctuary: human figures, sphinxes, minotaurs, priests with bull-masks and chariots. These examples belong to the last phase of use of the sanctuary and include a rare depiction of a chariot drawn by four horses, with three riders. The fantastical centaur figure combines a horse's body with a human torso and breasts.

From Agia Eirini sanctuary, Cyprus (750 – 600 BCE)

Swedish excavations at Agia Eirini, Cyprus

By John Lindros – Världskulturmuseerna as part of the Connected Open Heritage project.
In 1929, the Swedish Cyprus Expedition discovered over 2,000 terracotta figurines in a sanctuary: human figures, sphinxes, minotaurs, priests with bull-masks and chariots. These examples belong to the last phase of use of the sanctuary and include a rare depiction of a chariot drawn by four horses, with three riders. The fantastical centaur figure combines a horse’s body with a human torso and breasts.

From Agia Eirini sanctuary, Cyprus (750 – 600 BCE)
Human and animal figures

The human figures may show warriors wearing helmets, mantles and a turban. The bull, with traces of red paint on its body, is fitted with a harness: a domesticated animal.

Some of the offerings at this sanctuary may have been intended to secure agricultural fertility.

From Agia Eirini sanctuary, Cyprus (750 – 600 BCE)  
Ceramic
Male figure wearing helmet
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1741

Male figure dressed in mantle and wearing a turban
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1796

Male figure wearing helmet
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 460

Bull figurine
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: AI 1556
Drinking vessel

Ceremonial drinking containers are found across the eastern Mediterranean and Western Asia in the Late Bronze Age. These often took the form of a bull or horse, important animals in agriculture, warfare and migration.

Here, the handle takes the form of a male rider. The exquisite relief decoration is distinctive of this period, with earlier examples having simpler painted motifs.

From Cyprus
(c.1100 – c.1050 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1971.858
Iron Age sanctuaries offered a focal point for local religious activity. These religious spaces became packed with offerings, of different sizes, forms and material, depending on the wealth of the donors. These human, animal and mythic figurines created an enduring community presence in the landscape.
Archer

The shooting archer wears a short tunic, horned helmet and carries a quiver of arrows on his back. This figure was left, along with many other figures, in the Iron Age sanctuary of Abini Teti. The sanctuary was positioned on a route used by livestock moving between different seasonal pastures. Offerings may have been left to ensure protection of these valuable resources.

From Abini Teti, Sardinia (1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 20841
Seated woman and child

Figurines of warriors are common types of Nuragic bronzes, but much rarer family groups better convey a sense of both community and emotion. Here a seated woman holds a naked child while raising her right hand in prayer. Was the child dead? These figures may have been part of a tradition of revering the ancestors and celebrating family structure, found across the island at this period.

From Santa Vittoria Serri, Sardinia
(1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 40573
Warrior

Figurines with long cloaks were distinctive of the later phases of Nuragic culture on Sardinia. This figure has been chiselled with facial details and clothing.

From Abini, Teti, Sardinia
(1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 34771
Warrior figurines with long cloaks were distinctive of the later phases of Nuragic culture on Sardinia. This figure has been chiselled with facial details and clothing. (From Abini, Teti, Sardinia (1000–700 BCE). Copper alloy. National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 34771.)

Nuraghe Su Nuraxi, Barumini, Sardinia
By Horsch, CC BY-SA 3.0
Aphrodite

This statue of Aphrodite was dedicated at Amathous, one of the ancient royal cities of Cyprus. A sanctuary on the top of the town’s acropolis of Amathus, was devoted to Aphrodite Amathusia (‘Aphrodite of Cyprus’).

From Amathous, Cyprus (c.200 BCE)
Marble
Archaeological Museum of the Limassol District, no: AM2738
CITIES & EMPIRE

Under the Roman Empire, some visual styles became widespread across the Mediterranean. Fine artworks made from imported marble decorated villas, temples and public spaces, influenced by Ancient Greek models. Local traditions and identities remained visible, such as the close connection between Cyprus and the goddess Aphrodite.
Aphrodite Anadyomene: rising from the sea

Aphrodite, a goddess associated with love and pleasure, is shown rising from the waters. This depiction references a myth in which she was born from the foam created by the genitals of the castrated sky god Uranus, thrown in the sea. Carried by the waves, Aphrodite came to rest on the shores of Cyprus.

From Salamis, Cyprus (c.300 – 100 BCE)
Marble
Cyprus Department of Antiquities, no: Sal. St. 20A
Aphrodite Anadyomene:

Aphrodite, a goddess associated with love and pleasure, is shown rising from the waters. This depiction references a myth in which she was born from the foam created by the genitals of the castrated sky god Uranus, thrown in the sea. Carried by the waves, Aphrodite came to rest on the shores of Cyprus.

From Salamis, Cyprus (c.300 – 100 BCE)

Marble

Cyprus Department of Antiquities, no: Sal. St. 20A

Salamis, Cyprus.

Mike McBey, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.
Limestone head of a female votary

This elegant and veiled head was discovered in the ancient city of Idalion. This major city flourished in the Hellenistic Period, with one acropolis clustered around sanctuaries of Aphrodite and Adonis, where votive offerings like this statue were dedicated.

From Dali-Ambelleri, Idalion, Cyprus (310 – 290 BCE)
Limestone
The Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1874.337
Children in the temple

This statuette is part of a special group representing children sitting and holding a small pet, wearing a chain of amulets and seals across their chests. Unusually, this one depicts a girl. ‘Temple boys’ – and more rarely girls – were servants of the god worshipped in the sanctuary. These images were also made to mark the first time a boy or girl left an offering in a sanctuary.

From Golgoi, Cyprus
(300 – 200 BCE)
Limestone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.1.1917
Hands from the lagoon

These hands were found in the shallow waters of the Santa Gilla lagoon in Sardinia in 1892, three of 327 offerings including vases of various shapes, masks, anatomical votives, ceramic models of animals and three lead ingots. Some hands hold snakes, and many have detailed depictions of the lines on the palm.

From Santa Gilla lagoon, Sardinia
(200 – 100 BCE)
Ceramic
Hands from the lagoon

These hands were found in the shallow waters of the Santa Gilla lagoon in Sardinia in 1892, three of 327 offerings including vases of various shapes, masks, anatomical votives, ceramic models of animals and three lead ingots.

Some hands hold snakes, and many have detailed depictions of the lines on the palm.

Votive hand
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 24569

Votive hand
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 24510

Votive hand
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 24496
Apollo

This head may depict Apollo and was found submerged in Santa Gilla lagoon in Cagliari. We do not know if the object was donated at a sanctuary, or forms part of an ancient shipwreck. The area was a former Phoenician settlement west of the present centre of Cagliari and later became a Roman port and refugee site.

From Santa Gilla, Sardinia (200 – 100 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: SNI 003
This head may depict Apollo and was found submerged in Santa Gilla lagoon in Cagliari. We do not know if the object was donated at a sanctuary, or forms part of an ancient shipwreck. The area was a former Phoenician settlement west of the present centre of Cagliari and later became a Roman port and refugee site.

From Santa Gilla, Sardinia (200 – 100 BCE)

Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: SNI 003

Santa Gilla Lagoon, Sardinia.
ID 176657915 © Rodolfo Baldussi | Dreamstime.com
Language is a powerful vehicle of identity, and many languages were spoken and written in the ancient Mediterranean islands. Writing allowed people to commemorate their actions, rule territories, organise production and trade, dedicate religious offerings and document other parts of everyday life. Surviving inscriptions allow us to track languages and scripts moving from one place to another, and to identify multi-lingual communities.
The Cypro-Minoan script

This script first emerged in the Late Bronze Age on Cyprus, probably developed from a writing system on Crete. It was used for the management of agricultural produce, marking ownership or indicating contents, allowing complex socio-political structures to develop. Objects inscribed with Cypro-Minoan have also been found at the city of Ugarit on the Syrian coast, showing the movement of goods and traders across the Mediterranean. The script has not yet been deciphered.

From Enkomi and Kition, Cyprus
(1300 – 1200 BCE)
Ceramic
The Cypro-Minoan script first emerged in the Late Bronze Age on Cyprus, probably developed from a writing system on Crete. It was used for the management of agricultural produce, marking ownership or indicating contents, allowing complex socio-political structures to develop. Objects inscribed with Cypro-Minoan have also been found at the city of Ugarit on the Syrian coast, showing the movement of goods and traders across the Mediterranean. The script has not yet been deciphered.

Fragment of large jar inscribed in Cypro-Minoan script
Cyprus Museum, no: A1507

Clay ball inscribed in the Cypro-Minoan script
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Eng. 1282

Clay ball inscribed in the Cypro-Minoan script
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: KITION 4215
Cypriot-Syllabary writing and Greek

A distinctive writing system, the Cypriot-Syllabary, emerged around the 11th century BCE. It was replaced by Greek writing in the 4th century BCE. The marble slab is inscribed in both scripts, reflecting the co-existence of multiple languages, and writing systems in some communities.

Both texts commemorate the erection of a sanctuary of Artemis Agrotera, by a king of Paphos named Nikokles.
A distinctive writing system, the Cypriot-Syllabary, emerged around the 11th century BCE. It was replaced by Greek writing in the 4th century BCE. The marble slab is inscribed in both scripts, reflecting the co-existence of multiple languages, and writing systems in some communities. Both texts commemorate the erection of a sanctuary of Artemis Agrotera, by a king of Paphos named Nikokles.

**Bi-graphic marble inscription, from Pafos-Maloutena, Cyprus (700 – 525 BCE)**
Marble
Archaeological Museum of the Pafos District, no: ΜΠ 357

**Fragment of bowl with Cypriot Syllabary inscription, from Kythrea-Skali (Nicosia district), Cyprus (350 – 310 BCE)**
Limestone
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: CM 1961/XII-8/1=Ins. 456
Inscriptions in Classical Cyprus

Inscriptions in several languages and scripts would have been seen by communities across Classical Cyprus, used for personal dedications, trade and administration.

The altar is inscribed with Cypriot signs proclaiming ‘Nikos son of Karus (?) set this up for good luck’. The fragment of pottery is marked with a quantity of olive oil, one of 733 inscriptions found in the Idalion royal palace.
Inscriptions in several languages and scripts would have been seen by communities across Classical Cyprus, used for personal dedications, trade and administration.

The altar is inscribed with Cypriot signs proclaiming 'Nikos son of Karus (?) set this up for good luck'. The fragment of pottery is marked with a quantity of olive oil, one of 733 inscriptions found in the Idalion royal palace.

Altar with inscription, from Tamassos, Cyprus (500 – 300 BCE)
Limestone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.302.1892

Phoenician inscription on plaque, from Idalion-Ampileri, Cyprus (500 – 300 BCE)
Stone (gypsum)
For the god of shepherds

The back of this statue is inscribed ‘for Opaon Melanthios, on behalf of the founder’. Opaon Melanthios was a god of shepherds with a sanctuary at Amargetti in western Cyprus. Was the donor seeking protection for his flock?

From Amargetti, Cyprus (100 BCE – 100 CE)
Limestone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.239.1888
A garrison commander

The city of Itanos in northeastern Crete lay on the sea route from the Aegean Sea to the southeastern Mediterranean. As a perfect location to oversee trade and movement, the Ptolemies (Greek rulers of Egypt) sent mercenaries to control the city. This inscription gives the name of Philotas from Epidamnos: a soldier with a Greek name from the area of modern Albania.

From Itanos, Crete (200 – 100 BCE)
Limestone
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: E80
FOOD & RITUAL

From Nuraghi Antigori, Sardinia
(1500 – 1200 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari,
no: 249, 250, 232, 231
Islanders made creative use of their local food resources: land was intensively farmed, and livestock moved between seasonal pastures. Food played an important role in religious and burial traditions, Potters created vessels for cooking, serving and eating, including elaborately decorated examples used in rituals and buried with the dead.

The sea also provided opportunities, with fish as source of food for island communities. These simple pieces of fired clay would have helped fishing nets sink to the seafloor and ensure they effectively trapped fish. A set of 40 weights from a single net was found in the tower complex (nuraghe) of Antigori, overlooking Cagliari Bay. Imported Mycenaean pottery found at the same place tell us that this community combined fish and other local produce with food from further afield, creating a distinctive local cuisine.
We might think of the Mediterranean diet as timeless, with simple, local and fresh foods. Archaeologists do find remains of wine, bread, olives and fish – all items familiar to us today. Their meanings and how they were prepared may have changed over time, but archaeological science can tell us about ingredients and how meals were prepared.
Preparing a household meal

The settlement of Marki-Alonia offers rare evidence for Early Bronze Age diet and cooking practices. In the house, small jugs were used to hold water, milk, wine and possibly olive oil. The cooking pots are burnt from being placed directly on a fire. Archaeobotanists have identified traces of wheat, barley, chickpeas, peas, lentils, almonds, olives, grapes, beef, lamb, goat and deer at the site.

From Marki Alonia, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1850 BCE)
Ceramic
Preparing a household meal

The settlement of Marki-Alonia offers rare evidence for Early Bronze Age diet and cooking practices. In the house, small jugs were used to hold water, milk, wine and possibly olive oil. The cooking pots are burnt from being placed directly on a fire. Archaeobotanists have identified traces of wheat, barley, chickpeas, peas, lentils, almonds, olives, grapes, beef, lamb, goat and deer at the site.

Spouted bowl
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: P14117

Cooking pot
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: P16151

Small jug with cutaway mouth
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: P13929

Small jug with round mouth
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: P13251

From Marki Alonia, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1850 BCE)
Preparing a household meal

The settlement of Marki-Alonia offers rare evidence for Early Bronze Age diet and cooking practices. In the house, small jugs were used to hold water, milk, wine and possibly olive oil. The cooking pots are burnt from being placed directly on a fire. Archaeobotanists have identified traces of wheat, barley, chickpeas, peas, lentils, almonds, olives, grapes, beef, lamb, goat and deer at the site.

Ceramic Landscape of Marki, Cyprus. A Christophilopoulou
Preparing a household meal

The settlement of Marki-Alonia offers rare evidence for Early Bronze Age diet and cooking practices. In the house, small jugs were used to hold water, milk, wine and possibly olive oil. The cooking pots are burnt from being placed directly on a fire. Archaeobotanists have identified traces of wheat, barley, chickpeas, peas, lentils, almonds, olives, grapes, beef, lamb, goat and deer at the site.

From Marki Alonia, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1850 BCE)
Ceramic

Landscape of Marki, Cyprus.
A Christophilopoulou
Food and diet

New scientific methods help archaeologists to identify tiny remains of ancient plants and animals. These tell us about how the landscape was used, what the climate was like and what ancient people were eating. Preserved organic materials found in excavation and shipwrecks give us a unique idea of plant products that were traded and consumed across large Mediterranean islands such as Crete, Cyprus and Sardinia: almonds, olive, pomegranate, fig, grape, coriander, carob and resins used to preserve wine.
Food and diet
New scientific methods help archaeologists to identify tiny remains of ancient plants and animals. These tell us about how the landscape was used, what the climate was like and what ancient people were eating.

Preserved organic materials found in excavation and shipwrecks give us a unique idea of plant products that were traded and consumed across large Mediterranean islands such as Crete, Cyprus and Sardinia: almonds, olive, pomegranate, fig, grape, coriander, carob and resins used to preserve wine.

Foods used in ancient cooking, from Cyprus and Crete (Modern specimens)
Clockwise from top: almonds, olives, figs, coriander, raisins, dates, oregano, wheat, mountain rosemary and mountain tea.
Wine drinking

Wine has been enjoyed for thousands of years in the Mediterranean, but the ways it was consumed are particular to their time and place. Sealed with a bung, the flask (left) would have allowed liquids, including wine, to be carried around on journeys. Elaborate pitchers (right) with painted and moulded decoration were popular in Cyprus. The black Attic jug (centre) shows how Greek drinking pottery was a popular import in Sardinia, perhaps used in Greek-style Symposium parties.
Wine has been enjoyed for thousands of years in the Mediterranean, but the ways it was consumed are particular to their time and place. Sealed with a bung, the flask (left) would have allowed liquids, including wine, to be carried around on journeys. Elaborate pitchers (right) with painted and moulded decoration were popular in Cyprus. The black Attic jug (centre) shows how Greek drinking pottery was a popular import in Sardinia, perhaps used in Greek-style Symposium parties.

Wine jug, from Tharros Cabras, Sardinia
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 11049

Pitcher with winged goddess, from Marion, Cyprus
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.46.1890

Flask, from unknown location, Cyprus
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.189.1888
Sardinian storage containers

A situla is a cylindrical vessel for storing and serving large volumes of liquids. This style, with its flat bottom, ribbon handles and surface grooves is typical of the Monte Claro culture, which spread across Sardinia in the third millennium BCE. Such vessels are found in both houses and tombs.

From Sestu, Sardinia
(2400 – 2100 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 197382
Long-distance shipments

This large transport vessel was one of the distinctive trade shapes, suitable for carrying large quantities of wine or olive oil. During this period, Cypriot potters borrowed techniques and decorative styles from Egypt, Greece, and Phoenicia. They produced eye-catching vessels, with linear patterns and stylised animals.

From Tamassos, Cyprus (1050 – 700 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.6.1907
Food is a daily necessity, but it meant much more than subsistence for the islanders. Preparing and eating food brings people together. The vessels used for enjoying food show the creativity of their makers and reveal distinctive food cultures on each island. Food and drink were central to religious rituals: offerings to the gods and shared meals at funerals and feasts. Dining together allows people to emphasise the things that matter to them.
Palace feasting

Feasts were central to the social and ritual life in the palace city of Knossos. Decorated vessels with spouts showed off the skill and creativity of potters. These objects go beyond function, underlining the performance aspects of serving and pouring in shared rituals.

This specialised vessel (rhyton), with a hole in its base for pouring, may have been used to make religious offerings. Sea creatures, like the marine molluscs (argonauts) on this pot, were common motifs in the pottery of Minoan Crete. This decoration both expressed an affinity for the sea and reveals a familiarity with the creatures that live in its depths.
Palace feasting

Feasts were central to the social and ritual life in the palace city of Knossos. Decorated vessels with spouts showed off the skill and creativity of potters. These objects go beyond function, underlining the performance aspects of serving and pouring in shared rituals. This specialised vessel (rhyton), with a hole in its base for pouring, may have been used to make religious offerings.

Sea creatures, like the marine molluscs (argonauts) on this pot, were common motifs in the pottery of Minoan Crete. This decoration both expressed an affinity for the sea and reveals a familiarity with the creatures that live in its depths.

Spouted jug, from Knossos, Crete (1700 – 1600 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.865

Spouted cup, from Knossos, Crete (1900 – c.1850 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1930.645

Marine style rhyton from Palaikastro, Crete (1500 – 1450 BCE)
Ceramic
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 3396
The wild outdoors

Stags, crested birds, waterfowl, flowers and trees decorate these jugs, evoking the movement and wildness of nature. Such vivid imagery on drinking vessels evoked the sacred meanings of these animals and plants and brought the great outdoors into the dining space.

The bull is designed to hold and pour liquid, with the face ending in a spout and a handle on the animal’s back designed for pouring. Cattle were an important part of daily life in Cyprus in this period, providing meat, dairy products and muscle power for ploughing. Religious imagery often included bulls, emphasising their importance in community life.
Barrel-shaped jug with stags, from Larnaca, Cyprus (c.750 – 600 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1885.366

Sack-shaped jug with water bird, possibly from Amathous, Cyprus (c.750 – 600 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1911.345

Bull-shaped vessel, from Cyprus (1500 – 1201 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.19.1932
Miniature food for eternity

In central Crete, miniature versions of stone vessels and containers with multiple cavities were often placed with the dead. These may have contained valuable aromatic substances following Egyptian traditions or small food and drink offerings, or even substituted for those foodstuffs.

From Platanos, Crete
(3000 – 1600 BCE)
Stone (steatite)
Miniature food for eternity
In central Crete, miniature versions of stone vessels and containers with multiple cavities were often placed with the dead. These may have contained valuable aromatic substances following Egyptian traditions or small food and drink offerings, or even substituted for those foodstuffs.

Kernos: vessel with two cavities
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Λ 1624

Nest shaped vessel
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Λ 1872

Cup
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Λ 1642

Miniature pithos (storage jar)
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Λ 1995
Nestled among the embers of a fire, this clay stand would have held a cooking pot in position, ensuring it was heated evenly. Such hobs would also ensure the brittle vessels did not crack through direct contact with the heat. Boiling meats and vegetables in a stew was a common form of cooking, whether for special meals or day-to-day eating.

From Marki Alonia, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1850 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities Cyprus, no: Marki P 2750
Grinding grain

Grinding grain and other foods in mortars must have been an everyday chore for many in the ancient Mediterranean. This mortar was found in an elite tomb, but was already centuries old before it was buried in 600 – 500 BCE. Had it been kept for generations or recently re-discovered? Either way, it connected the deceased to their ancestors and to local food traditions.

From Grave XI (XII), Tamassos, Cyprus (1900 – 1050 BCE)
Stone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.323.1892
Individual drinking

Cups are found in great numbers and a wide range of designs and were probably used to drink wine. They reflect a hospitality culture in which guests received individual vessels rather than sharing from a larger vessel, as had been common in earlier periods. With such cups also being found across the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt, we glimpse the fusion of different food and drink cultures.

The flourish of abstract patterns on this Kamares ware cup show the influence of metal prototypes on the workshops of the Minoan palaces that produced them.
Individual drinking cups are found in great numbers and a wide range of designs and were probably used to drink wine. They reflect a hospitality culture in which guests received individual vessels rather than sharing from a larger vessel, as had been common in earlier periods. With such cups also being found across the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt, we glimpse the fusion of different food and drink cultures.

The flourish of abstract patterns on this Kamares ware cup show the influence of metal prototypes on the workshops of the Minoan palaces that produced them.

Kamares ware decorated cup, Phaistos, Crete (c.1750 – 1700 BCE)
Ceramic
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 5782

Red-polished ware cup, from Vounous, Cyprus (2200 – 2100 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5b.1939
Many of the ancient cultures of Sardinia left elaborate food vessels in graves. The tripod, used to support cooking vessels in a fire, comes from the necropolis of Is Loccis Santus, made up of 13 artificial caves. This example may have been specially made for the tomb and never used. The dish is from the tombs of a different group, the Monte Claro culture, who lived nearby.
Tripod vessel, Is Loccis Santus, Sardinia (3000 – 2000 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 167586

Plate, from Sa Duchessa, Sardinia (3000 – 2000 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 147424
Wine offerings

Jugs and jars are often found at sanctuary sites, where they would have been used in religious rituals, possibly for making libations with wine. These examples are from a sacred well, reached by a stairway and covered by a vaulted roof, at Sant’ Anastasia. The decorative bands filled with dashes, diamond shapes and circles on the two-handled vessel may be a stylized representation of a tower (nuraghe).

From Sant’Anastasia, Sardara, Sardinia (1200 – 900 BCE)
Ceramic
Wine offerings

Jugs and jars are often found at sanctuary sites, where they would have been used in religious rituals, possibly for making libations with wine. These examples are from a sacred well, reached by a stairway and covered by a vaulted roof, at Sant' Anastasia. The decorative bands filled with dashes, diamond shapes and circles on the two-handled vessel may be a stylized representation of a tower (*nuraghe*).

Pear-shaped jar with two handles
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 36134

Jug with one handle
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 601257
A bread offering

This figurine, showing a woman holding up a circular loaf of bread, was left as an offering at Abini sanctuary. Grain was an important staple for the Nuragic people: such religious donations underline how bread and sustenance played a key role in religion, alongside the heroic warrior figures seen earlier in the exhibition.

From Sanctuary of Abini, Teti, Sardinia (1000 – 700 BCE)
Copper alloy
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: L143
Incense burner

Dining and religious ritual were richly sensory experiences for the people of ancient Crete. The burning of fragrant plants in specialised vessels would have heightened the senses during ritual and eating.

From Ta Pharangia, Sphakia, Crete (1300 – 1190 BCE)
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.282
CONNECTED ISLANDS & MIGRATION

From Enkomi, Cyprus (c.1200 – 1100 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: T.10/23
Island communities thrived on connections across the sea. People, objects, materials and ideas moved around, creating hybrid cultures. Trade, survival, and curiosity fuelled these dynamic exchanges.

The city of Enkomi in Eastern Cyprus, founded around 1800 BCE, flourished as a copper-smelting and trading centre, with particularly strong links to Ugarit on the facing Syrian coast. This jar from Enkomi, decorated with bulls and humans, is an object typical of the mainland Mycenaean Greek style, and shows the presence of Greek settlers in the later phase of the town in the 13th century BCE. The city would fade in significance after a series of attacks, after which cities like Salamis would emerge as important centres.
The movement of people is one of the few constants of Mediterranean history, but it has taken many different forms. Objects show us movement and contact between people – as valued imports or the possessions of individuals who chose to move and settle somewhere new. Coastal communities might retreat to higher ground in times of turmoil, setting up new communities.
Cycladic style

Enigmatic and evocative figurines like this were mainly produced in the Cycladic islands using a local marble. Depicting a stylised human form, these figurines were originally painted, and placed mostly in tombs. This example, found in a burial cave in north-central Crete, may have been made locally in the style of the Cyclades. Were such objects adopted for local ritual, used in new ways, or do they provide evidence of migrants?

From Pyrgos Cave, Crete (2500 – 2000 BCE)
Marble
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Figurine: Γ 251
Minoan style

The pottery production on Minoan Crete joyfully combines representations of the sea, plants and animals with abstract forms. Different styles developed, such as the white-spotted pottery with a dark background, or the famous Kamares style for prestige objects and tableware, with its complex white, red and blue patterns.

Minoan pottery is found in many places around the Mediterranean, demonstrating its broad appeal and the reach of Crete’s networks.
Minoan style
The pottery production on Minoan Crete joyfully combines representations of the sea, plants and animals with abstract forms. Different styles developed, such as the white-spotted pottery with a dark background, or the famous Kamares style for prestige objects and tableware, with its complex white, red and blue patterns. Minoan pottery is found in many places around the Mediterranean, demonstrating its broad appeal and the reach of Crete’s networks.

Early Minoan jar with painted decoration, from Crete (2200 – 2000 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.2.1972

Middle Minoan jug, from Knossos Palace, Crete (1700 – 1650 BCE)
Ceramic
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 2398
Perfume industry

Mycenaean potters were influenced by the natural forms found in Minoan art, but represented them in an increasingly stylised manner. Squat stirrup jars – the name refers to the ‘stirrup’ that runs from the pouring spout to a non-functional second spout – and pear-shaped jars were used for oils and perfumes. Vessels like these have been found across the Eastern Mediterranean and as far south as Sudan, reflecting the wide demand for both exotic objects and the luxury products they contained.
Mycenaean potters were influenced by the natural forms found in Minoan art, but represented them in an increasingly stylised manner. Squat stirrup jars – the name refers to the 'stirrup' that runs from the pouring spout to a non-functional second spout – and pear-shaped jars were used for oils and perfumes. Vessels like these have been found across the Eastern Mediterranean and as far south as Sudan, reflecting the wide demand for both exotic objects and the luxury products they contained.

**Stirrup jar, from Crete**  
(1400 – 1090 BCE)  
Ceramic  
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1967.527

**Piriform Jar, from Larnaka-Laxia tou Riou (tomb 4), Cyprus**  
(1400 – 1090 BCE)  
Ceramic  
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.C.98
A refugee community

As coastal cities were abandoned in the Late Bronze Age, some communities retreated to ‘refugee settlements’. Many of these were found in remote locations and on the slopes of high peaks, easy to defend. In Karphi, where these vessels were found, a community of around 3,000 people lived in small households. Terracotta figurines and other objects were offered at a small shrine, indicating the survival of earlier Minoan traditions.

From Karphi Lasithi region, Crete
(1180 BCE – 970 BCE)
Ceramic
A refugee community
As coastal cities were abandoned in the Late Bronze Age, some communities retreated to ‘refugee settlements’. Many of these were found in remote locations and on the slopes of high peaks, easy to defend. In Karphi, where these vessels were found, a community of around 3,000 people lived in small households. Terracotta figurines and other objects were offered at a small shrine, indicating the survival of earlier Minoan traditions.

Pyxis with decorated lid
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11057

Twin-handled bowl
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11059

Kalathos with bow-shaped handle
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11053

Stirrup jar
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11068

Stirrup amphora
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11069
As coastal cities were abandoned in the Late Bronze Age, some communities retreated to ‘refugee settlements’. Many of these were found in remote locations and on the slopes of high peaks, easy to defend. In Karphi, where these vessels were found, a community of around 3,000 people lived in small households. Terracotta figurines and other objects were offered at a small shrine, indicating the survival of earlier Minoan traditions.

From Karphi, Lasithi region, Crete (1180 BCE – 970 BCE)
As coastal cities were abandoned in the Late Bronze Age, some communities retreated to ‘refugee settlements’. Many of these were found in remote locations and on the slopes of high peaks, easy to defend. In Karphi, where these vessels were found, a community of around 3,000 people lived in small households. Terracotta figurines and other objects were offered at a small shrine, indicating the survival of earlier Minoan traditions.

Pyxis with decorated lid
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11057

Twin-handled bowl
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11059

Kalathos with bow-shaped handle
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11053

Stirrup jar
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11068

Stirrup amphora
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π11069

From Karphi, Lasithi region, Crete (1180 BCE – 970 BCE)

Karphi, Crete.
Schuppi, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Punic inscriptions

Inscriptions in the Punic or Phoenicio-Punic language, a variety of the Phoenician language) come from two prominent sites in Sardinia. At Sulcis Tophet, on the island of Sant’ Antioco, inscriptions were left in an open-air sacred place. By contrast, at Fluminimaggiore, inscriptions were dedicated in a temple. This area was colonised by the Carthaginians and then Romans, attracted by silver and lead deposits.
Punic inscriptions
Inscriptions in the Punic or Phoenicio-Punic language, a variety of the Phoenician language) come from two prominent sites in Sardinia. At Sulcis Tophet, on the island of Sant’ Antioco, inscriptions were left in an open-air sacred place. By contrast, at Fluminimaggiore, inscriptions were dedicated in a temple. This area was colonised by the Carthaginians and then Romans, attracted by silver and lead deposits.

Small base with Punic inscriptions, from Antas Fluminimaggiore, Sardinia (7500 – 300 BCE)
Stone
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 004

Small stone with inscription, from Sulci Tophet, Sardinia (7500 – 300 BCE)
Stone
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 10680
Perfume bottles

These miniature perfume containers evoke the strong connections between Greek communities and cities like Tharros and Nora on Sardinia. Glass vessels (*alabastra*) for perfumes or scented oils first appeared in the Greek world late in the 6th century BCE. These were used in funerary rites and the bottles then left in the grave. Both Nora and Tharros were great Phoenician emporia trading centres which had extensive contacts with Greek merchants.
Perfume bottles evoke the strong connections between Greek communities and cities like Tharros and Nora on Sardinia. Glass vessels (alabastra) for perfumes or scented oils first appeared in the Greek world late in the 6th century BCE. These were used in funerary rites and the bottles then left in the grave. Both Nora and Tharros were great Phoenician emporia trading centres which had extensive contacts with Greek merchants.

**Perfume bottle from Tharros, Sardinia**  
(600 – 500 BCE)  
Glass  
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 9668

**Perfume bottle from Nora, Sardinia**  
(600 – 500 BCE)  
Glass  
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 005
Perfume bottles

These miniature perfume containers evoke the strong connections between Greek communities and cities like Tharros and Nora on Sardinia. Glass vessels (alabastra) for perfumes or scented oils first appeared in the Greek world late in the 6th century BCE. These were used in funerary rites and the bottles then left in the grave. Both Nora and Tharros were great Phoenician emporia trading centres which had extensive contacts with Greek merchants.

Perfume bottle from Tharros, Sardinia (600 – 500 BCE)
Glass
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 9668

Perfume bottle from Nora, Sardinia (600 – 500 BCE)
Glass
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 005

Norbert Nagel – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0.
These miniature perfume containers evoke the strong connections between Greek communities and cities like Tharros and Nora on Sardinia. Glass vessels (alabastra) for perfumes or scented oils first appeared in the Greek world late in the 6th century BCE. These were used in funerary rites and the bottles then left in the grave. Both Nora and Tharros were great Phoenician emporia trading centres which had extensive contacts with Greek merchants.

Perfume bottle from Tharros, Sardinia (600 – 500 BCE)
Glass
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 9668

Perfume bottle from Nora, Sardinia (600 – 500 BCE)
Glass
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 005

Tharros, Sardinia.
Norbert Nagel – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0.
Phoenician innovation

Phoenician jewellers used glass paste instead of precious stone to embellish necklaces with head-shaped pendants and beads. This revolutionised jewellery production, replacing precious stones. Such pendants became popular across Cyprus and Sardinia from the 7th century BCE, showing the reach of Phoenician craftsmen and traders. The pendants depict human heads with twisted hair, animals (rams, roosters) and monstrous creatures believed to repel evil forces.

From Amathus, Cyprus and unknown location (possibly Tharros), Sardinia (600 – 500 BCE)
Glass
Phoenician innovation
Phoenician jewellers used glass paste instead of precious stone to embellish necklaces with head-shaped pendants and beads. This revolutionised jewellery production, replacing precious stones. Such pendants became popular across Cyprus and Sardinia from the 7th century BCE, showing the reach of Phoenician craftsmen and traders. The pendants depict human heads with twisted hair, animals (rams, roosters) and monstrous creatures believed to repel evil forces.

Pendant in human head form
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 006

Pendant in animal head form
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 007

Janiform head pendant
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.106c.1876

Pendant in the form of a head
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.106d.1876
Phoenician-Punic Jewellery and scarab from Tharros

These earrings, one with an image of the Egyptian falcon god Horus, show the wealth and range of Phoenician trade networks, linking Sardinia with North Africa and other islands. Gold and silver were the focus of this trade, but while towns like Tharros were important parts of these networks, the material culture of Sardinian communities changed little through these contacts.

From Tharros, Sardinia
(600 – 500 BCE)
Phoenician-Punic scarab
Gold and stone
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 218

2 looped cross earrings
Gold
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 19476 & 1947

Earring pendant with Horus and basket
Gold
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 21636

Amulet pouch
Gold
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 9342

Hair Ring
Gold
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: SNI 008
Advances in seafaring and trade freed up movement of objects and people across the Mediterranean. The Phoenicians were a major factor in these networks, establishing a set of independent city-state trading posts. These were not conquests of territory, but cosmopolitan hubs that were also used by other traders such as the Euboean Greeks.
A Phoenician razor

This elegant razor, with a handle in the form of a two-headed swan and engraved decoration, is another example of the important Phoenician presence in Sardinia. Trading centres were founded along the coasts as early as the 9th and 8th centuries BCE. These would have been places of great cultural and technological exchange.

From unknown location, Sardinia (c.500 – 239 BCE)
Bronze
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 010
Perfume and opium

In the Late Bronze Age, Cyprus began to trade with the neighbouring mainlands, and foreign goods were introduced to the island. Egypt was a close commercial contact and one of the commodities traded, other than copper, was perfumed oil, bottled in specially made juglets. Cypriot vessels with ring-shaped bases may have been used for the export of opium from Cyprus and traded in the Aegean Sea, and the eastern and central Mediterranean.

From Kalavassos-Agios Dimitrios and Larnaka-Laxia tou Riou, Cyprus, and unknown location, Egypt (1550 – 1200 BCE)
In the Late Bronze Age, Cyprus began to trade with the neighbouring mainlands, and foreign goods were introduced to the island. Egypt was a close commercial contact and one of the commodities traded, other than copper, was perfumed oil, bottled in specially made juglets. Cypriot vessels with ring-shaped bases may have been used for the export of opium from Cyprus and traded in the Aegean Sea, and the eastern and central Mediterranean.

Base-ring painted jug, from Larnaka-Laxia tou Riou, Cyprus
Ceramic
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.C.92

Base-ring Jug with relief decoration, from Kalavasos-Agios Dimitrios, Cyprus
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: KAD375

Base-ring jug with relief decoration, from Kalavassos-Agios Dimitrios, Cyprus
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: KAD1766

Base-ring jug, from unknown location, Egypt
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: E.GA.3099.19436
Pan-Mediterranean goddesses

Astarte was worshipped over thousands of years, from the Bronze Age into Classical antiquity, and from the Levant to Egypt, Cyprus and even as far west as the Iberian Peninsula. Her cult became particularly widespread between 1200 – 1100 BCE when Phoenician people in the Mediterranean introduced her worship in their colonies.

Ceres was a goddess of agriculture, grain crops, fertility and motherly relationships in ancient Roman religion.
Pan-Mediterranean goddesses

Astarte was worshipped over thousands of years, from the Bronze Age into Classical antiquity, and from the Levant to Egypt, Cyprus and even as far west as the Iberian Peninsula. Her cult became particularly widespread between 1200 – 1100 BCE when Phoenician people in the Mediterranean introduced her worship in their colonies.

Ceres was a goddess of agriculture, grain crops, fertility and motherly relationships in ancient Roman religion.

Figurine of the goddess Astarte, from Selemiyeh, Turkey (2000 – 1750 BCE)
Ceramic
The Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1913.450

Bust of Sardinian Ceres, from Calangianus, Sardinia (200 – 50 BCE)
Ceramic
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 009
The Phoenicians settled in Carthage – in modern Tunisia – in around the 9th century BCE. Carthage later became a powerful empire. These communities used burial urns at distinctive open-air cemeteries and sanctuaries (*tophet*), including in Sardinia. Researchers debate whether some of these burial jars held remains of child sacrifices.

From unknown location, Sardinia (500 – 238 BCE)

Ceramic

National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 33744
Cypriot style

The combination of the geometric and natural – stylised birds, fish and circles is typical of the Cypriot Bichrome style of pottery. Used across Cyprus, Western Asia and Egypt, such pottery shows the continued interconnections between islands and mainland. These vessels would have carried wine or olive oil. The fine decoration suggests that this prestige object was intended for feasting.

From Cyprus
(750 – 600 BCE)
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Loan Ant.103.97
Cosmpolitan communities

These two objects evoke the complex web of interactions and connections between islands and mainland communities. The statue was made in the Greek style but found at Naukratis in Egypt, a port city home to a cosmopolitan mix of Egyptians, Cypriots, Greeks and others. Found in Cyprus, the Phoenician seal – an object used to mark ownership and control access to products, belongings or buildings – draws on Egyptian religious imagery, with a depiction of the falcon god Horus.
These two objects evoke the complex web of interactions and connections between islands and mainland communities. The statue was made in the Greek style but found at Naukratis in Egypt, a port city home to a cosmopolitan mix of Egyptians, Cypriots, Greeks and others. Found in Cyprus, the Phoenician seal – an object used to mark ownership and control access to products, belongings or buildings – draws on Egyptian religious imagery, with a depiction of the falcon god Horus.

Statuette of a woman, holding bowl, from Naukratis (Egypt) (680 – 520 BCE)
Limestone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.2.1887

Scaraboid stamp seal, from Cyprus (680 – 520 BCE)
Stone
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: ANE.30.1909
Athenian pottery from a Phoenician cemetery

Beautifully decorated tombs in the cemetery on Tuvixeddu hill near Cagliari were used for the burials of the Phoenician community. These vessels were all made in Athens, with the fine wine-cup (skyphos) depicting a dancing follower of Dionysus wearing a garment (peplos) fashionable across the Greek world. Other vessels included large storage pots (amphorae) and containers for aromatic substances.

From Tuvixeddu cemetery, Cagliari, Sardinia (700 – 300 BCE)
Ceramic
Athenian pottery from a Phoenician cemetery

Beautifully decorated tombs in the cemetery on Tuvixeddu hill near Cagliari were used for the burials of the Phoenician community. These vessels were all made in Athens, with the fine wine-cup (skyphos) depicting a dancing follower of Dionysus wearing a garment (peplos) fashionable across the Greek world. Other vessels included large storage pots (amphorae) and containers for aromatic substances.

Cup (kantharos) with Dionysiac scene
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 15664

Attic red-figure cup (skyphos)
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 32672

Miniature black-figure cup (kylix)
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 33327

Pouring vessel (guttus) with black-figure decoration
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 83824
From Decimoputzu and Sarroch Nuraghe Antigori, Sardinia (3600/3500 – 2200 BCE)
Copper
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: B543; B551; A956; A958; 17064; SNI 12
Islanders were creative with the raw materials around them, and islands were places of technical innovation. The challenges of geographical isolation provoked improvisation. Exchange, migration and foreign rule brought new ideas and new markets for goods. These allowed islanders to overcome geographic distance and the absence of certain materials on each island.

Cyprus and Sardinia had rich metal sources exploited by ancient communities, but Crete had no significant metal deposits. Copper ingots, such as these from Sardinia, were traded all over the Mediterranean. After the copper ore was processed, it was poured into moulds, creating objects that could easily be transported by ship to those islands without metal.
Metals were central to island identities: the ancient Greek word for copper (*kupros*) is derived from Cyprus. Ancient metalworking can be studied by identifying raw materials, production places, and reconstructing supply and trade networks. Objects forged from bronze, copper, iron, gold, and silver played an important role on all three islands, used for weapons, ritual objects, jewellery and coins. By examining the industries that lay behind their production, we can understand when and how new materials and techniques were introduced into islands, revealing travel and connections across the Mediterranean.

**RESOURCES & TECHNOLOGY**

The efficient shape of this ingot, reminiscent of the hide of an ox, would have allowed these 30kg objects to be easily picked up and carried on the shoulder. These ingots were made in standard weights, cast in special moulds at the production site. This standardisation provided traders with confidence to efficiently ship and exchange the valuable metal across the Mediterranean.

From the Royal Villa (Room 7), Hagia Triada, Crete (c.1520 – 1450 BCE)

Copper

Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Χ726α
Ox-hide ingot

The efficient shape of this ingot reminiscent of the hide of an ox – would have allowed these 30kg objects to be easily picked up and carried on the shoulder. These ingots were made in standard weights, cast in special moulds at the production site. This standardisation provided traders with confidence to efficiently ship and exchange the valuable metal across the Mediterranean.

From the Royal Villa (Room 7), Hagia Triada, Crete (c.1520 – 1450 BCE)
Copper
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: X726α
Mineral wealth

Copper ore (covellite) has been mined across Sardinia since around 1800 BCE, and turned into ingots. In Sardinia, ox-hide ingots have been found in hoards hidden in towers (nuraghe), villages, temples, and sanctuaries, but never in tombs.

New scientific techniques such as lead isotope analyses can help identify where the metal came from. The copper in this ingot was from Apliki in Cyprus over 2100km across the sea. Ancient metalworking was an industry that connected islands and mainlands.
Mineral wealth

Copper ore (covellite) has been mined across Sardinia since around 1800 BCE, and turned into ingots. In Sardinia, ox-hide ingots have been found in hoards hidden in towers (nuraghe), villages, temples, and sanctuaries, but never in tombs.

New scientific techniques such as lead isotope analyses can help identify where the metal came from. The copper in this ingot was from Apliki in Cyprus over 2100km across the sea. Ancient metalworking was an industry that connected islands and mainlands.

Modern Covellite samples, from Sardinia (Collected around 1900 CE)
Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences Cambridge, no: 11617

Ox hide ingot, from Serra Ilixi-Nuragus, Sardinia (1500 – 1200 BCE)
Copper
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 5485
Metal for the gods

The important cult centres at Abini and Sant’Anastasia attracted worshippers who left a range of metal offerings as donations to the gods. The handles and lids, originally attached to metal vessels, are embellished with bird figures. At Sant’Anastasia, objects were found in a deep sacred well, accessed by steps. Many such sites continued in use for centuries, even after the arrival of Christianity.

From Abini Teti, and Sant’Anastasia, Sardara, Sardinia (1000 – 600 BCE)
Bronze
Metal for the gods

The important cult centres at Abini and Sant’Anastasia attracted worshippers who left a range of metal offerings as donations to the gods. The handles and lids, originally attached to metal vessels, are embellished with bird figures. At Sant’Anastasia, objects were found in a deep sacred well, accessed by steps. Many such sites continued in use for centuries, even after the arrival of Christianity.

From Abini Teti, and Sant’Anastasia, Sardara, Sardinia (1000 – 600 BCE)

**Bronze**

- **Handle with animal head decoration**
  National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 20837

- **Lid with bird-shaped handle**
  National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: SNI 011

- **Bronze basin**
  National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 135898
Casting mould for a weapon

This mould would have been filled with molten metal, to cast a spearhead, in the distinctive shape used in Iron Age Sardinia. Spearheads of this type have been found in the sanctuaries around Nuoro, though this example was found at a site with a tower (nuraghe), monumental tomb and sacred well.

From Silanus, Sardinia (1000 – 600 BCE)
Stone
National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, no: 23934
Dagger

This triangular-shaped blade was found in an Early Bronze Age tomb. Made from copper with few impurities, it is likely to have come from a local source of copper ore. Its flat tang has been pierced to receive a single pin, which is still in place, suggesting it was an object designed for symbolic or ritual use.

From Tomb 154, Vounous-Bellapais, Cyprus (2250 – 2050 BCE)
Copper
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5n.1939
Dagger or knife

Once attached to a handle with three metal pins, its flat shape suggests this may have been a knife or dagger. The handle may have been made of wood, with dark traces of this material preserved around the pins.

From Tamassos, Cyprus
(2100 – 1600 BCE)
Copper alloy
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.211.1892
Minoan dagger

The dagger blade is still attached to its original handle, held in place by two copper rivets. Some of the 100 graves in the Zafer Papoura cemetery near the Late Minoan Palace at Knossos contained the burials of warriors. In these graves, daggers and spearheads were placed with the dead alongside intricate pottery most possibly as status symbols denoting a warrior’s ethos.

Knossos-Zafer Papoura, Crete
(1400 – 1300 BCE)
Copper alloy
Ashmolean Museum, no: AN1896-1908.AE.472
Weapons

The most common form of metal weapon in the Bronze Age Mediterranean was a spearhead, with tangs to attach the blade to a wooden handle. Such objects were not just weapons. Spearheads with very large blades but small tangs may have been made to show off wealth or proclaim status. Blades buried with the deceased were often deliberately bent, as if to ‘kill’ their power.

From Cyprus
(2100 – 1600 BCE)
Bronze
The most common form of metal weapon in the Bronze Age Mediterranean was a spearhead, with tangs to attach the blade to a wooden handle. Such objects were not just weapons. Spearheads with very large blades but small tangs may have been made to show off wealth or proclaim status. Blades buried with the deceased were often deliberately bent, as if to ‘kill’ their power.

Blade
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.132f.1908

Blade
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.210.1892

Blade
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.210a.1892
Weapons as offerings

This group contains a dagger with a hilt in the shape of the Greek letter “gamma”, sword hilt and spear head as well as a miniature dagger, created solely to be deposited in Iron age sanctuaries rather than for practical use. Contacts with Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean allowed the development of local Sardinian metallurgy, for making tools, weapons and utensils.

From Su Benatzu Santadi and Abini Teti, Sardinia (1200 – 900 BCE)
Bronze
Spear Head  
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 38927

Sword hilt  
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 36320

Dagger with a Gamma-shaped handle  
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 50922

Miniature dagger  
National Archaeological Museum Cagliari, no: 14789
A sword and its wrappings

This type of weapon is often found in burials across Bronze Age Cyprus. Scientific analyses have shown these are usually made from copper with small traces of tin, arsenic and iron. Mineral traces on the object suggest it was once wrapped in a textile or leather, perhaps as part of burial ritual.

From unknown location, Cyprus (1800 – 1400 BCE)
Copper
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.132h.1908
A sword and its wrappings

This type of weapon is often found in burials across Bronze Age Cyprus. Scientific analyses have shown these are usually made from copper with small traces of tin, arsenic and iron. Mineral traces on the object suggest it was once wrapped in a textile or leather, perhaps as part of burial ritual.

From unknown location, Cyprus (1800 – 1400 BCE)

Copper

Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.132h.1908

Detail of blade surface showing mineralised remains of a textile or leather wrapping.

Photograph taken with a DinoLite digital microscope, Susanna Pacionaldo, Fitzwilliam Museum.
The Tamassos sword

Placed in one of the four stone-built tombs of the kings of Tamassos, this complex object evokes the wealth of Cypriot rulers and their access to imports. It was found near a stone coffin, with a shield, helmet and vessels for feasting. Scientific analyses have revealed that the sword featured carved ivory plaques, copper-alloy rivets, and tin and silver layers added to the edges of the hilt.

From Tomb 12, Tamassos, Cyprus (600 – 480 BCE)
Iron, silver, tin, and wood
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.334.1892
X-radiograph of hilt-fragment revealing decorative metal foils on hilt edges and silver heads of the rivets.
above: Reconstruction drawing showing how the sword might have looked when new. Drawing by Kate Morton.

below: Side view of sword rendered from micro-CT scans. Image produced by Graham Treece, University of Cambridge, using Stradview software.
GOLD STYLES

In late Classical and Hellenistic Cyprus, gold jewellery was popular among the wealthy, both worn in life and placed in burials. These rings, pendants and diadems show the skills of the ancient makers, but also styles that drew on imagery found across the ancient Mediterranean.
Mouth cover

This mouth cover was made by delicately hammering gold foil, creating a scene of two figures worshipping a lotus flower. The holes at either end would have allowed it to be used as an ornamental headband (diadem), but these objects were a typical feature of burials at Enkomi, where they covered the mouths of the deceased.

From Cyprus
(1000 – 900 BCE)
Gold
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Loan Ant.103.94
Reuse and recycling

Gold is very soft and can be beaten into very thin sheets or foil. This decorated headband (*diadem*) is made of pure gold, with an embossed scene of winged youths flanking a palm motif. The central part, in the shape of a roof pediment, suggests this was cut down from a larger sheet: precious gold would have been re-used and re-cycled.

From unknown location, Cyprus (400 – 300 BCE)
Gold
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.155a.1909
Classical style on Cyprus

These pendants, rings, animal-head earrings and coils are characteristic of the jewellery placed in burials during the Classical period in Cyprus. The pendant in the shape of a pointed flask (*aryballos*) may have been made for the grave, others were likely jewellery worn during the deceased’s lifetime.

The coils may have been threaded through plaited hair.

From Marion and Palaepaphos, Cyprus (500 – 300 BCE)
Gold / Copper alloy and gold
Jar-shaped pendant
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.120.1890

Pair of coils with griffin-head terminals
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.126.1890

Ring with intaglio of Eros flying
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.123.1890

Crescent-shaped earring
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.307.1888

Small coil
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.321.1888

Calf-head earring
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.4.1891
Lion-head earring

Hellenistic jewellery-makers fashioned earrings with a range of animal shapes, including lions, panthers, dolphins, lynxes and calves. All these beasts were associated with the god Dionysos. The earrings were made using gold sheet and filigree (twisted threads and beads).

From Cyprus
(300 – 100 BCE)
Gold
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.J.1
Lion-head earring

Hellenistic jewellery-makers fashioned earrings with a range of animal shapes, including lions, panthers, dolphins, lynxes and calves. All these beasts were associated with the god Dionysos. The earrings were made using gold sheet and filigree (twisted threads and beads).

From Cyprus (300 – 100 BCE)

Gold
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.J.1

Detail showing swagged and twisted wires as well as chase work at the base of the lion’s head.

Image taken with a Hirox 3D microscope, courtesy of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge.
The mineral wealth of Cyprus had made it a powerhouse of trade and metal production. Its communities would also combine the raw ingredients of sand, soda ash or natron and limestone to create a flourishing glass industry. While glass had been made in Cyprus from around 1500BCE, along with production in western Asia, the Aegean and Egypt, from 100BCE a new method of mould-blowing allowed the making of complex and very thin-walled vessels.
Glass vessels from Cyprus

In Roman Cyprus, glass replaced pottery in the home. Drinking cups, plates, bowls, bottles and jugs were now made in glass, which had become cheaper to manufacture with new mould-blowing technology. Glass vessels were also placed in tombs. The pale green jug (oinochoe) would have been blown out of molten glass and the delicate spout and base shaped while still hot. A fine strip of glass was then added to create a ring around the neck and the handle.

From Cyprus
(58 – 400 CE)
Glass
Glass vessels from Cyprus

In Roman Cyprus, glass replaced pottery in the home. Drinking cups, plates, bowls, bottles and jugs were now made in glass, which had become cheaper to manufacture with new mould-blowing technology. Glass vessels were also placed in tombs. The pale green jug (oinochoe) would have been blown out of molten glass and the delicate spout and base shaped while still hot. A fine strip of glass was then added to create a ring around the neck and the handle.

Flask
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.61.1876

Bottle
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.70.1876

Jug (Oinochoe)
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.132.1888

Stirring rod
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.58b.1876

Flask
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: Gr.50.1876

Unguentarium
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.49.1888
BURIAL & MEMORY

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2000 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: V.T.2/91
A person’s death was a time to re-affirm community identities. Objects placed in tombs show what was important to the living, helping us to understand islanders’ sense of identity. At cemeteries such as Bellapais-Vounous on Cyprus, the buried objects were part of ceremonies and traditions that conveyed and secured a shared sense of belonging.

Two figures meet each other’s gaze across the lid of this box (*pyxis*) which may have held cosmetics. One is depicted in the distinctive ‘plank-shaped style’, holding a baby. The other is modelled in the round. Interpreting such imagery is difficult. Does the baby-holding figure evoke motherhood and a link to the ancestors?
The tombs of Bellapais-Vounous on Cyprus were a place to gather and remember the dead. People came together to feast in burial ceremonies. All the pots used during these rituals ended up in the tomb alongside the deceased, sealed where they were last used, perhaps considered unsuitable for use in day-to-day life. These objects provide glimpses of community imagination.
Agents of identity

Objects in graves could have personal or religious significance. Blades like this (probable) spearhead might mark the deceased as a hunter or warrior. They often show signs of wear from use before they were buried. Imported toggle pins, worn on the shoulders of the deceased, tell us about long-distance maritime exchange networks. Wearing imported goods conveyed prestige and status. Ceremonial vessels with religious imagery, such as horned animals and discs, allow the deceased to re-negotiate their place in the cosmos.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)
Hook-tanged weapon, possibly a spearhead
Copper alloy
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UK, no: 1951.1076.E

Toggle pin
Copper alloy
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5i.1939

Toggle pin
Copper alloy
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5j.1939

Ceremonial Jar
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5y.1939

Ceremonial spouted ‘tulip’ bowl
Ceramic
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5e.1939
Drinks and offerings

Some tombs at Bellpais-Vounous were provided with pottery vessels that could store up to 300 litres. These may have held alcoholic beverages – perhaps wine – consumed during burial feasts or offered in the tomb. The raised snake decoration may have been intended to evoke the supernatural.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)
Ceramic
Drinks and offerings

Some tombs at Bellpais-Vounous were provided with pottery vessels that could store up to 300 litres. These may have held alcoholic beverages – perhaps wine – consumed during burial feasts or offered in the tomb. The raised snake decoration may have been intended to evoke the supernatural.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Red-polished cutaway-mouethed jug
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5v.1939

Red-polished cutaway-mouethed jug with snake
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Vounous, T.87A, n.4

Red-polished-black-topped flask
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5d.1939
A community’s pottery tradition

Across the northern coast of Cyprus, potters developed a distinctive style, with red polished and black-topped vessels incised with geometric motifs, then highlighted with a white calcium paste. Each vessel was unique, reflecting individual potters and the diversity of the community they served. Bellapais-Vounous was the centre of this pottery production.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)
Ceramic
A community’s pottery tradition
Across the northern coast of Cyprus, potters developed a distinctive style, with red polished and black-topped vessels incised with geometric motifs, then highlighted with a white calcium paste. Each vessel was unique, reflecting individual potters and the diversity of the community they served. Bellapais-Vounous was the centre of this pottery production.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Ceramic

Red-polished-black-topped ear-lug jar
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5p.1939

Red-polished-black-topped stemmed ‘tulip’ bowl
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5f.1939

Red-polished-black-topped ‘tulip’ bowl
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UK, no: 1951.1074.M

Tomb 84 Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (Stewart and Stewart 1950: p.67, fig.27).
A community's pottery tradition

Across the northern coast of Cyprus, potters developed a distinctive style, with red polished and black-topped vessels incised with geometric motifs, then highlighted with a white calcium paste. Each vessel was unique, reflecting individual potters and the diversity of the community they served. Bellapais-Vounous was the centre of this pottery production.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Ceramic

Red-polished-black-topped ear-lug jar
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5p.1939

Red-polished-black-topped stemmed 'tulip' bowl
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5f.1939

Red-polished-black-topped 'tulip' bowl
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UK, no: 1951.1074.M

Tomb 84 Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (Stewart and Stewart 1950: p.67, fig.27).
A community's pottery tradition

Across the northern coast of Cyprus, potters developed a distinctive style, with red polished and black-topped vessels incised with geometric motifs, then highlighted with a white calcium paste. Each vessel was unique, reflecting individual potters and the diversity of the community they served. Bellapais-Vounous was the centre of this pottery production.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Ceramic

- Red-polished-black-topped ear-lug jar
  - Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5p.1939
- Red-polished-black-topped stemmed 'tulip' bowl
  - Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5f.1939
- Red-polished-black-topped 'tulip' bowl
  - Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UK, no: 1951.1074.M

Tomb 84 Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (Stewart and Stewart 1950: p.67, fig.27).
Feasting at the tomb

Funeral feasts were held at the tomb to honour the deceased, leaving behind drinking vessels, cooking pots and animal bones with butchery marks. The most common serving bowls have horn-shaped handles, probably used both to serve alcoholic drinks and stews. Most tombs contain up to six of these bowls, perhaps used in small family gatherings. A few were more lavish, containing up to 26 bowls.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Ceramic
Feasting at the tomb

Funeral feasts were held at the tomb to honour the deceased, leaving behind drinking vessels, cooking pots and animal bones with butchery marks. The most common serving bowls have horn-shaped handles, probably used both to serve alcoholic drinks and stews. Most tombs contain up to six of these bowls, perhaps used in small family gatherings. A few were more lavish, containing up to 26 bowls.

From Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Red-polished-black-topped bowl
Fitzwilliam Museum, no: GR.5q.1939

Red-polished-black-topped bowl
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UK no: 1951.1074.K
Model of a shrine

In the foreground, a small female figure approaches a large jar, whilst three horned animals tower over her. Similar imagery was used to decorate some tomb passageways, so the object may show an offering being left at a tomb. It communicates the community’s relationship to the sacred, and the importance of cattle in the economy.

From Kotsiatis, Cyprus
(c.2000 – 1750 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: 1970/IV-30/1
Model of a shrine

In the foreground, a small female figure approaches a large jar, whilst three horned animals tower over her. Similar imagery was used to decorate some tomb passageways, so the object may show an offering being left at a tomb. It communicates the community's relationship to the sacred, and the importance of cattle in the economy.

From Kotsiatis, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1750 BCE)

Ceramic

Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: 1970/IV-30/1
Plank-shaped figurines

Around 2000 BCE, Cypriot potters started making plank-like figurines, particularly at Lapithos in the north of the island. Their incised decoration may echo the styles of elaborate garments and jewellery. The figure on the left is shown with two shoulder pins holding a garment in place, like the real fittings found in tombs at the site. These figurines appear at a time when Lapithos was becoming the most powerful site in the region, with strong trade networks across the Eastern Mediterranean.
Around 2000 BCE, Cypriot potters started making plank-like figurines, particularly at Lapithos in the north of the island. Their incised decoration may echo the styles of elaborate garments and jewellery. The figure on the left is shown with two shoulder pins holding a garment in place, like the real fittings found in tombs at the site. These figurines appear at a time when Lapithos was becoming the most powerful site in the region, with strong trade networks across the Eastern Mediterranean.

Plank-shaped figurine, from Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1750 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: 1933/I-17/1

Double-headed plank-shaped figurine, from Lapithos-Vrysi tou Barba, Cyprus (c.2000 – 1750 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: LAPITHOS T.18/N.206
Animals and cosmology

Horned and wild animals – cattle, rams, goats, boars, vultures and snakes – are frequently represented in the objects buried at Bellapais-Vounous. The elaborate platter and pair of figurines were found together. Holes under the animals’ bellies may have enabled their attachment to the platter, perhaps to be added and removed during storytelling. Stories would have been one way in which communities imagined the cosmos.

From Tomb 160A, Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)
Ceramic
Animals and cosmology

Horned and wild animals – cattle, rams, goats, boars, vultures and snakes – are frequently represented in the objects buried at Bellapais-Vounous. The elaborate platter and pair of figurines were found together. Holes under the animals’ bellies may have enabled their attachment to the platter, perhaps to be added and removed during storytelling. Stories would have been one way in which communities imagined the cosmos.

From Tomb 160A, Bellapais-Vounous, Cyprus (c.2250 – 2100 BCE)

Ceremonial stemmed platter
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Vounous, T.160A, n.13

Figurine of a boar
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Vounous, T.160A, n.22

Figurine of a deer
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Vounous, T.160A, n.11
The burial of the dead was both a time of personal grief and an opportunity to reaffirm one’s place in a wider community. Islanders’ approaches to death are as diverse as the islanders themselves, and changed over time, from early Sardinian megalithic burials, to the clay vessels (*pithoi*) or boxes (*larnakes*) of Minoan Crete, or the square tombs with long passageways in Iron Age Cyprus. Some communities favoured burial, others cremated the body. Artefacts placed in the tombs ranged from miniature vessels to luxury metal objects.
Jar used in a burial

This small burial jar (*pithos*), with three vertical arched handles on the shoulder, would have been closed with a lid, and used to hold a dead person, possibly a child. Found in a cemetery in eastern Crete, it is decorated with abstract geometric designs in dark ink, typical of Minoan pottery of this period.

From Sphoungaras, Crete (c.2000 – 1900 BCE)
Ceramic
Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 7317
Early Sardinian vessels

These vessels were excavated at the necropolis of Cuccuru S’Arriu, on the southern shore of the pond of Cabras. A site first inhabited in the Middle Neolithic period (Boniughinu Culture), its cemetery housed the dead in artificial cave tombs with pottery, stone and bone tools. This pottery gives us a glimpse of the important early cultures of Sardinia and the ways they represented their identity through offerings for the dead.

From Cuccuru is Arrius, Cabras, Sardinia
(5100 – 4500 BCE)
Clay
Early Sardinian vessels
These vessels were excavated at the necropolis of Cuccuru S’Arriu, on the southern shore of the pond of Cabras. A site first inhabited in the Middle Neolithic period (Bonuighinu Culture), its cemetery housed the dead in artificial cave tombs with pottery, stone and bone tools. This pottery gives us a glimpse of the important early cultures of Sardinia and the ways they represented their identity through offerings for the dead.

Decorated vase from Cagliari
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 29928

Two-handled vase from Cabras
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 181509

Basket vase from Cabras
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 181513

Miniature basket vase from Cabras
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 181515

Miniature basket vase from Cabras
National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, no: 181516
Clay burial chest

These clay containers (larnakes) were made to hold human remains in Minoan Crete. Decorated with painted discs intertwined with curving lines, this example is made in a distinctive light-brown clay, quarried around Pacheia Ammos on the north coast of the island.

From Pacheia Ammos cemetery, Crete (2100 – 1800 BCE)

Ceramic

Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 7367
Clay burial chest

These clay containers (larnakes) were made to hold human remains in Minoan Crete. Decorated with painted discs intertwined with curving lines, this example is made in a distinctive light-brown clay, quarried around Pacheia Ammos on the north coast of the island.

From Pacheia Ammos cemetery, Crete (2100 – 1800 BCE)

Ceramic

Heraklion Archaeological Museum, no: Π 7367

Kamilari Tholos tomb: located southwest of Hagia Triada. 250 vases were found inside the tholos tomb. Middle Minoan IIIA

Schuppi, CC BY-SA 3.0
Wealthy burials and dual identities

The Kouklia-Skales cemetery, situated near a settlement, contained more than fifty tombs of the Cypro-Geometric Period. Individuals were buried with extraordinary wealth: pottery, metalwork, vases, weapons, jewellery and implements of various types, including this rare bronze helmet. The objects included both distinctively Greek styles, the metal vases and the banquet equipment, while others were influenced by Anatolian techniques.

From cemetery of Kouklia-Skales, Cyprus (1050 – 950 BCE)

Bronze
Wealthy burials and dual identities

The Kouklia-Skales cemetery, situated near a settlement, contained more than fifty tombs of the Cypro-Geometric Period. Individuals were buried with extraordinary wealth: pottery, metalwork, vases, weapons, jewellery and implements of various types, including this rare bronze helmet. The objects included both distinctively Greek styles, the metal vases and the banquet equipment, while others were influenced by Anatolian techniques.

From cemetery of Kouklia-Skales, Cyprus (1050 – 950 BCE)

Helmet
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/9

Hemispherical bowl
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/8

Mace head
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/34
Phoenician style on Cyprus

Made of a thin sheet of gold with embossed eight-petalled rosettes, these attachments were found in Kouklia-Skales cemetery. Along with gold jewellery, types of metal vases and imported pottery, these objects feature styles associated with both Phoenicia and Syria, showing the connection between island and mainland at this time.

From Kouklia Skales, Cyprus
(1050 – 950 BCE)
Gold
Phoenician style on Cyprus

Made of a thin sheet of gold with embossed eight-petalled rosettes, these attachments were found in Kouklia-Skales cemetery. Along with gold jewellery, types of metal vases and imported pottery, these objects feature styles associated with both Phoenicia and Syria, showing the connection between island and mainland at this time.

From Kouklia Skales, Cyprus (1050 – 950 BCE)

Attachment
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/7A

Attachment
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/7B

Attachment
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/7C

Attachment
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/7D

Attachment
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/7E
Local and imported pottery

These vessels show the range of local and imported pottery used by the community at Kouklia. One of the most important places in the early first millennium BCE, it would later become a major kingdom, with contacts to both Phoenician cities and the Anatolian mainland.

From cemetery of Kouklia-Skales, Cyprus (1050 – 950 BCE)
Ceramic
Amphora with White Painted I ware decoration
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus,
no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/12

Amphora with Black Slip I ware decoration
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus,
no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/13

White Painted I ware bowl
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus,
no: Kouklia Skales (RRKM506) T.188/24
BEING AN ISLANDER

From Agia Paraskevi, Cyprus (c.2000 BCE)
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, no: Agia Paraskevi Tomb 50, Model 2
What does it mean to be an islander? Each island had its own traditions and trajectories that persisted across millennia, enriched and reimagined through connections across the sea. What might appear insular was actually most open.

This clay model is a rare ancient depiction of a community, gathered for religious activity. A group of men sit on a bench, looking at a plank-shaped figure, probably a statue. Two other individuals move in front of the statue. A bull head and crescent shape adorn the wall behind. In showing the group and their interactions – rather than just the statue – the maker emphasised the creative power of shared activity.
The poet describes forced migration and displacement as something one can no longer return from: return is a time and a place that no longer exists.

I.
We speak languages that are not ours
we move around without a passport
or identity form
we write desperate letters
that we never send
we are invaders, numerous, misfortunate ones
Surviving
Survivors
and this sometimes
it makes us feel guilty.

They name everything
With the names they remember
Names that come from the other side of the sea
Pieces of another language
Different than that spoken
And in their houses,
Their plants, their furniture
Their ashtrays and their cats
are called differently.
II.
They name everything
With the names they remember
Names that come from the other side of the sea
Pieces of another language
Different than that spoken
And in their houses,
Their plants, their furniture
Their ashtrays and their cats
are called differently.
This poem became a symbol of Island Greece and an anthem of popular resistance against a dictators’ regime from 1967.

On the secret seashore  
white like a pigeon  
we thirsted at noon;  
but the water was brackish.

On the golden sand  
we wrote her name;  
but the sea-breeze blew  
and the writing vanished.

With what spirit, what heart,  
what desire and passion  
we lived our life; a mistake!  
So we changed our life.
Giorgos Seferis, *Denial* (Greek: ‘Αρνηση’ also known as *On the Secret Seashore*), 1931. Translated from Greek by Edmund Keeley and Phillip Sherrard.
The poem references Homeric narratives and the value of the journey as a transformational life event.

Hope your road is a long one.
May there be many summer mornings when, with what pleasure, what joy, you enter harbors you’re seeing for the first time; may you stop at Phoenician trading stations to buy fine things, mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony, sensual perfume of every kind—as many sensual perfumes as you can; and may you visit many Egyptian cities to learn and go on learning from their scholars.
Ithaka

The poem references Homeric narratives and the value of the journey as a transformational life event.

Hope your road is a long one.
May there be many summer mornings when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you enter harbors you're seeing for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind—
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to learn and go on learning from their scholars.

Constantine P. Cavafy, Ithaka, 1911, originally published in the collection The City. Translated from Greek by Edmund Keeley and Phillip Sherrard
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This exhibition is organised by the Fitzwilliam Museum in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Sports, Greece; the Department of Antiquities, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works, Cyprus; and the National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari, Sardinia. The exhibition is under the auspices of the Ambassador of Greece to the United Kingdom and the High Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus to the United Kingdom.
We would like to acknowledge the support of our University of Cambridge partners: the Department of Archaeology and the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; the Faculty of Classics; the Cambridge Centre for Greek Studies; the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; and the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences.

We are also grateful to our many collaborators further afield, in particular the Cyprus Institute; the Hellenic Institute; Royal Holloway, University of London; the Heraklion Museum, Crete; the Department of Antiquities Cyprus; and the National Archaeological Museum, Cagliari who have given so generously, not only in the form of loans to the exhibition, but also their time, knowledge and expertise.
Exhibition Curator
Anastasia Christophilopoulou

Project Curator
Abigail Baker

Exhibition Design
Holmes Studio

Exhibition Graphics
Holmes Studio

Exhibition Build
MCD Group

Lighting Design
Beam Lighting Design

Project Management
Faithful + Gould
We would also like to acknowledge the generous contributions of the Pouroulis Foundation, the High Commission of Cyprus in the UK and other supporters who have made the research project and exhibition possible.

We would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity. The Museum would also like to thank HM Government for support provided by the Museum and Gallery Exhibition Tax Relief scheme through HMRC.