

The Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey: A Report to the Ministry of Culture, 2003

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The Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey completed fieldwork in 2002, but several members of the project assembled in the Korinthia during June of 2003 to study the artefacts in the museum in Kyras Vrysi and to discuss and work with the data collected over the four years of archaeological survey. A major focus was the rationalization of the project data, and preliminary attempts to isolate areas of significant artefact densities in the areas previously surveyed.

Members of the project also visited many of the LOCAs identified in previous years, among these Ano Vayia, Lakka Skoutara (near Sofiko), Kromna, and the fortresses on the summits of Mt. Oneion (fig. 1). The following more detailed account is provided as an example of the kind of recording carried out in the 2003 season.

The site of Ano Vayia (or Vagia) is located 650 m inland (south) of the north coast of the Peloponnesus in the area known as Vayia (fig. 2). This area lies about 1 km to the east of the harbor of Lychnari. The site itself sits on the top of a wooded hill some 150 m above sea level. From this vantage it commands impressive views of the Saronic gulf west of its position extending as far as Stanotopi and the eastern extent of Mt. Oneion. The entire coast of the Isthmus is also visible from the vicinity of Ayoi Theodoroi to the northern coast of the Peloponnesus to the east and west of Katakali. It is also notable that this site is uniquely situated to observe an east-west pass parallel to the coast and to the east of the hill. Since both the interior and the coastline are especially rugged to the east and south of the Vayia area, this inland pass provides the only access to the harbor of Frankolimano from the Isthmus.

This site had been investigated in 2001 and 2002. In 2001, this site was identified in the course of extensive survey in the area, and designated EDU (extensive discovery unit) 6524. A 20 m by 5 m rectangular structure with considerable tumble was briefly noted, and a rather dense scatter of coarse ware pottery and tile centered on the ruins there was identified as mostly Classical in date. EKAS returned to the site briefly in 2002 with a total station. Several points were taken at this time, and additional pottery was examined around the site, including some material from the Late Roman period. A rough plan was also prepared of the structure with some dimensions.

During the 2003 study season, a small team of 4 individuals again revisited Ano Vayia under the direction of Prof. Timothy Gregory and David Pettegrew. During five visits from the 21st to the 25th of June, the team prepared a more detailed plan of the site, checking the total station points against new measurements. In particular we examined what appeared to be a low foundation of a round structure lying 12 m to the east of the main ruin. This round foundation was tentatively determined to be architecturally related and contemporary to the main rectangular structure atop the hill. An elevation of the well-preserved western wall of the rectangular structure was also prepared. Several cut blocks were noted in the tumble and, after a close examination, the team found no evidence for mortar. While no additional ceramic material was collected, Gregory photographed and described the pottery visible on the surface of the hill and amidst the tumble of the structure, and

concluded that the material there was Late Archaic to Classical in date. Finally, team members examined the rest of the hill and discovered no additional concentrations of pottery. On the western slope of the hill, however, a small scatter of obsidian was noted.

It is our tentative conclusion that the site of Ano Vayia represents an Early Classical farmstead. While its form is unusual, its size is roughly comparable to farmsteads found elsewhere in the Greece. Most Greek-period farmsteads discovered so far in Greece have been assigned to the Late Classical-Hellenistic period and, if the date suggested for Ano Vayia is correct, the site different in this respect. Moreover, the large quantity of pottery found there was almost entirely coarse ware and storage vessels, suggesting that the site had an industrial or subsistence rather than a religious function. Its commanding viewshed does not exclude the possibility of a military function as well. Remains from the Classical or Hellenistic period were also noted on the Vayia peninsula and it seems likely that the site of Ano Vayia was in some way related to these ruins.

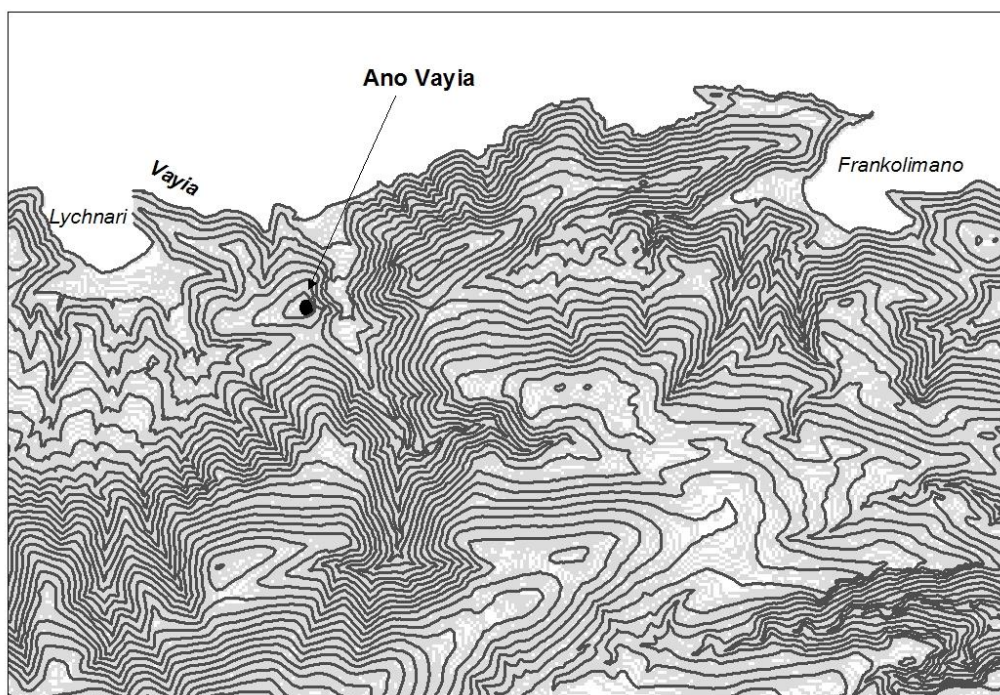
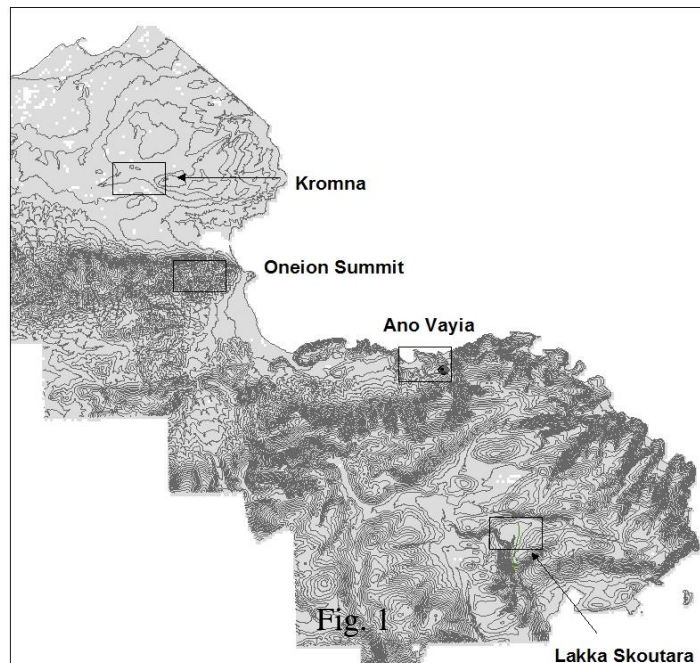


Fig. 2