

The Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey: A Report to the Ministry of Culture, 2000

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Under the direction of Professors Timothy E. Gregory (Ohio State University) and Daniel J. Pullen (Florida State University), the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey conducted fieldwork from 26 June to 4 August 2000. The project operated under a permit granted by the Ministry of Culture to the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Special thanks are due to the Fourth Eforeia of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities (represented by Mrs. P. Kasimi) and the Sixth Eforeia of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Antiquities (represented by Mrs. K. Skarmoutsou). The research team was composed of 36 individuals (12 specialists: archaeologists, ceramic specialists, geologists, etc. and 24 students from various universities of the USA, Europe, and Australia). The Field Coordinator was Thomas Tartaron (Yale University), while geomorphology and GIS applications were supervised, respectively by Jay Noller (Oregon State University) and Richard Rothaus (St. Cloud State University).

From the beginning of the project the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey has been an interdisciplinary undertaking, with full emphasis on the environment, both present and past. A full geomorphological study of the research area preceded the archaeological investigation, and all archaeological field units (Discovery Units) were defined by their environmental integrity. The project is also fully diachronic, with attention paid to all periods, from remote prehistory to the present. The research activities for the year 2000 focused in the Hexamilia and Isthmia basins of the Eastern Korinthia, and detailed investigation covered the following areas:

Area	Number of Units	Area
Perdikaria	270	0.68 sq. km.
Kenchreai	86	0.52 sq. km.
Kyras Vrysi	133	0.61 sq. km.
Gonia	165	0.31 sq. km.
Extensive Survey, mostly in the paths and summits of Mt. Oneia	120	1.2 sq. km.

The total area sought for the 2000 survey was 11.2 sq. km., of which 2.5 sq. km. was unsuitable for investigation (mainly because of built areas, roads, and declared and protected archaeological sites). The area available for survey in 2000 was 8.7 sq. km. Of this total, intensive survey

covered 2.12 sq. km. (24% of the total), while extensive survey covered 1.20 sq. km. (14% of the total). Thus, the total coverage was 3.32 sq. km., or 38% of the available territory.

The following detailed information relates to the objects observed and counted during the surface survey of 1999 and 2000:

1999-2000 (combined)	1999	2000
92,436 ceramic sherds	32,080 ceramic sherds	60,356 sherds
24,310 tiles	11,756 tiles	12,554 rooftiles
491 lithics	240 lithics	251 lithics
752 miscellaneous	68 miscellaneous	684 miscellaneous

Overall, EKAS seeks to carry out a “low-impact” archaeological survey, with a minimum of disturbance to the cultural integrity of the area investigated. Thus, the description, drawing, and photography of representative artifacts was carried out in situ and in a systematic fashion. The detailed study of the data from the “in-situ” processing has not been completed, but at present more than 12,527 items from the 2000 survey have been entered into the electronic database. In accordance with the restrictions set by the permit from the Ministry of Culture for the year 2000, a collection of representative artifacts was carried out, 690 in number, details of which are provided in the list submitted to the Ephoreia. These artifacts have been stored in the facilities of the Fourth Eforeia of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities.

Among the more notable discoveries of the 2000 season are the virtually certain indications of a religious sanctuary, primarily of Late Classical date, in an area between Kyras Vrysi and Kromna, south of the main Hexamilia-Isthmia road. This site is marked by the presence of many cut blocks, large quantities of roof-tiles, high-quality pottery, and several perirrhanteria fragments. The presence of significant numbers of Mycenaean and Geometric pottery in this area is suggestive of the possibility that there may have been continuity of use at this site from the Bronze Age into classical times. Another sanctuary, or at least a place of communal dining, seems to have been located at Kromna, just south of the main road, in the area of the ancient quarries: two sizable dining rooms were discovered in close proximity to one another, along with fragments of perirrhanteria. Another notable area of activity is the large fortress discovered on one of the heights of Mt. Oneion (Venista), between Xylokeriza and Kenchries (LOCA 9008). This fortress has similarities to the one found earlier by Ronald Stroud (*Hesperia* 40 [1971]), but it provides important new information about the extent and nature of the fortifications in the southern Korinthia in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods, as well as the routes into the mountainous interior of the Korinthia in antiquity and the Middle Ages. Investigation in the areas north of Rachi Boska and around the known sites of Gonia and Yiriza add to our knowledge of the broader settlement patterns in the Korinthia in prehistory and generally confirm the conclusions that were beginning to appear at the end of the 1999 season. The identification of Early Helladic I material on Kromna adds to last year's discovery of EH I on the Rakhi Bosca. Coupled with the EH I material already known from Blegen's work on Yiriza, the EH I settlements seem to be relatively widespread. This contrasts with the later EBA and MBA, for which periods we have found fewer sites.

The investigation of tombs, under the direction of Joseph Rife (Cornell University), brought to light many new areas of burials, apparently stretching from Mycenaean to Late Roman times, while the study of the archaeology of the modern period, under the direction of Lita Diacopoulos (University of LaTrobe) focused on the villages of Examilia and Xylokeriza.