KLIO’S CLAY: INSCRIBED INSTRUMENTA DOMESTICA FROM LAPPA (CRETE)

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ABSTRACT

This article explores a range of possible interpretations for a collection of inscribed instrumenta domestica, largely found in stratified contexts during systematic excavations at modern Argyroupoli (ancient Lappa, Crete) between 1986 and 1990. These instrumenta domestica are examined in such a way as to address a series of fundamental questions about continuity and change in the material record of Lappa, beginning with (1) where inscribed instrumenta domestica have been found in the archaeological landscape of the city. The discussion then presents various categories of inscribed instrumenta domestica, and for imported goods analyzes (2) when these objects were produced or imported; (3) whence the imported objects made their way to the island; (4) how these imported goods came to Lappa and what that contributes to our knowledge of transit and trade patterns; and (5) why Lappaians imported fine wares and amphoras to supplement their own local production. Study of the inscribed instrumenta domestica from the Lappa sheds light on the commercial connections and contacts of the ancient city in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. These inscribed instrumenta domestica are then placed into possible historical contexts and used to illustrate changes in the use and distribution of these artefacts, changes attributed to multiple and overlapping phenomena.