

Mycenaean Greece, Mediterranean Commerce, and the Formation of Identity

Bryan E. Burns



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The impact of long-distance exchange on the developing cultures of Bronze Age Greece has been a subject of debate since Schliemann's discovery of the Shaft Graves at Mycenae. In Mycenaean Greece, Mediterranean Commerce, and the Formation of Identity, Bryan E. Burns offers a new understanding of the effects of Mediterranean trade on Mycenaean Greece by considering the possibilities represented by the traded objects themselves in their Mycenaean contexts. A range of imported artifacts were distinguished by their precious material, uncommon style, and foreign writing, signaling their status as tangible evidence of connections beyond the Aegean. The consumption of these exotic symbols spread beyond the highest levels of society and functioned as symbols of external power sources. Burns argues that the consumption of exotic items thus enabled the formation of alternate identities and the resistance of palatial power.

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