



View of Aghia Kyriaki bay from west. The archaeological site occupies most of the gullied area behind the beach.

Atkinson, J.A. and Photos-Jones, E. 2001. A site with a 'special purpose': mining activity on Melos in the Late Roman Period. In: J.E. Fell, P.D. Nicolaou and G.D. Xydous, 5th International Mining History Congress, 12-15 Sept 2000, Milos Island, Greece: Book of Proceedings. Milos Conference Center - George Eliopoulos. 77-85.

### **Abstract**

The identification and characterisation of a class of sites on Melos dating from the Roman period and known collectively as 'special purpose' sites forms the background to this paper. Previous authors have suggested that 'special purpose' sites may have been involved with industrial and trading activities, including pottery production and the mining/processing of industrial minerals (IMs), otherwise known as "earths". Much of the evidence accrued to date for these sites as the Late Roman centres of mining/processing or trading of IMs has come from general references in the ancient sources. This documentary evidence has been combined with some unusual archaeological characteristics which these sites exhibited, including evidence of vast quantities of coarse vessels, particularly lekanae and amphorae, which have been associated with industrial/mining and trading uses. In order to test this model further a multi-disciplinary research project focused on Aghia Kyriaki, one of the best known and preserved of this class of sites, has been in operation since 1997. The aim is to combine evidence of Roman mining activity with a clearer understanding of the archaeology of this site, which may then permit a more accurate interpretation of the purpose of 'special purpose' sites on Melos.

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