Processing Team Final Report, 2000

Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey

Daniel J. Pullen and Kim Beaufils

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INTRODUCTION

The EKAS 2000 Processing Teams, led by Daniel Pullen and Kim Beaufils, had the responsibility for all the materials observed or collected by the field teams. This report incorporates much of the mid-season report.

PERSONNEL

The Processing Teams were overseen by Daniel Pullen who also led one Processing Team in the field. Kim Beaufils led the second team. For many days, Timothy Gregory led a third team, and this helped tremendously. Team members included Amy Dill, Emily Anderson, Caroline Braga, and Dana Moore. Kat Moore, Dana's sister, and John Glover helped out by spending many hours scanning drawings. Martha Risser contributed her time during the study week to consult on Archaic and Classical materials brought in.

ACTIVITIES

Discovery Unit

The main activity of the Processing Teams was to go into the field and identify the materials collected by the field teams. During the first week (6/26-6/30) all members of the team worked together in order to ensure compatibility. Beginning in the second week (7/3-7/7) we split into two teams, Daniel, Emily, and Caroline forming one team, and Kim, Amy, and Dana forming the second. During the second week, Tim Gregory spent much time with Kim's team. Having two teams allowed greater flexibility and the possibility of special projects, such as Dana going with the extensive team to map the architecture on Mt. Oneion. During the last three weeks of the field season Tim Gregory often formed a third processing team. Some of Tim's work was done on Mt. Oneion (LOCA 9008), but other times it was done in the regular DU areas. Because the field teams collected material on the last day, we went into the field to process on the following Monday, the first day of the "study week."

Procedures were similar to those of last year, with the addition of the removal of limited material in the field for processing in the lab. Materials were selected by the ChronoType method in the field by the field teams during DU walking. Team leaders helped in combining the individual team members' collections to avoid duplication. Materials were left in a bag with a tag and marked with a blue flag, generally in the northeast corner of the DU. One procedural problem has been those DUs that have not been surveyed or that did not have any finds. We established that field teams were to place a flag and a tag so indicating in the field to avoid the Processing Teams spending time looking for nonexistent bags. Unfortunately, one team did not always utilize flags to mark bags, and we spent many hours trying to locate their bags. In

addition, the team leaders gave us lists of unsurveyed DUs and DUs with no artifacts. Those DUs unsurveyed and with no artifacts were entered into the finds database as place markers.

DU collections were recorded on the SUIR forms, drawn and photographed as appropriate, and left in the field. The lack of a second digital camera until 7/11/00 hampered us some in documentation. A very few select items from DU collections were removed from the field for additional processing in the lab.

LOCA

LOCA [LOcalized Cultural Anomaly] collections began this year. The LOCA team experimented with various collection procedures. For LOCA 9002, the site was gridded into 10 x 10 m squares. For 10 squares, circles of 5 m^2 were inscribed. The material from the circles was collected first by ChronoType, then all remaining items collected. Then the material from the squares containing the circles was collected, followed by all remaining items. This will form the basis of a detailed comparison of collection methods. For 30 additional squares, only circles (both ChronoType and Total) were collected. Grab samples were then made over the remaining grid squares. This is where the procedure has been tightened significantly since. Too many insignificant items were selected in the grab procedure, and brought into the lab by the LOCA team. From now on, only the Processing Team will bring things in. Additionally, the LOCA team is to be encouraged not to select so much as "grab" samples. For LOCA 9002 material was drawn and photographed in the field, even when it was brought in for further analysis. A limited number of these documented items brought in to the lab were redrawn and photographed in order to test the effectiveness of field processing.

For other LOCA collections, ChronoType circles were used for LOCAs with high density, and ChronoType squares used for those with low density. All lithics were collected, either by the circle or square. LOCA 9008 (Mt. Oneion) had a slightly different collection procedure, due to the extreme topography at that location. Materials were chronotyped at particular points, each point designated a LOCA subunit. These collection points were recorded to be mapped into the GIS at a later date.

The Processing Team analyzed the material from the various LOCA collection units in the field in the same manner as for the DUs. A limited selection of representative, datable, or functionally distinctive items was selected for removal from the field for additional processing in the lab at OSU/Isthmia. For LOCA 9002 nearly all the material removed from the field for lab processing was drawn in the field, but lack of a camera prevented any photography in the field. A selection of 10 items was redrawn by the same field draftsman in the lab in order to compare the accuracy of the drawings in the field with those done in the lab.

Lab

Lab Processing of the material from the LOCAs included washing, labeling, and documenting. This procedure is still in development. So far no LOCA was subjected to analysis in terms of refining identification or documentation. We are still trying to work out a good procedure to identify specifically items removed from the field. Giving the items brought into the lab the same item number as given in the field allows us to evaluate the accuracy of our identifications in the field.

Martha Risser (Trinity College) visited us on 8/2/00 to look at the Archaic and Classical materials from LOCAs 9003, 9005, and 9008. We took notes on her observations. These observations will be integrated into our database. It was gratifying that we were often quite close

to her identifications and dates, though of course she was able to give more precise shape names and dates than we were. She will consult for us again in 2001.

RESULTS

By Friday, August 04, 2000, we have produced 1000s of items of documentation. We have entered nearly 6000 ChronoType items (some of which are multiple objects such as 69 medium coarse body sherds recorded as one ChronoType item), probably just over half of the items from the SUIR sheets. Over 600 drawings and 300 photographs were produced during the course of the season. The drawing and photo databases have been checked and edited. The drawing scans (those completed) and the digital photos have been checked against the databases.

The Finds database for 2000 has been improved over that of 1999, with a few additional fields added such as collection type and object location. Object location refers to whether the object was left in the field, brought into the EKAS lab, or turned over to the Ephoreia. The collection type is an important innovation of this year. This developed out of the LOCA collection methods. We also institute an item numbering system that reflects the collection method:

Item Numbers	Collection method
1-100	regular DU collection using ChronoType system
101-200	LOCA collection using ChronoType system in 5m2 circle
201-300	LOCA collection of all materials in 5 m2 circle
301-400	LOCA collection using ChronoType system in 10 x 10 grid square
401-500	LOCA collection of all materials in 10 x 10 grid square
501+	grab collections

A separate field in the finds database also records the collection type.

PROBLEMS

The sheer quantity of data has overwhelmed the Processing Team. We were able to keep up with the field teams, processing in the field only one day beyond the close of the five-week field season. Though data entry was done nearly every day during the field season, this was insufficient to keep up, given the other duties. At the end of the season's study week on Friday, we have not entered all the DU information. Little of the LOCA data has been entered. Indeed nearly one-half of the items have not been entered. Data entry will be completed in the States.

Drawings done in the field were scanned for storage. Unfortunately the computer and scanner are old and slow, and it was difficult to keep up with scanning of drawings in the two hours allotted in the afternoon for work back in Ancient Corinth. Long hours of scanning by Kat Moore and John Glover have cut down the backlog considerably, but there will be approximately 80 drawings that Amy Dill will scan in the week following (8/7-9/00).

Processing of materials brought back to EKAS lab for analysis was not completely free of problems. A large number of objects was confused in the washing process, and some objects' context was lost or their identify remains unclear. As the Processing Team had many other duties, we relied on help from other EKAS members. Some of the washing was too vigorous for fragile surface decoration, and some loss of detail has occurred. We need to develop a better methodology for material brought in. Until the study week we had no time to draw and photograph any material brought back to the lab for analysis.

Some problems occurred when the field teams did not record carefully whether units were unsurveyed, had no artifacts, or where the bags of material had been left for us. A few bags were lost in this manner. There were a few bags lost to conditions not under out control, such as possible theft, mutilation by animals, and weather (winds). Another area of concern is that of materials collected by the field teams or geomorphologists and brought in to the lab. This material needs to be carefully recorded and assigned a DU number.

The extensive team work did not result in much material analyzed or brought in. The Mt. Oneion work was put into the regular EKAS recording system and presented no problems except the collection method necessitated by the field conditions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR 2001

An increase to three processing teams will be necessary if we increase the number of DU field teams. We do not necessarily need three people for each team, but a group of 7 or 8 might be sufficient. We could circulate people as necessary. One person should be trained in architectural drawing or survey/topography for field recording of architecture.

We do need one person assigned to the EKAS lab to oversee the material that is brought in for analysis. This person would maintain records, oversee washing and labeling, and could do some data entry. This person should be able to go to the field and help process when there is no material in the lab. The lab person should have access to a good computer that is updated on a daily basis.

Ideally the Processing Teams should have two weeks at the end of the season, or at least one and a half, in order to finish everything. Because the Processing Teams work in the field at least one day beyond the field teams, this does cut down on the number of days in the study week to four.

The field teams need to be uniform and more careful in how they leave material in the field for the Processing Teams. More communication between the Processing Teams and the field teams will help alleviate many of those types of problems. Having cell phones this year greatly facilitated communication, and we should continue the practice of each team having a phone.

In addition to Martha Risser visiting us in 2001, we should arrange for other experts to look at our material. Experts in the Late Bronze Age and Roman periods would be particularly useful for us.