



## Archeologists Find 4,000 Year-old Trade Deal in Anatolia

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Archeologists have unearthed the tablets of first written trade agreement in Anatolia.

Professor Cahit Gunbatti of Ankara University's Faculty of Letters, History and Geography said the first written trade agreement in Anatolia was made 4,000 years ago.

"We have discovered the cuneiform-script tablets in Kultepe-Karum excavations in (the Central Anatolian province of) Kayseri," Gunbatti told AA correspondent.

Archeologists have been carrying out excavations in Karum hamlet near Kultepe tumulus, where Assyrians used to live, since 1948. They have unearthed some 23,000 cuneiform-script tablets so far.

"Around 4,500 tablets have been smuggled abroad since 1948," Gunbatti said. Gunbatti said Assyrian tradesmen who settled in the region 4,000 years ago sold the tin and fabrics they brought from Mesopotamia.

The two tablets indicated that the oldest trade agreement in Anatolia was made 4,000 years ago, Gunbatti said.

"The Assyrian Kingdom in Mesopotamia made written trade agreements with Kanesh Kingdom and Hahhum Kingdom near Adiyaman," he said.

Kultepe is a modern village near the ancient city of Kanesh, located in Kayseri.

Kanesh, inhabited continuously from the Chalcolithic period down to Roman times, flourished most strongly as an important merchant colony (karum) of the Old Assyrian kingdom, from ca. 20th to 16th centuries BC. A late (c 1400 BC) witness to an old tradition includes a king of Kanesh called Zipani among seventeen local city-kings who rose up against the Akkadian Naram-Sin (ruled c.2254-2218).

It is the site of discovery of the earliest traces of the Hittite language, and the earliest attestation of any Indo-European language, dated to the 20th century BC.

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