

2. The island



Pygmy hippopotamus skull, ca. 10,000 BC

Akrotiri-Aetokremnos-Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

Most people link Cyprus with the sea. However, the history of the island has always depended on a mountain range, *Troodos*. Having emerged from the sea through a unique geological process, *Troodos* covers an area of ca. 3200 m² at the centre of the island, with its highest peak (Mt Olympus) elevating at 1951 m.

Apart from life-giving water sources, and dense forests which provided fuel and building material for houses and ships, Troodos has also abundant mineral resources, copper in particular. Copper was the basic material for making tools, weapons and luxury items in antiquity, and was extensively traded in the Mediterranean and the Near East from the 2nd millennium BC onwards. Copper trade was arguably the most important factor for the economic and cultural growth of ancient Cyprus.



Andesite anthropomorphic figurine, 7th-6th millennia BC

Khirokitia, Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

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Copper oxide ingot, 16th-11th c. BC

Enkomi- Department of Antiquities, Cyprus



Bronze lamp stand, 750-600 BC

Department of Antiquities, Cyprus