

Shard reveals how Cyprus' ancient kingdoms managed economy

August 14 2019



In this photo provided from the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, on Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2019, Archeologists work at the archeological site area during the 2019 excavation season at Kouklia outside in southwest city of Paphos, Cyprus. Archaeologists say the discovery of a small clay shard inscribed with a partial inventory of goods at a 2,500 year-old citadel suggests that Cyprus' ancient city states "more than likely" had a homegrown, common economic management system. (Department of Antiquities of Cyprus via AP)

The discovery of a small clay shard inscribed with a partial inventory of goods at a 2,500-year-old citadel suggests that Cyprus' ancient city states "more than likely" managed their economies using a homegrown system, not an imported one, an archaeologist said Wednesday.

University of Cyprus Professor Maria Iacovou told The Associated that the recent discovery at the ancient kingdom of Paphos on Cyprus' southwestern coast refutes the notion that Cypriot city states managed their economies based on systems brought over from foreign kingdoms, like those of neighboring Phoenician city states.

The inscription on the shard was in a Greek syllabic script that was the official writing system of six of Cyprus' seven ancient city states from the 8th century B.C. The exception was the city state of Kition, which was ruled by Phoenician-speaking kings.

The only other place where similar inventory inscriptions have been discovered was at the Cypriot city state of Idalion.

The Idalion inscriptions were written in the Phoenician alphabet. Iacovou said Kition's rulers, who had taken over Idalion because of its large copper reserves, had also used the Cypriot economic management system, but used the Phoenician alphabet in their running of the city state.



In this photo provided from the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, on Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2019, a small clay shard found during the 2019 excavation season at Kouklia outside in southwest city of Paphos, Cyprus. Archaeologists say the discovery of a small clay shard inscribed with a partial inventory of goods at a 2,500 year-old citadel suggests that Cyprus' ancient city states "more than likely" had a homegrown, common economic management system. (Department of Antiquities of Cyprus via AP)

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Citation: Shard reveals how Cyprus' ancient kingdoms managed economy (2019, August 14) retrieved 28 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-08-shard-reveals-cyprus-ancient-kingdoms.html>

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