

The Use of Glazing Traditions to Examine the Dynamics of Cultural Interactions: A Case Study of Cypriot Glazed Wares from the 11th to 17th Centuries AD (GLAZE)

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What is glaze and glazing tradition?

- Glaze is the layer of vitreous or 'glassy' material attached to the surface of ceramics.
- Glazing tradition refers to how glaze is produced. It includes the following elements: (1) the composition and type of the glaze; (2) the substance (e.g. colourant, opacifier etc.) added to alter the properties and quality of the glaze; (3) the composition and type of the ceramic body the glaze is attached to; and (4) the method of glaze application.

Why study glaze?

- A few previous case studies showed that cultural interactions led to changes in some or all elements of glazing tradition.
- These case studies include the innovation of tin-opacified glaze in Abbasid (Iraq) in the 9th century AD after the import of Chinese porcelains, and the introduction of lustre in al-Andalus (Spain) in the 10th century AD following the Arab expansion.

Why focus on the Cypriot glazed wares that were produced during the 11th to 17th centuries AD?

- Cultural interactions were particularly intense in Cyprus during this time period: the demise of the Byzantine Empire, the emergence of the Franks and the Venetians, and the expansion of the Ottoman Empire.
- The Byzantine, Franks and Venetians, and Turks had distinctive glaze production technology.
- Very little is known regarding the Cypriot glazing traditions during this time period, even though previous studies have confirmed that Cyprus was among one of the major centres of producing glaze wares.
- The key research question is: to what extent frequent cultural interactions stimulated changes in glazing tradition?

How to study glazing tradition?

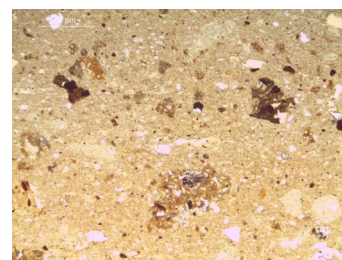
- Step 1: To determine the glazed wares were produced locally or imported using thin-section petrography and XRF
- Step 2: To characterise the composition and type of the glaze and ceramic body, and the method of glaze application using SEM-EDS
- Step 3: To delineate whether or not there was change in the glazing tradition through time using statistical analyses
- Step 4: To interpret the resultant pattern of change in relation to the socio-political developments of the Cypriot society during the period studied

Acknowledgements

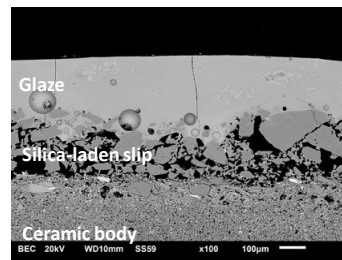
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Photomicrograph of ceramic fabric by thin-section petrography



Backscattered electron image of glaze and associated ceramic body by SEM-EDS