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DU Team 2 Final Report, 2001

Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey

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25 June – 29 June

On Monday we began with training the teams up on Rachi Boska, just next to the geodetic marker. That day we surveyed two DUs just underneath (northwest of) the geodetic marker. These fields yielded few artifacts; the main concentration of artifacts was eroding out of a bulldozer cut of whitish marl soils, surveyed by team 1.

On Tuesday, we moved to Vayia, a gently upsloping finger of land which extends to the north into the Saronic Gulf. With all three field walking teams present, we split the site into three sections and mapped out the standing structures. In our section (to the northwest), these consisted of several walls, a modern house, a circular line of stones, and two large cairns. We used measuring tape, a laser range finder, and compasses to shoot points for measurement, and took GPS points at key locations. Our area began with the large cairn just to the north of the geodetic marker, and followed a wall which extended to the west, as well as a pile of rubble stones which extended to the southwest. The rubble pile, which was probably once a wall, curves to the west and meets a well-defined wall which extends to the south. The rubble pile then curves to the northwest, turning into a wall which meets the modern structure. This structure is built of simple field stones, with some use of mud or clay as mortar. There appears to be a doorway about midway along the southeastern wall. The westernmost extent of our area is defined by another large cairn, which lies about 50 meters to the west of the first cairn mentioned (the one which is just to the north of the geodetic marker). The circular line of stones (which lies just to the east of the modern house) is difficult to interpret, and no associated finds have elucidated its function.

Having mapped these structures, we were in a position to define DUs based on the standing architecture, and survey them, which we did on Wednesday. We surveyed 16 units (2503-2519) which enveloped the areas which we mapped on Tuesday, as well as the upper area along the dirt road which leads to the site. This latter area, which extends south and east from the main hill, had a strong Classical signature. The cairns were walked as regular DUs, but declared as LoCAs due to the distinctive finds of EBA pottery contained within them.

9 July – 13 July

We revisited the area north, west, and south of Yiriza hill in order to determine if we should declare LoCAs in some areas which had high densities of lithics. These fields were surveyed last year by Team 2 when I was sick and Tom was team leader. With Tom, then, we drove out to Yiriza and resurveyed 10 fields around the base of Yiriza hill. Unfortunately, we found very few lithics, particularly few of chert. This is particularly disappointing because some of the finds in these fields last year were of impressive chert cores which we were hoping to find

in order to describe stone tool manufacture and use more precisely for this area. There is definitely a presence of stone tools in all the fields around Yiriza which is more dense than most areas which we have surveyed in the Korinthia, but we were unable to gather much more data. It should be noted that our procedure here was to click on artifacts in regular DU walking, but we did not move or collect artifacts at all. This procedure was initiated partially because if significant types or quantities of lithics were found, we did not want to disturb their position when and if the area was declared a LoCA.

Wednesday, we began by tracing the extent of a Classical-Hellenistic wall reported by Wiseman. This wall lies on the Ayios Dimitrios ridge, between two geodetic markers. As one drives along the road which leads from Kyras Vrisi to the Ayios Dimitrios settlement, there is an intersection in the road with an animal pen on the north and a line of maquis to the west. The Classical-Hellenistic fortification wall falls along this line of vegetation to the west, following contour lines until it falls short of the geodetic marker (and the WW II bunker beside it) by about 100 meters. This western geodetic marker is very close to the settlement and lies just above the last unit (a large grain stubble field) walked by Team 2 in 1999. To the east of the intersection, it is more difficult to identify the wall, due to the dense vegetation covering the rise where the wall lies. We were also unable to examine this area inconspicuously, and so we terminated our investigation slightly earlier than we would have liked.

We were able to confirm Wiseman's observation of quarrying very close to the wall, as well as his date for it from the spread of Classical-Hellenistic Corinthian roof tiles which dominates the finds in this area (this is based purely on my impressions of the material and is in no way quantitative). Interestingly, the most dense concentrations of Classical-Hellenistic roof tiles are at the edges of the observable areas of the wall, particularly around the eastern geodetic marker, where large quantities of tile are eroding out of the soil. Wiseman mentions a 'garrison' on the eastern edge of the fortification wall, and it may be that this scatter of tiles represents such a construction. We were unable to identify the architecture which Wiseman associated with this 'garrison' but there has been some modern house-building in the area, and we were unable to spend a great deal of time in this area.

We began by walking out the wall, then by mapping the western edge of the wall, using the geodetic marker as our benchmark. Our measurements have to be checked, however, because when mapping the wall onto the 1:5000 topographical maps, the wall fell north of the ridge. We identified two towers in the first 350 meters of the wall, spaced about 150 meters apart and roughly conforming to Wiseman's descriptions of them. The wall is best preserved at the western end (where the towers are), as Wiseman also notes. Further work in this area should include more accurate mapping of the wall, more photographs of well-preserved areas, and systematic mapping of the eastern areas where Wiseman noted more substantial remains of structures (i.e., the 'garrison'). This can be accomplished this season or during a later study-season, but it is well worth the time and energy to get the wall digitized into the GIS.

On Thursday of this week, all teams remained in Ancient Korinth to catch up on paperwork, and Friday was a day off (mid-season break).

16 July – 20 July

We moved to the area near the ancient site of Isthmia, modern Kyras Vrasi. We began surveying in a small valley across the street from the ancient site, below the Hellenistic Rachi settlement which rises over the modern town. In this area was probably the Hellenistic stadium of the Isthmian games, and we surveyed the area just above the stadium. The area to be surveyed was split into three parts for each of the DU teams, of which ours was the south-western most. This area was relatively light in artifactual material. Once we finished with the fields below the Rachi settlement, we moved up to the area known as Rachi Marias, separated from Rachi Tsigkou (where the Hellenistic settlement is) by a small ravine. One open field, 2564, yielded relatively high absolute counts of artifacts, but probably not density, since it is a rather large field.

On Wednesday we continued work in the area of Rachi Marias, working our way west to the area where the two Rachis join together. Survey conditions were rather poor, as the modern houses either prevented surveyed entirely, or maquis and phrygana cover was so thick as to keep densities rather low. At the end of Wednesday, we came across several World War II bunkers on the edge of the Rachi Tsigkou which looked over the region to the north, which includes the modern road between Examilia and Kyras Vrasi. These bunkers were assigned a LoCA, which was further investigated by Team 3 (Eleni).

Thursday, we moved down from the Rachi Tsigkou to the lower area between the Rachi and the modern Examilia-Kyras Vrasi asphalt road, called Chorafia Tsigkou. This allows us to have some contiguity between the units surveyed at the end of the 2000 season to the west of Kyras Vrasi and the units surveyed up on the Rachi. Overall, densities were low, especially in the area to the south, near the Rachi ridge, though one particularly dense field was 2581, in which 240 ceramic sherds were counted. This scatter does not seem to extend beyond the DU but it is not clear if the relative shift in artifact density is due more to factors of visibility and plowing than actual ancient land-use.

Week Five (23 July – 27 July)

In the final week of field work, Team 2 moved to the area called Kesimia, which is roughly located between the hills of Kromna and the area called Perdikaria, the small plain to the north of Rachi Boska. It was in this region that the LoCA termed “the Pantheon” was found by Team 2 in 2000. We began by surveying units adjacent to the “Pantheon” which we did not have time to survey in 2000, in order to supply us with more contextual data about the sanctuary and the settlement in the area, both in Kesimia and in Kromna more generally. We also wanted to fill out some of the fields which were not surveyed in 1999 in Perdikaria. Artifact densities in this area are markedly more dense than they were in the Rachi area or in Athikia, which makes good sense since Kesimia and Perdikaria are quite fertile areas, and are located in a major corridor between Korinth and Isthmia. No extremely dense fields were surveyed, however, and the Archaic-Classical signature which is so strong for the area between Kromna and the “Pantheon” seems to drop off as we moved to the east.

One interesting area is located in the southwest of Kesimia, where Team 1 (Carol Stein) finished up their work in 1999. Their unit 123 yielded extremely high artifact densities, and included finds such as loomweights and cut stone blocks. We surveyed a vineyard adjacent to this field, DU 2619, which had relatively low absolute finds but is unplowed with low visibility.

We feel that the artifacts in this vineyard, as well as the several large stones that are clearly cut blocks, are linked to the dense scatter in unit 123, and we declared a LoCA for the area which includes the vineyard. It is unfortunate that the olive grove which was surveyed in 1999 (i.e., DU 123) has not been plowed in the last two years, since visibility in that field is now quite low due to the growth of weeds. Also, mapping in the field one afternoon, Naomi and I noticed that the dirt road which runs just to the south of these fields cuts open some archaeological strata, in which Roman pottery can be seen *in situ*. Moreover, some concentrations of stone in the cut seem to represent the vestiges of walls. At least the Roman pottery which was found in the DU 123 probably comes from this level of soil, therefore. The pottery coming out of the cut was examined by Daniel Pullen, for whom collecting/reading the artifacts was unnecessary given all the data collected from the DU walking of 123 and 2619.

To the east and south of this LoCA, we surveyed a grain stubble field which has a linear depression in its center. Jay Noller had identified this feature as the traces of a road which ran E-W through the area. Team 1, at the very start of the 2000 season, surveyed another grain stubble field to the west which contained the continuation of this 'road.' In our survey area, the road yielded far more artifacts (over three times as many) than the surrounding DUs, with the same visibility and geomorphological processes active in all three DUs.

At the end of Tuesday and for the entirety of Wednesday, we worked in the Perdikaria area, the small plain that lies between the asphalt road north of Rachi Boska and the "lower Kromna" dirt road (which runs south of the "Pantheon" from the major intersection of dirt roads just south of Kromna). A number of fields were unsurveyable because they were fenced in, but the overall artifactual signature is low-density in the area until one begins to approach Rachi Boska. In particular, the fields which lay directly north of the Rachi Boska asphalt road (DUs 2654, 2666) are quite high density. They are weedy olive groves, ill-kept and unplowed, but they yielded relatively high artifact densities. It is unclear how to interpret these densities, if they are a result of artifact movement or not.

After finishing up our work in Perdikaria, which consisted of filling in the area between the transects walked by Teams 1 and 2 at the end of the 1999 season, we moved to survey some of the fields on top of Rachi Boska. We concentrated on the area to the east of the long vineyard at Rachi Boska, where artifact densities were extremely high. We did this in order to fill out the context of the important site on Rachi Boska, and to quantify the drop-off in artifact densities (and thereby more precisely define the edges of the site). Indeed, artifact densities were rather low despite reasonable survey conditions (though none of the fields had recently been deep-plowed), though we were finding artifacts such as groundstones, which seem to indicate some intensive land use in the area.

On the final day of the field season, we first participated in an experiment run by Andy Davis. This consisted in the team walking a 40 m x 40 m square DU (4021) in the normal fashion, and then gridding out the DU into 10 m x 10 m squares and taking a total collection of all artifacts in the field. The experiment is designed to test the relationship between ChronoTyped collections of field walkers taking a 20% sample of a given unit and the "actual" assemblage of material present on the surface of that unit. Of course, this relationship is going to vary depending on the visibility, background disturbance, etc. of the field (for example, one is much more likely to be able to see small lithics in a clean vineyard than in a grain stubble field),

so it may be rather difficult to control for these variables, though it may be possible with some of the data collected by Rob Shone in 1999.

The experiment took place in an open grain stubble field just north of the Rachi Boska asphalt road, where it intersects another asphalt road which branches off to the southwest towards Xylokeriza. In addition to the experimental work, the team walked three DUs in the area of the experiment (2671-2673). These DUs were designed to pick up the densest artifact scatter in the field, which was actually quite high. The area was plowed several years ago, bringing to the surface large chunks of tile and amphora. One piece of tile was preserved on three edges, and was over 0.5 meters in length. As one moves to the east of the experimental unit, the land rises slightly in slope, and it is here on the small rise that artifact densities are quite high. They are especially high in tiles, and in finds of Roman date, though there is a slight Classical-Hellenistic signature as well.

General Comments

Overall, this year was an unusual one, in that much of the work was far from our camp in Ancient Corinth and permit problems prevented us from doing intensive work over long periods of time in the same area. Moving from area to area is actually quite difficult on team leaders and geomorphs, particularly as far as mapping is concerned. We often found that for this reason, we did not have enough time in the afternoon to map ahead of the DUs which we would be walking the next morning, and we were certainly not able to get the 1 – 1 ½ day “cushion” which we had in 2000. While working in Vayia were extremely profitable, the team seemed most comfortable when in “DU mode” in the last two weeks of the season.

Finally, as a more general comment, it seems a shame (and this is something over which EKAS had little to no control) that we did not do more work in the Rachi Boska – Perdikaria – Kromna area. I say this just because it seems to be the mentality among some staff that representative transects across the Eastern Korinthia can answer certain of our questions about the region in antiquity. Based on the kinds of things we are finding, however, it seems that our “representative” transects are likely to miss rather interesting data sets. For example, in the 2000 season, we made the decision to move south of the “upper Kromna” dirt road and survey the “Pantheon.” In our planning sessions, however, we were not intending to survey at all on that side of the road. We certainly made the correct decision to survey the Pantheon, but this is all by way of saying that 100 meters or less can make a huge difference in the data that the survey collects. We cannot pretend that because we have surveyed around the Pantheon in a 150 meter radius we now “know” its context in a complete way. But, at any rate, I think that we have quite a lot of interesting data from all the areas in which we have chosen to work.

In terms of method and recording, I am quite confident that we have a solid and consistent procedure, not least because of the fact that David and I have done the majority of the DUs of the survey. Last year, David and I worked quite hard to make sure that we were making consistent decisions in the field, and this year we seem to have continued from where we left off last year. Again, in terms of geomorphology, the method this year was just as integrated as it was last year, though we could have used three geomorphological interns for three teams. Had we received our permit in the beginning of the year and done full DU walking for the whole six weeks, there would have been incredible strain on Carrie and Naomi. However, Carrie and Naomi, having worked in the system in years past, effected a smooth transition from the

geomorphology-archaeology of 2000 to 2001, and our units are comparable to those of previous years.

Summary of DUs by toponym:

Training (Rachi Boska)	2501-2502
Vayia	2503-2519
Yiriza	2520-2529
Kyras Vrissi: Rachi	2552-2561
Rachi Marias	2562-2571
Rachi: Rachi Tsigkou	2572-2577
Kyras Vrissi: Chorafia Tsigkou	2578-2595
Kesimia: Kromna	2596-2625
Perdikaria	2626-2656, 2666-2669
Rachi Boska	2657-2665
Perdikaria: Rachi Boska	2670-2673