CHAPTER 5
The Crossroads

An ancient traveler journeying to Corinth along the coastal road from Athens via Isthmia, or the road from Kenchreai, would have walked westward below the steep Ayios Dimitrios Ridge to the point where the ridge terminates and the principal roads meet near a series of limestone quarries (Figure 5.1). This place is the first point of convergence of the major roads from the east (Isthmia), southeast (Kenchreai), west (Corinth), and north (Lechaion Gulf). While the entire isthmus was a travel corridor of intersecting roads, the crossroads below the Ayios Dimitrios ridge is one of only several places on the Isthmus where so many roads from different directions intersect in the same location. As such, it was one of the most important structures of the Corinthian Isthmus.¹

At the crossroads developed an important settlement of the Corinthia that has come to be known as “Kromna.” As James Wiseman argued in his overview of the site, Kromna emerged in the Archaic period but developed by the fifth/fourth century BC into an important town which, following the refoundation of Corinth as a colony, also had a significant Roman component. The Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey documented an extensive carpet of Archaic-Late Roman artifacts and features in the area that indicate buildings at the crossroads were even more extensive than Wiseman had estimated. For a traveler of the eastern Corinthia, the crossroads would have constituted one of the major nodes marking a passage to or from Corinth; and for the city itself, the area lay at the heart of its territory.

¹ For full discussion of the roads on the Isthmus, see Chapter 2, section 1.2.
This chapter presents new evidence for the place of the crossroads in the life of the city of Corinth, and also discusses the broader character of Late Antique settlement on the Isthmus.  Section 5.1 reevaluates the literary evidence and argues that there is little evidence for a Corinthian town called “Kromna”; the Corinthian “Kromna” rather was a place sacred to Poseidon and could indicate Kenchreai itself.  The area of the crossroads that Wiseman called “Kromna” was nonetheless an important node in Corinth’s eastern territory.  Section 5.2 details the development of the area as suggested by the data from the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey.  It argues that artifactual material at the crossroads site is far more extensive than previously estimated and suggests an important structure of ancient Corinth from the Archaic period through Late Antiquity.  The third section of this chapter (5.3) contextualizes the crossroads in terms of the broader pattern of settlement and land use in the eastern Corinthia, underscoring the continuity of the region’s sites through Late Antiquity.  A final section (5.4) draws conclusions about settlement in the Corinthia in the Roman and Late Roman periods based on the preceding
settlement on the Isthmus was more dense and continuous than usually imagined, but also concentrated at nodes like the Kromnian crossroads, lacking in place-fame but vital to the city’s economy through the sixth century. The continuity of settlement and activity at the crossroads demonstrates the late health of the city on the Isthmus and the continuing place of the territory in regional and Mediterranean travelspheres.

5.1. Corinthian “Kromna”

In 1960 James Wiseman documented an extensive settlement south of the modern Corinth-Isthmia road at about the mid-point between the villages of Hexamilia and Kyras Vrysi (Isthmia), in the area of the Hexamilia Quarries. Previous brief excavations in the area, and Wiseman’s new investigations, recorded remains spanning the Archaic period to Late Antiquity, but with the most significant and distinct material dating to the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Large quantities of Archaic-Classical period finewares, miniature terracotta vessels, figurines, and even a terracotta altar suggested to Wiseman both domestic and religious activities. Cemeteries on the western edge of the town and sarcophagi throughout indicated significant mortuary elements. By a stroke of luck, in his investigation of the nearby third century BC trans-Isthmian wall, Wiseman found an inscription (in reuse) with the name of a man, Agathon the Kromnite. With a little research, he further discovered that “Kromna” was known by the Byzantine scholiast Tzetzes and the Hellenistic writer Callimachus as an important place on the Isthmus of Corinth, and to other ancient writers as an important town of the Peloponnese. Wiseman put together the cultural material, the inscription, and all the literary evidence, and claimed that the site at the crossroads was the important Corinthian town of Kromna.

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2 See Wiseman 1963, 249, 257, and 258 (Fig. 4); and Wiseman 1978, 66-68, and end note 120. The inscription was inventoried as IS 484. See SEG XXII (1967), no. 219.

While Wiseman’s Classical-period “Kromna” is now embedded in every archaeological map of the Corinthia, his identification is not convincing in light of the evidence. Before turning to an analysis of the material remains at the crossroads, this section will offer a reinterpretation of the place called Kromna as it is known from literary sources. It will argue that Kromna cannot be an inland Corinthian *town* but must instead be a Corinthian *place* sacred to the deity Poseidon, perhaps the harbor Kenchreai.

5.1.1. Corinthian Kromna in Ancient Literature

G. Shipley has recently linked the inscription recording the ethnic, *Agathon the Kromnite, to Kromnos*, a *polis* in Arcadia that was absorbed into Megalopolis in the fourth century BC. We will return to Shipley’s suggestion in 5.1.2 after we deal with what seems to be the more immediately convincing explanation for its presence: Wiseman posited that the inscription refers to a man named Agathon from the Corinthian town of Kromna located (reused in a later wall) only a few hundred meters south of the inscription’s find spot. What is the literary evidence for this identification?

As Wiseman pointed out in discussing the sources, there were several places in the eastern Mediterranean named according to some variant of the *Kromn*- root. The two important ones were the Paphlagonian Kromna and the Peloponnesian Kromnos, both of which numbered among the famous places of antiquity. The former was the great city listed by Homer’s *Iliad* in the marshalling of the Paphlagonian ships and was frequently cited by poets, commentators, and scholiasts in antiquity and Byzantium because of its honored place in the famous epic; this Paphlagonian Kromna was later absorbed into the

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6 For original discussion, see Wiseman 1978, 66-68, with endnotes. The following reanalysis is based on a fuller TLG search for the root *Kromn*-.
The second famous Kromna was the polis in Arcadia near Megalopolis, also referred to as Kromi, Kromos and Kromnos. This place was absorbed in the late Classical period by the foundation of nearby Megalopolis and was still visible, albeit in ruins in the second century AD. This latter Peloponnesian Kromna was particularly memorable because of the role that it played in the narrative of the wars of the fourth century, especially the campaigns of Epaminondas; Xenophon recorded a battle between the Arcadians and Spartans for the city in 365 BC. Hesychius does mention a third city named Kromna in Thessaly about which there is no other information.

The literary evidence for a town called Kromna in the Corinthia is itself not very strong. On the one hand, Byzantine commentators and scholiasts who mention a Peloponnesian city called Kromna had in mind the more famous Arcadian city embedded in discussions of the Greek wars of the 360s. Because there was a more famous Arcadian Kromna that was mentioned frequently in ancient literature, general references to “Kromna, a city of the Peloponnesse” cannot be used as evidence in favor of a Corinthian city of the same name. Hence, Wiseman’s suggestion that the Kromna mentioned by Stephanus of Byzantium could refer to the one in Corinth is not likely, and in any case, Stephanus’ source appears to be Pausanias’ description of Arcadian

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7 Homer *Il.* 2.855; cited frequently, for example: Strabo 12.3.5, 12.3.10; Apoll. Rhod. *Arg.* 2.942; Pomp. Mela *Chor.* 1.104.4; Plin. *Nat.* 6.5.3; Val. Flacc. *Arg.* 5.105; Constantine VII Porphy. *De Thematibus Asia* 7.9; Ael. Her. *De prosodia catholica* 3.1.101.14, 1.160.4-5, 1.256.7-9; Steph. Byz. 40.17-18, 84.3-4, 388.3-4; Eust. *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 1.566.12, 1.568.24, 1.570.8-12; Hesychius s.v., Kromna; Scholia in Apollonium Rhodi 195.18 and 196.1.

8 Paus. 8.27, 8.34. See Roy, Lloyd, and Owens 1992.


10 Hesych., s.v., Kromna. See Wiseman’s skepticism about the existence of this one, 1978, 66.

11 See Wiseman 1978, 66-68, with endnotes, for a basic outline of the evidence.

12 Ael. Her. *De prosodia catholica* 3.1.174.20; Steph. Byz. 388.3-7; Eustathius *Comm. ad Homeri Iliadem* 156.18-19
Kromos;\textsuperscript{13} furthermore, Wiseman’s rendition of the Stephanus passage as “it is also a city of many men, women, and children, and flourishing” is a mistranslation.\textsuperscript{14} Moreover, the absence of specific references to a major Corinthian settlement of this name by Thucydides, Xenophon, Strabo, Pausanias, or any other ancient geographers or historians further erodes the likelihood that a large town of the name \textit{Kromna} existed in the Corinthia. There is, in the end, no specific evidence for a sizable settlement (whether \textit{polis}, \textit{polisma}, \textit{astu}, or \textit{kome}) in the Corinthia by the name of Kromna.

On the other hand, there are sources that do confirm that there was a \textit{place} known as Kromna in the Corinthia. The evidence includes a passage of the fourth century BC poet Callimachus with scholiast; a Byzantine commentator’s note on a passage of Lycophron; and a Byzantine scholion on a line from Aristophanes’ \textit{Knights}. The most important evidence, and the only direct evidence from antiquity, is the Callimachus passage, for the other two scholiasts’ remarks appear to derive from that passage. A brief reconsideration of the passages can be instructive.

The passage of Callimachus, the poet of the third century BC, is the only direct evidence from antiquity for a place known as \textit{Kromna} in the Corinthia. The relevant passage comes from a surviving fragment of an elegy in praise of Sosibios, the chief of

\textsuperscript{13} Hence, Stephanus notes that Kromoi is named after Kromos, son of Lycaon, a comment that must be derived from Pausanias’ description (8.1-8.3) of the cities of Arcadia, relating the origin and name of Arcadian Kromoi (8.3.4) to Kromos, one of the sons of Lycaon, son of Pelasgus, the first inhabitant of Arcadia.

\textsuperscript{14} Wiseman, \textit{ibid.} The passage that Wiseman translates as “many men, women, children, and flourishing” is a grammatical note about the gender and plurality of the word. In respect to \textit{ethnics}, Stephanus commonly refers to the gender and number of the word. Steph. Byz. 388.4-6: K\textit{rw\beta}\textit{mn\alpha}, p\textit{olij} P\textit{aflagonij}, h\textit{num\amp\ast\striji}, w\textit{j e\textit{ahtai}, tinej d\textit{ef\textit{asij x\textit{wrpin A\textit{ma\textit{stridoj}, to\textit{l e\textit{nikoj K\textit{rwmni\textit{hj kai}\textit{k rwmnaij kai}\textit{K rwmnaieuj, e\textit{ati kai}\textit{P el oponnh\textit{soj polij a\textit{\j s enikw\textit{j kai}\textit{qhi ukw\textit{j kai}\textit{\textit{eikw\textit{j kai}\textit{pl hquntikw\textit{j a polij K\textit{rw\beta}nou tou= L\textit{uka\textit{noj.}
A scholion on this passage adds only that *Kromni* and *Lechaion* are places of Corinth and somehow connected with libations (to Kromnos?).  The text of Callimachus itself firmly roots *Kromnitin* in the discussion of the territory of the sacred isthmus of Poseidon and the rites of the victor at the Isthmian games.  As Wiseman’s discussion suggests, the use of the *men...de* construction places *Kromnitin* and *Lechaion* in apposition and parallel, as though the *Kromnitin* land marked the end on the Saronic Gulf in the same way as *Lechaion* terminated at the Corinthian Gulf.  Certainly the structure of the text itself would support an interpretation of this sort, for immediately above in lines 9-10, the god is described as sitting sea-girt at both (sides) of the narrow land.  Wiseman suggests that *Kromnitin* and *Lechaion* refer to the land, but it is possible that the assumed feminine objects are the seas themselves that wash the narrows of the Isthmus from both sides.  It

15 Pfeiffer, Frag. 384, *The Victory of Sosibios*.

16 The translation is from the Loeb, C.A. Tyrpanis, *Callimachus. Aetia, Iambi, Hecale and Other Fragments*.  See also the Trypanis introduction for why this dating and this Sosibios is preferred.

17 οὗτοι τόποι τῇς Κορίνθῳ καὶ Πελοπίδῃ πάντες...καὶ πυρος καὶ λάσιος Κρωμνι[...] καὶ *Λέχαιοιν* καλεῖται
is also probable that in this passage, *Kromnitin* substitutes for the more common and standard *Kenchreai* that forms the clear parallel to the harbor at Lechaion (see discussion below). It is as though *Kromna* is an alternate name for *Kenchreai* or that the Saronic side of the Isthmus is implied by the term *Kromnitin*. What is most clear from the passage is that *Kromnitin* does not refer to a city or town but to a place at the end of the sacred isthmus opposite Lechaion. We will return to this observation briefly.

The second relevant passage is from Lycophron’s *Alexander*. The ancient text is seemingly inconsequential and is only valuable for the present discussion because of the scholiast’s interpretation of it.18

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The twelfth-century commentary of Isaac and John Tzetzes, in explaining the phrase in Line 522, ὁ Κρώμης ὄναξ state “*Kromna* is a city of Paphlagonia, in which there is a temple of Poseidon. It is also a place of Corinth as Callimachus relates in *The Victory of Sosibios*”;19 additional scholia in other manuscripts call it a *chora* or *chorion* of Corinth.20 But as Wiseman remarks,21 these scholia seem to be based on the Callimachus passage

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19 Κρώμης πόλις Παφλαγονίας, ἐν Ἡ Ποσειδόνος ἱερὸν ἔστιν. ἔστι δὲ καὶ Κορίνθου τόπος ὡς καὶ Καλλίμαχος ἐν Σωσιβίου νική τῇ μὲν Κρωμίτην

20 See Leone 2002, 104.

21 Wiseman 1978, 78, note 121.
already discussed. Consequently, the second piece of evidence for a Corinthian Kromna is insubstantial except in so far that other Byzantine commentators were aware of the Callimachus passage and multiple Kromna's. The implied connection of Poseidon to Kromna will be discussed below.

The final passage comes from Aristophanes’ Knights 551-564, where the chorus addresses Poseidon with the following words²²:

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Ippi anac Poseidon, w
xal kokrotniippwn ktupoj
kai xremetis moj anda nei
kai kuanemboi qoai
mis qoforoi trihreij,
meirakiw q'amilla lam-
prunomenw en ar ma sin
kai barudaimonountwn,
deur"el q'eij xoron, w
xrusotriai,n, w
delfinwn medeww Souniarate,
w Geraistie pai Kronou,
Formiwi te filtat"ek
twn allwn te qewn Aqh-
naioj proj to parestoj.
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“Poseidon, Lord of Horses, thrilling to the ring of horses’ hooves clashing like bronze, and their neighing, and to the swift triremes with their blue rams and their payloads, in their chariots, heading for the heights of glory or the depths of ill fortune, come join our dance, god of the golden trident, master of dolphins at Sunium, son of Cronus at Geraestus, dearest of gods to Phormio and the Athenians in time of war!”

Again the ancient text itself provides no direct evidence for a Corinthian Kromna. However, line 561 refers to Poseidon as the son of Cronus at Geraestus. A scholion explains that Geraestus is “a cape of Euboea, having on the one hand Kromnitin, and on the other hand Lechaion. For these are holy places of Poseidon.”²³ It is clear that the Byzantine commentator is reading Aristophanes through the Callimachus passage, which is copied nearly word for word, although here he wrongly situates these places on the promontory sacred to Poseidon in Euboea. It appears that the point of connection in the

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²² The translation is from the Loeb. The Greek of line 561 is: w Geraistie pai Kronou

²³ Γεραίστιε: Γεραιστός ἄκρωτηριον Εὐβοίας, τῇ μὲν Κρωμνίτην ἔχων, τῇ δὲ τὸ Λέχαιον ἱερὰ δὲ εἰσὶ τοῦ Ποσειδώνος. Ἔνθα ὁ Εὐριπος. VELΘ
scholiast’s mind between the Geraestus promontory and the Corinthian places is that both of these areas were sacred to Poseidon:  

What these passages together confirm is that although there may have been a place at Corinth in the Classical and early Hellenistic periods known as Kromna, there is little indication that this place ever had the size, status, fame, or organization of a town or city. On the contrary, in Callimachus, the only ancient evidence for the existence of a Corinthian Kromna, the phrase simply notes τῇ μὲν Κρομνίτην τῇ δὲ Λέχαιον, ἔχων but does not explain its meaning. It is clear that none of the scholiasts or commentators had additional information at hand, nor were they aware of a town or city by that name in the Corinthia; they note only that Kromna was a “place” with the vague and open-ended terms τόπον and χωρίον. They had little more information than the modern scholar. If Kromnitin did not refer to a town called Kromna, what kind of place did Callimachus have in mind?

5.1.2. Other Explanations for a Corinthian “Kromna”

Although Wiseman linked the derivation of the name Kromnitin to the cult of Cronus, the passage of Callimachus is referring to the deity Poseidon. The poet does not name Poseidon specifically in the passage, but he is certainly the one described by lines 9-12 who is seated on both sides of the sea-girt sacred isthmus, possessing the Lechaion and Kromnitin land. This is the meaning understood by several Byzantine scholiasts noted above, who associated the term with the god Poseidon with whom the Isthmus was closely associated in ancient mythology and topoi. The scholiast on the Callimachus passage does not make this connection, but the commentator on Aristophanes clearly does (ἵερὰ δὲ εἰσὶ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος), even if he wrongly places the sites in Euboea. Tzetzes’ commentary on Lycophron’s Alexandra links the Paphlagonian city Kromna to the god Poseidon, as do other Byzantine scholiasts. Kromnitin, then,

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25 See C.A. Trypanis (Loeb), 235-237, for this interpretation and translation as well.
brought to mind associations with Poseidon, either because the Paphlagonian Kromna was connected to the deity or because the scholiasts understood Callimachus’ description as referring to the god of the Isthmus.

One possible interpretation of the apposition is that Callimachus is referring to what he imagines are the boundaries of the Isthmus—the western border marked by the harbor at Lechaion and the eastern boundary marked by the significant Corinthian town of Krommyon (also spelled Kromyon, Kremyon). Although Wiseman has argued that Krommyon was definitely outside the Isthmus,26 we have seen (3.1.1) that the “boundaries” of the Isthmus, especially the eastern boundaries, were hardly fixed in antiquity. As Krommyon is one of the cities associated with the borders of the Peloponnese/Ionia and the Corinthia/Megaria,27 and was a sizable and important Corinthian town during the Classical period,28 it is possible to see in the Callimachus passage a reference to this city as an eastern terminus of the Isthmus. There is certainly no reason to think a poet like Callimachus would have been bound to exact territorial definitions, whatever these were at the time. Might Callimachus have simply substituted (for sake of meter?) the word Kromnitin for the town of Kromyon.29

An even better interpretation of the parallel structure, however, is to read it as referring to the twin gulfs and harbors of the Isthmus, the western/northern end terminating at the Corinthian Gulf and the harbor Lechaion and the eastern/southern end terminating at the Saronic Gulf and presumably Kenchreai.30 Another passage of

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26 For discussion of Krommyon, see Wiseman 1978, 17-19.

27 Thucydides 4.45 says that it is in Corinthian territory in 425 BC; but Xenophon Hell. 4.4.13 calls it a stronghold in Megarian territory in 392 BC. Strabo notes (8.6.22) that it is a village (kome) of the Corinthia that previously belonged to Megara, and that it was near (9.1.6) the mythical stele set up on the Isthmus marking the border between the Peloponnese and Ionia.

28 Wiseman 1978, 19.

29 Steph. Byz. states that the ethnic of Kromna was Kromnitis, Kromnaios, and Kromnaeius; while the ethnic of Kromyon was Kremmyonios, Krommyonios, and Krommywnia.

30 The Loeb translator A.W. Mair also links (p. 106 note a) Kerchnis to the harbor at Kenchreai.
Callimachus, *Hymn* 4 (“Hymn to Delos”), lends support to this interpretation and helps us see why Byzantine scholiasts interpreted Corinthian *Kromna* as a place associated with Poseidon. In this passage, Delos describes the greatest love that the god Apollo shows to her:

> ‘α’υτη έγώ τοι’δε· δισήροτος, άλλ’ άπ’ έμεδ Α’πόλλων κεκλήσεται, ούδε τις άλλη γαϊ’δων τοσσόνδε θε’β’ περιλήπτει άλλω, (270)
> ού Κερχνίς κρείοντι Ποσειδάωνι Λεχαίῳ,
> ού πάγος Έρμαιῇ Κυλλήνιος, ού Δι’ Κρήτης,
> άτε έγώ Α’πόλλωνων· καί έσσομαι ούκέτι πλαγκτή.’

‘I am as thou see’st—hard of tillage; yet from me shall Apollo be called ‘of Delos,’ and none other among all lands shall be so beloved by any other god: not Cerchnis so loved by Poseidon, Lord of Lechaeum, not Cyllene’s hill by Hermes, not Crete by Zeus, as I by Apollo; and I shall no more be a wandering isle.’

The excerpt is important because it again emphasizes the link in Callimachus’ mind between the deity Poseidon and two places, this time, *Lechaion* and *Kerxnis*. The latter *Kerxnis* is an otherwise unknown place-name in ancient literature and is best read as a variant form of Corinth’s eastern harbor *Kenchreai*, a place name linked in mythology with *Kenchrias*, one of the two children of Poseidon and Peirene, the other being *Leches*.32 Although the entire isthmus was sacred to Poseidon, Callimachus’ reference to *Lechaion* and *Kromnitin / Kerxnis* may well refer to specific sanctuaries or sacred precincts.33 At a much later point, in Pausanias’ day, Lechaion possessed a sanctuary of Poseidon as well as a bronze image of the god, and at the tip of the mole at Kenchreai stood a bronze image of Poseidon.34 It is also possible that in referring to Kenchreai, Callimachus has in mind the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, as both sites were on the eastern Saronic end of the Isthmus and relatively near one another. In this interpretation, Callimachus would be referring to two sacred termini: 1) the land sacred to Poseidon on the Corinthian Gulf, perhaps centered at a sanctuary at Lechaion, and 2) the eastern end of the Isthmus associated with the Saronic Sea, the harbor of Kenchreai, and the site of

31 Translation is the Loeb volume by A.W. Mair, *Callimachus and Lycophron*, London 1921.

32 Cf. discussion in *PW*, s.v., *Kenchreai*, no. 1 and 2, which note that both *Kerchneia* (cf. Aischylos *Prom*. 676) and *Kerchnis* were alternate forms for *Kenchreai*, the former for the place in the Argolid, the latter for the harbor of Corinth.

33 This was the interpretation given by the scholiast on Aristophanes’ *Knights*, noted above.

34 Paus. 2.2.3.
Isthmia. All of these places—Lechaion harbor, Kenchreai harbor, Isthmia, and the two gulfs—were mythically or ritually associated with Poseidon and might constitute conceptual termini of the “sacred Isthmus”. The Byzantine scholiasts were wise not to read more into the ancient poem than the vague descriptors “places.”

In conclusion, although the interpretation of Callimachus’ Kromnitin is open to debate, there is little evidence to support Wiseman’s argument that it refers to a town or sizable settlement. On the other hand, the Callimachus passages do provide good early examples of the kind of Corinthian landscape metaphors that would become common in the Roman imperial age: the structure of the Isthmus linked to its seas, the god Poseidon (lord of the Isthmus), and the famous games of celebration at the Isthmus. The best surviving and most thorough example in this genre is Aelius Aristides’ Isthmian Oration (Or. 46.20) of the mid-second century AD, whose long praise describes the land of the Isthmus as it connects to the seas as Poseidon’s “chancellery,” “palace,” “court,” and “headquarters.” Indeed, by an early Roman date, the perception of the Isthmus sacred to Poseidon, pointing to two seas and two harbors, was well-ensconced in literature and topoi, so that even Strabo structures his account accordingly: “The beginning of the seaboar on the two sides is, on the one side, Lechaem, and on the other, Kenchreai, a village and a harbour distant about 70 stadia from Corinth.”

Corinthian mythology firmly linked Poseidon with the two harbors, for the two children of Poseidon and Peirene in Corinthian mythology were Leches and Cenchrias.

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35 A counter-argument might state that if one were to interpret the crossroads as sacred to Poseidon, it would fit as the parallel of Callimachus’ Lechaion…Kromnitin. It is hard to imagine, however, that Callimachus had in mind the crossroads as the parallel to Lechaion. If Callimachus had in mind famous precincts sacred to Poseidon, the temple at Isthmia is the obvious counterpart to Lechaion; if he had in mind promontories or harbors, Kenchreai or the Saronic coast at the Isthmus would be the intended meaning of Kromnitin.

36 The Greek words are: arxeia...basileia...aulhn...ormhtrian.

37 Strabo 8.6.22. Such structure sounds indeed very similar to the passages discussed above. The Greek is: Arxh|del|th|e paral|a|j ekateraj th|e meh|to|Lekaion th|e de|Kegxreai|kw|hm kail|im|hn a|pekwn th|e pol|ej o|on ebdomh|konta sta|g|j.

38 Paus. 2.2.3.
Although the memory of the *Kromnitin* epithet did not even survive the Hellenistic period, the conceptual linkage of the Isthmus to the god Poseidon and his two harbors and seas became more firmly embedded in the popular mind.

If the deconstruction suggested above is along the right lines, what do we make of the inscription, *Agathon Kromnitin*, dated to the late fourth to early third century BC, and found (reused) in the third century trans-Isthmian wall. First, we are left with the possibility that *Kromnitin* refers to a district or deme of Corinth connected to the sizable town Kenchreai. If the inscription, reused as it was in a third century BC wall, should be associated with the cemeteries at the nearby crossroads, it is plausible that the crossroads in the Classical-Hellenistic period formed not the center of a great town, but rather, the boundary of the district of Kenchreai and other districts extending toward Corinth. In such a reading, if *Kromna* were another name for Kenchreai, the inscription *Agathon Kromnitin* could denote the demotic of a person Agathon of the nearby district of Kenchreai—although why Agathon would choose to identify himself as an inhabitant of Kenchreai rather than Corinth is unclear. Second, as discussed above, it is always possible that *Kromnitin* might refer to someone from the important eastern Corinthian town of *Kromyon*, who happened to be buried on the Isthmus. And finally, is it not possible that G. Shipley’s suggestion is actually the correct one, that Agathon was from the Arcadian town of *Kromna* and ended up buried on the Isthmus? Other mythical and historical notables, like Palaemon, Sisyphus, and Neleus were allegedly buried on the Isthmus, and certainly there were numerous actual graves at the crossroads. It does not seem improbable that Agathon was a foreigner staying in Corinth who died in the city in the fourth century BC and was buried at one of the most visible places in the eastern

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39 Wiseman 1963, 257; 1978, 66. Wiseman was not explicit about why that date was assigned but only notes (1963, 257, footnote 6) that the date (later than 325 BC, earlier than third century BC) was assigned by Professor Jameson. Wiseman suggested the inscription originally marked a grave or was part of a dedication.

40 Paus. 2.1.3; 2.2.2.
territory, a crossroads of the Greek world; in such a case, his ethnic Kromnitin and Callimachus’ Corinthian Kromnitin would be a mere random coincidence.  

Wiseman may be correct in linking the inscription to the nearby area of significant cultural features but his argument for the presence of a large and flourishing Classical or early Hellenistic town are not supported by the evidence. In fact, as the discussion below suggests, the distribution of material culture and settlement at the juncture of roads to Kenchreai, Isthmia, and the Lechaion Gulf is far more continuous, more diverse, and less bounded than might be implied by the settlement category “town,” with settlements, buildings, and graves spread throughout the area. Arguably, the numerous activities that occurred where the roads of the Isthmus met were tied to the broader structure of Corinthian economy and culture. Rather than simply a large, well-bounded Classical-Hellenistic period town on the Isthmus, the crossroads represented one of the most essential extra-urban structures of the city of Corinth. It is understandable that settlement in the Roman period redeveloped strongly in an area so important for its economic and cultural life: a busy crossroads of the Isthmus, Greece, and the broader world.

5.2. The Patterns of a Crossroad

Wiseman documented the crossroads as an Archaic-early Hellenistic town bounded by cemeteries on the northwest, south, and east. It is not possible to determine the exact location of the cemeteries from his description, but approximate locations are suggested....

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41 The only potential problem with this interpretation is that Wiseman dated the inscription to the late fourth / early third century BC (although, as noted above, he is not explicit about his criteria), and Pausanias notes (8.27) that the Arcadian city of Kromoi ended with the creation of Megalopolis initiated by Epaminondas in the 360s BC. It is doubtful, however, that the “end” of the city of Kromoi was as immediate as Pausanias suggests, and a survey of a site identified with Arcadian Kromoi has found pottery of the fifth and fourth centuries (although no later than this date): see J. Roy, J.A. Lloyd, and E.J. Owens, “Two Sites in the Megalopolis Basin: suggested locations for Haemoniae and Crommus,” in J.M. Sanders (ed.), Philolakon 1992, 185-94. In any case, in Pausanias’ own day (2nd century AD), parts of Megapolitan territory were still referred to as “Kromitian” (Paus. 8.34). There is no good reason, then, for rejecting this interpretation (that Agathon of Kromna was from Arcadia) on the basis of chronological evidence.

42 This chapter will retain the place-name “Kromna” to denote the broad settlement of the crossroads area below the Ayios Dimitrios Ridge since it is now firmly embedded in maps and discussion of the Corinthia.
Wiseman did not proffer an estimate of site size but the cemetery boundaries that he recorded suggest a size of about 700 meters east-west and 400 meters north-south, or about 28 hectares total. Moreover, Wiseman’s analysis highlighted the abundance of Archaic and especially the Classical-period material and only noted the presence of Roman and Late Roman material. His reconstruction of the evidence suggested a Classical town in the quarries, with some evidence for cult, which went out of use by the third century BC; the site’s later history was unclear.

Figure 5.2. Wiseman’s Kromna against the gray backdrop of surveyed EKAS units, with LOCA numbers. Triangles represent Wiseman’s suggested boundaries for the three cemeteries demarcating the site

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43 The short description of the site is limited to Wiseman 1963, 271-73, and Wiseman 1978, 66. In the former, Wiseman noted that: “Cemeteries near the cart road on the southwest side of the low ridge at Section 9 (Fig. 1, D), at the southeast edge of the ridge which slopes up sharply to the Haghios Demetrios crest, and a few hundred meters south of the first quarry west of Section 9 mark the extent of the settlement. Eleven wells and two cisterns are located in this area, and great quantities of cut poros blocks, roof tiles and other habitation debris are scattered about the fields.” In the latter, Wiseman noted that the rock-cut tomb at the crossroads was at the northwestern border of the site. This allows us to approximate the general locations of his borders.
Not far south of the place identified as Kromna, on a bluff above the corridor from Kenchreai to Corinth is another important site of the Isthmus, that known by its local toponym Perdhikaria (also called “Rachi Boska”). Since Blegen’s work in the area in the early twentieth century, Perdhikaria had long been known for its Cyclopean wall of Late Helladic date, as well as prehistoric pottery spanning EH to LH III B periods. Wiseman noted scattered Classical to Late Roman material in the area that suggested a small settlement during these periods as well. Since the publication of *The Land of the Ancient Corinthians* (1978), both Kromna and Perdhikaria have frequently appeared as distinct dots on maps of the central Isthmus and the eastern Corinthia, along with the sites Yiriza, Gonia, Arapiza Ridge, and Voukiana.

During the summers of 2000 and 2001, the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey systematically surveyed the land north and west of the Ayios Dimitrios Ridge and documented the carpet of artifacts strewn across both Kromna proper and Perdhikaria. Now that the data has been collected, it is possible to evaluate systematically the extensiveness of cultural material and periods represented. The following analysis, based on distributional / siteless density data (see below), suggests that cultural material was far more extensive in the area than previously estimated. It offers a reinterpretation of the area in the Greek and (especially) Roman periods and argues that Late Antique habitation and land use in the area marked a culmination of the use of an area (the crossroads) that had been vital to the city of Corinth since its refoundation in the early Principate.

5.2.1. Sites and Siteless Methods at Kromna

It is a well known fact that broken pottery and tile constitute the main type of surface material encountered in the countrysides of the Mediterranean; features like walls, agricultural installations, mosaic floors, and architectural members form only minor components. Although archaeologists encounter many methodological and analytical

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44 Carl W. Blegen, “Corinth in Prehistoric Times,” *AJA* 24 (1920), 1-13, Site 9, p. 7 and fig. 7; Sakalleriou and Faraklas 1971, Appendix II, p. 17; Wiseman 1978, 64-66.

45 Wiseman 1963, 273.
problems in trying to record, define, and interpret sites based on artifact scatters, the most fundamental problems in defining sites are ontological: What is the rationale for establishing boundaries to artifact scatters, especially as these scatters correspond so indirectly to past cultural phenomena? What is the ancient categorical equivalent (e.g., farmstead? villa?) to a scatter of pottery observed on the soil surface? What, in other words, do pottery scatters mean in terms of ancient society and culture?46 Although landscape archaeologists freely use a standard vocabulary to describe the artifact patterns they see in the surface—as for example, “sites”, “villages”, “villas”, “farmsteads”, “field houses”, and “activity areas”—these are only convenient and simplifying categories useful for dealing with a messy and complex reality: most ‘sites’ represent material deposited through a variety of human behaviors (e.g., deposition and abandonment) and natural formation processes (e.g., taphonomy, plowing) over long periods of time.47 Consequently, defining sites in artifactual carpets requires wrestling with a variety of theoretical, methodological, and interpretive complexities.

In Aegean survey, there have been two main approaches to measuring artifact scatters across archaeological space. Traditionally archaeologists have studied the landscape in terms of “sites” (and its variants ‘villas’, ‘farmsteads’, etc…), defined either as the most significant, densest, and extensive artifact scatters, or as exceptional features (e.g., an olive press bed) encountered in the field. In site-based approaches, site definition can occur according to quantitative criteria (e.g., the densest artifact scatters) or, more commonly, according to subjective assessments of which material seems the most “significant” and “interesting”. The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, for example, used the term POSI (“Places of Special Interest”) as their name for sites they considered interesting; the Eastern Korinthia Survey reserved the term LOCA (“Localized Cultural Anomalies”) to denote similar high-density scatters or unique material.48 Site-
based approaches produce maps showing the distribution of sites across a region (i.e., the so-called “dots on a map”), but these sites are usually defined according to admittedly subjective criteria.

The other approach to measuring artifact scatters, which has become common in Mediterranean survey, is known as ‘siteless,’ ‘non-site’, ‘distributional’, or ‘off-site’ survey. Siteless survey makes the artifact (rather than the site) the basic unit of analysis and attempts to quantify the distribution of artifacts across a region, usually through the use of tally-counters in documenting the landscape. Artifact counts can be converted into density figures by dividing the total number of artifacts counted by the area of space sampled. Since the basic unit of analysis is the artifact rather than the site, the typical end product of siteless survey approaches is a map showing artifact density distributions across space, plotted usually according to their unit of collection (i.e., ‘tracts’). Although methodological paradigms are actually more complex than suggested by this brief outline—for example, site-based projects have sometimes counted (‘off-site’) pottery across the landscape and some siteless projects may use their data to define “sites”49—the discussion does highlight two distinct trajectories in Mediterranean survey.

While neither approach to documenting cultural material is ‘right’ per se, the latter method of counting artifacts does promote systematization, consistency, and comparability in recording artifact patterns in a way not possible using simple impressionistic assessments of what constitutes a ‘site’. It is chiefly because of the introduction of ‘siteless’ methods and quantitative techniques into Aegean survey that surveyors today can systematically pattern artifact scatters and compare the artifact structure of one region to another. Arguably, the full potential of quantitative approaches has not been realized as there is still significant skepticism about the value of counting artifacts and patterning the landscape by density. 50 The following discussion will show

49 For example, Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew 2006.

how and why the second approach to measuring artifact scatters—distributional / siteless methods—can contribute to new ways of understanding the crossroads of Corinth.51

5.2.2. A Continuous Carpet of Artifacts

If the literary evidence for a Classical-period town named Kromna is weak and insubstantial, the archaeological evidence (from EKAS) is neither neat nor tidy.52 In the course of survey near the sites Kromna and Perdhikaria, field teams noted that artifact patterns were more continuous and complex than suggested by previous site-based assessments of the area. Overall artifact density was high throughout the Kromna-Perdhikaria region although there were also numerous fluctuations between individual fields. It also became clear that two broad periods, Archaic-Hellenistic and Roman, constituted the vast majority of artifacts noted in the area, but the complex overlay of artifacts of different periods made artifact patterning very confusing. In short, the high densities and extensiveness of the artifacts in the area made it difficult to define sites according to traditional means, such as simple impressions of boundaries, or walking out the site to the point that artifacts diminish. Quantitative approaches can help significantly.

The most basic way to pattern the EKAS data is to map the (total) artifact density distribution in the area of Perdhikaria and Kromna.53 To take a case in point, most ‘sites’ defined in regional survey in the Aegean have average densities typically above 3,000

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51 The following discussion is an elaboration on ideas that have been previously presented and published in collaboration with William Caraher and Dimitri Nakassis. This section has been greatly influenced by their input and ideas. See W.R. Caraher, D. Nakassis, and D.K. Pettegrew, “Siteless Survey and Intensive Data Collection in an Artifact-rich Environment: Case Studies from the Eastern Corinthia, Greece,” Paper delivered at the 70th Annual Meeting for the Society of American Archaeology, Salt Lake City, Utah, April 2005; and W.R. Caraher, D. Nakassis, and D.K. Pettegrew, “Siteless Survey and Intensive Data Collection in an Artifact-rich Environment: Case Studies from the Eastern Corinthia, Greece,” Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology, 2006.

52 See my Appendix I for additional discussion of artifact patterns in the area.

53 The following analysis is based on the EKAS data (artifact densities, chronotypes, etc…), which was entered into a Microsoft Access database and now exists in various tables, and can be queried according to any possible criteria. This quantitative data is also linked to Geographic Information Systems (ArcGIS), which preserve a digital map of the survey units. Linking the data to these units in the GIS allows a researcher to visually represent the distribution of artifacts, chronotypes, and periods across space.
artifacts / hectare,54 and artifact densities typically diminish dramatically (fewer than 1,000 artifacts / ha) away from sites. We can begin with this admittedly arbitrary measuring stick: how much of the Kromna-Perdhikaria area possessed artifact density thresholds which, if encountered in other regions of the Aegean, would be defined as “sites”? The answer to the question is illustrated in Figures 5.3a and 5.3b below. The image on the left (5.3a) shows all the units surveyed on the Isthmus, with the Kromna-Perdhikaria crossroads visible in the center of the picture; the image on the right (5.3b) is a higher resolution view of the crossroads. In both images, units with densities at “site” status (greater than 3,000 artifacts / hectare) are represented by purple dots; in Figure 5.3b, mid-sized and small-sized blue dots have been added to denote artifact density thresholds of 2,000-3,000 and 1,000-2,000 artifacts / hectare, respectively. The range of dots gives a sense of artifact patterning in the area.

Figures 5.3a & 5.3b. The image on left shows “site”-status units on the Isthmus (purple dot = 3,000+ artifacts / hectare); the image on the right shows the same but with mid-sized and small blue dots added for units with 2,000-3,000 and 1,000-2,000 artifacts / ha, respectively

54 This figure is from Alcock, Cherry, and Davis 1994, 138. See discussion of artifact density at Kromna in Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew 2006.
Figures 5.4. Visibility of Units at the Crossroads

What do these images represent? On the one hand, these images generally confirm the impressionistic assessments of field teams that artifact densities were high and continuous. If we use typical density thresholds (>3,000 artifacts/ha) for defining sites in the Aegean as our measuring stick, most of the EKAS survey area is an extensive and continuous site! This only confirms that the Isthmus was not a typical countryside and necessitates more precise methods of patterning the data (see 5.2.3 below).55

With respect to the Kromna-Perdhikaria crossroads, Figure 5.3b shows that densities are consistently high, and that no units surveyed in this area were more than 100 or 200 meters away from units with “site” status. The highest “site”-status densities are not found everywhere but do taper off to the north (north of the Hexamilia-Isthmia road) and east (immediately below the Ay. Dimitrios Ridge). High-density site-level scatters, however, are more continuous to the south, stretching even onto the bluffs of Perdhikaria

55 For a discussion of the densities of the Isthmus compared with more remote parts of the Eastern Corinthia, see Appendix I.
and beyond. In part, the continuousness of high density areas must be related to the visibility of the surface (Figure 5.4 above). In comparing Figures 5.3b and 5.4, for example, one can see that some of the “blank spots” at the crossroads correlate well with low visibility units—such is the case with the block of units in the heart of Kromna proper and at the western end, the units to the north of the crossroads, and units at the northeast corner of Perdhikaria—and we must consequently recognize that artifact densities are in fact more continuous than Fig. 5.3b implies. Nonetheless, there are enough high visibility units throughout to recognize a general pattern. These analyses suggest that with the exception of the northern and eastern borders, the boundaries of cultural material at the crossroads are less well-defined than previous analyses have implied; on the contrary, the debris of material from the Archaic-Late Roman period spreads continuously to the south. Using the simple criterion of total artifact density, we can estimate that site-level densities extended nearly continuously over a distance of 1,300 meters north from the Ayios Dimitrios Ridge to the Isthmia Road, and at least 700 meters east to west; this conservative estimate of the high-density area of the crossroads is 91 hectares, approximately three times the size of Wiseman’s site (see above).

Apart from highlighting the exceptionally high-density character of the Isthmus generally, and the problem with bounding the crossroads area, patterning by total artifact density is not a particularly meaningful way to understand the data. After all, artifact scatters, by their nature, represent overlays of cultural material and aggregates of debris deposited over periods of time through different kinds of activities. A more meaningful analysis, then, is to analyze the period groupings that make up the assemblages in the area, as well as the functional characteristics for each period. Is it not possible that the area is more bounded when considered in its respective chronological groupings? The following analysis will discuss the crossroads at three broad points in time—the Archaic-Hellenistic, Early Roman, and Late Roman—and show how despite real changes in the use of the area, there are also significant elements of continuity.
5.2.3. The Chronological Pattern

There are presumably a range of possible approaches to patterning a continuous carpet of artifacts. This section adopts three different approaches to analyzing density data that highlight chronological patterns.

1. *Thresholds and Phases*: First, it uses an arbitrary threshold of minimum artifact counts to highlight survey units that have substantial quantities of material of particular periods. In dealing with the ceramic material found at sites, survey archaeologists have often used a minimum threshold of five or more artifacts of a specific period as evidence for a significant component or occupational phase for that period at the site.\(^{56}\) There are problems with this method of measurement in that it favors periods (such as Late Roman or Classical-Hellenistic) that are highly visible on the ground and consequently more abundant (Ch. 4). It nonetheless offers one way of assessing the distributional character of an area through time.

2. *Ranking*: Second, it assesses the degree to which the most diverse/densest units for each period concentrate in the area of the crossroads. It discusses the Top 50 Densest/Most Diverse units per period (see Appendix I) to provide a sense for how relatively important the crossroads was for each of the broad periods.

3. *Sites / LOCAs*: And finally, related to the second approach, it discusses the presence of LOCAs / “sites” in the area of the crossroads for each period. Since the LOCAs were defined on the basis of the most diverse / densest units (Appendix I), this approach overlaps with the second approach above, but it may still offer some insight into artifact patterning.

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Together these approaches highlight the general character of long-term settlement at the crossroads and demonstrate that the area was an important node in the Corinthia from the Archaic age through Late Antiquity, although arguably, there were also real changes in the use of the area through time (See 5.2.4 below).

First, if we use the arbitrary threshold of at least five artifacts / unit to define the distribution of significant phases, the area of the crossroads has substantial phase signatures for both the Archaic-Hellenistic and Late Roman periods. The distribution of phase-significant units of Archaic-Hellenistic and Late Roman dates is shown in Figures 5.5 and 5.6 below. Units with five or more artifacts for each period are indicated by blue dots; smaller dots and yellow background indicate units with one to four artifacts from the period. Using this approach to patterning the artifact data, we can conclude that significant concentrations of Archaic-Hellenistic and Late Roman material spread continuously between the slopes of Perdhikaria northward. Examining the individual period distributions in this way (Fig. 5.5 and 5.6) shows significant thresholds of both Archaic-Hellenistic and Late Roman material to the north of the Isthmia-Corinth road—a pattern that is lost when examining only the overall artifact density (see Fig. 5.3b). For the Archaic-Hellenistic period, units focus in an area some 850 m x 850 m north of the ridge of Perdhikaria, covering an area of 72 hectares, some two-and-a-half times larger than the site estimated by Wiseman for this period. The phase-significant units of the late Roman period, on the other hand, are as consistent but less continuous, concentrating in smaller groupings across the entire area, but spread over a kilometer north-south and east-west, covering an area nearly five times the extent suggested by Wiseman’s site. The yellow background for both periods indicates that the artifactual carpet is continuous, even when phase-significant units are not.

The main problem with this arbitrary method for analyzing significant period phases is that it favors those periods that are highly visible on the ground. If we look at the Early Roman period (Figure 5.7), by contrast, it would initially appear relatively unimportant as there are no units in this area with five or more artifacts of Early Roman date. On the other hand, the early Roman period does in fact have a distinct, but diffuse, pattern in the
area, spread over the much of the ridge of Perdhikaria, and the area immediately to the northwest. The lower-density character of the spread is to be explained by the source problems discussed at length in the previous chapter—relatively lower ceramic visibility when compared with either Archaic-Hellenistic or Late Roman. The early Roman period, then, appears as a significant component at Kromna spreading south from the quarry area onto and over the Perdhikaria ridge.\(^\text{57}\) Taken altogether, this analysis of minimum thresholds (>five artifacts) suggests that each of the three broad periods has extensive (albeit not necessarily high-density) signatures at the site of the crossroads.

Figure 5.5. Distribution of Significant Archaic-Hellenistic units. Blue dot indicates at least five artifacts of AR-HE date; yellow background indicates units with one to four artifacts; black triangles here and elsewhere represent Wiseman’s cemeteries.

\(^\text{57}\) For further discussion about low-density periods, see below. Also, W.R. Caraher, D. Nakassis, and D.K. Pettigrew, “Siteless Survey in an Artifact-rich Environment: Case Studies from the Eastern Corinthia, Greece,” in *JMA* 2006, have made a similar argument for the relatively diffuse distribution of the Archaic period (when compared with the Classical period).
Figure 5.6. Distribution of significant late Roman units. Tan background indicates units with 1-4 artifacts.

Figure 5.7. Distribution of significant early Roman units. Blue dot indicates at least five artifacts of ER date; red background indicates units with one to four artifacts.
The second way of assessing the chronological character of the crossroads is to determine how many of the densest and most diverse units of each period concentrate in the area of the crossroads. The basis for thinking about units in this way is discussed at length in Appendix I, which presents the “Top 50” most diverse and dense units of the Corinthia for the Archaic-Hellenistic, Early Roman, and Late Roman periods. The advantage of using this approach is that it ranks units for each period by their relative diversity/density, \(^{58}\) irregardless of how the density / diversity of the unit compares to other periods or some arbitrary standard; it thereby highlights the real concentrations for each period, the “hot spots.” For the Early Roman period, which is less visible and identifiable in the field (than, for instance, the Late Roman), ranking allows the densest units to stand out even though the units are relatively lower density compared to more visible periods.

By using this method of analysis, we can again see the constancy of the crossroads for the history of the region (Figures 5.8-5.11). Although the broad area of the crossroads constitutes less than a quarter of all the territory surveyed by EKAS, it produced a significant proportion of the finds: about 60% (n=30) of the fifty most diverse Archaic-Hellenistic units lie in this area, 32% of the densest early Roman units (n=16), and 42% of the most diverse Late Roman units (n=21). Again, the pattern for each of the periods indicates an extensive area of occupation. Although the material signature for these three periods assumes different shapes—the Early Roman period (Fig. 5.9), for instance, has a greater signature on the Perdhikaria Ridge and the area south of the quarries—there is still significant continuity in the use of the area as a whole. It is important to remember, of course, that the fifty densest units of each period occur against a background carpet of units with lower densities; each figure below shows the top fifty of the period against this background of material of the same period (represented by yellow and tan shade).

\(^{58}\) See Appendix I for a discussion of the terms “density” and “diversity-density”. In brief, simple period density refers to the amount of material of each period in a unit divided by the area of the unit. Diversity-density represents the diversity count of unique chronotypes of the period divided by the area of the unit. The latter is designed to eliminate redundant data for especially visible periods like the AR-HE or LR. For example, eight bodysheed fragments of Combed Ware collected from a unit are counted as 1 fragment on the diversity scale.
Figure 5.8. The fifty most diverse units of Archaic-Hellenistic date (green dots), against backdrop of all units with Archaic-Hellenistic pottery

Figure 5.9. The fifty most diverse units of ER date, against backdrop of all units with ER pottery
Figure 5.10. The fifty most diverse units of late Roman date, against backdrop of all units with late Roman pottery

Figure 5.11. The fifty densest / most diverse units of Archaic-Hellenistic (green), Early Roman (red), and Late Roman (blue) date
The drawback to this approach, however, is that it is susceptible to the biases produced by surveying differently sized survey units. EKAS teams defined survey units on the basis of geomorphic boundaries, and consequently, survey unit size ranged between 100 sq. meters and more than 10,000 sq. meters, although typically units fell within a narrower range of 800-3,000 sq. meters. Because artifact densities can fluctuate significantly across space, the use of different unit sizes complicates the measurement of period density. For periods where high artifact density is consistently extensive across broad spaces, for example, the approach is suitable for patterning the data; but for periods where artifact density varies substantially over small spaces, this method is likely to highlight the smallest units as the densest, since at lower spatial resolution (i.e., larger units), higher densities are ‘washed out’. For example, if in our consideration of period density, we examine units of all size:

- 34 of the top 50 Archaic-Hellenistic units have areas less than 800 square meters and these fifty units have an average area of 632 sq. meters.
- 27 of the top 50 Late Roman units have areas less than 800 square meters, and the fifty units together have an average area of 828 square meters.
- only 12 of the top 50 Early Roman units have areas less than 800 square meters, and the fifty units together have a much high average area of 2,229 square meters.

For the Archaic-Hellenistic and the Late Roman periods, sample size of the unit matters tremendously, with significant fluctuations in density across small spaces. Comparing the density of small units with larger units for these periods is unlikely to be meaningful since high period densities become washed out with lower spatial resolution. A better solution is to eliminate the 20% (n =284) of EKAS survey units that have areas smaller than 800 sq. meters; while this threshold (<800 sq. meters) is an admittedly arbitrary breaking point, it does effectively eliminate the effects caused by the smallest units on period density. Figures 5.8-5.11 only show Top 50 units with areas greater than 800 sq. meters.
An example of the effects of small unit size on ranking can be seen in Figure 5.12 below, which shows the Top 50 Archaic-Hellenistic units based on all unit sizes (5.12a) and units with areas greater than 800 square meters (5.12b). While the general picture of the Archaic-Hellenistic periods that emerges from both analyses is similar—concentrations at the crossroads, with occasional high-diversity units elsewhere in the same general locations—there are some notable differences. Figure 5.12a, based on analysis of units of all sizes, highlights the crossroads especially (where survey units tended to be smaller), with an emphasis on the northern half in the area known as Kromna. On the other hand, Figure 5.12b, which excludes smallest-sized units, shows a more even distribution of the highest diversity-density across the entire area of the crossroads and also emphasizes the area immediately west of Kyras Vrysi as one of the most concentrated densities of Archaic-Hellenistic material in the survey area. These differences confirm a need to look at the data in different ways in order to draw meaningful comparisons and interpretations. Section 5.2.4 below will discuss some of the implications of this discussion for interpreting the Archaic-Hellenistic period material at the crossroads.

Figure 5.12a and 5.12b. The fifty most diverse units of Archaic-Hellenistic date (green dots), against backdrop of all units with AR-HE pottery. Figure on left show highest density units of all sizes; while figure on the right excludes units smaller than 800 square meters.
A final approach to measuring the longevity of land use in the area is to examine the relationship of Late Roman sites to earlier Roman and Archaic-Hellenistic material. These sites, or LOCAs, are defined and discussed in the Appendix I that follows the dissertation. Figures 5.13-5.14 below show the overlay of Later Roman sites to earlier high-density areas in respectively, the northern and southern parts of the crossroads area.

**Figures 5.13a. & 5.13b., Kromna, LR Sites 8-12, 21-23, against AR-HE Diversity (left) and ER density (right). Tombs are indicated by crosses, Top 50 AR-HE units by green dots, and early Roman sites by red outline and hatch marks.**

**Figures 5.14a & 5.14b., Perdhikaria, late Roman sites (blue outline) # 5-11, against Archaic-Hellenistic diversity (left) and early Roman density (right).**

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The figures again illustrate the differences in the use of the crossroads over time: the Archaic-Hellenistic period clusters in the broad area immediately south and east of the crossroads; the Early Roman period (red outline and hatches) focuses on the ridge of Perdhikaria and several areas immediately to the north; and the late Roman sites (blue outline) are distributed at intervals of 100-200 meters across the crossroads. But the figures also show some remarkable patterns of continuity and reuse of specific places in the late Roman period. Late Roman sites like numbers 8, 9, and 11 appear to overlay the densest locations of preceding periods. It is difficult to see this overlay as random, and this pattern will be discussed at greater length in the following sections and chapter. The important point to make here is that the crossroads area was used between the Archaic and Late Roman periods and, in some cases, later occupation appears to have a close spatial relationship to earlier Roman and Archaic-Hellenistic.

Despite the problems in interpreting complex data, there is a clear and consistent pattern between the Archaic and Late Roman periods in the use of area of the crossroads. The Archaic-Hellenistic and Late Roman are densest due to greater diagnosticity but even the Early Roman has a significant signature in the area, albeit at lower density thresholds and in different parts. A significant proportion of the most diverse and densest units for each period also concentrate in this area, confirming the relative importance of the area compared to others in the Corinthia.

5.2.4. A Brief History of the Crossroads

If the discussion above highlights the material significance of the crossroads across the chronological span of the ancient world, what can we say specifically about the changes in the use of this area through time? The following discussion aims to highlight the character of long-term continuity at the crossroads and address how the area was important in the Corinthian landscape at different points in time.
Archaic-Hellenistic Period

At the outset, we must clarify the chronology of the use of the crossroads during the Archaic-Hellenistic period. Figure 5.5 above suggests a continuous pattern of Archaic-Hellenistic material from Perdhikaria to the Isthmia Road, but a recent analysis has shown a more nuanced reading of the history of the settlement in this broad period.\textsuperscript{59}

While pottery from this period does in fact spread from Perdhikaria to the Corinth-Isthmia road, the Archaic period material is restricted to the area outside of the quarries, extending north-westward from the base of the Perdhikaria ridge (Fig. 5.15a). And although Classical-period material is spread from Perdhikaria to the Corinth-Isthmia Road (and beyond), it concentrates in the area of the quarries that Wiseman referred to as Kromna (Fig. 5.15b). The extensive AR-HE scatter, in other words, is an aggregate of material from two narrower periods that has a more subtle history.\textsuperscript{60} Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew have argued that the low-density Archaic scatter immediately below and to the northwest of the Perdhikaria ridge was the ephemeral predecessor to the Kromna that would emerge in the early Classical Age.\textsuperscript{61} The following discussion attempts to build on their observations with a more nuanced analysis of the functional character of the site.

\textsuperscript{59} Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew 2005 and 2006.

\textsuperscript{60} Cf. Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew 2005 & 2006.

\textsuperscript{61} Wiseman seems to have recognized this, in part, by noting the presence of earlier material in the graves excavated on the (south?)western end of the site: Wiseman 1978, 66.
Figures 5.15a & 5.15b., Counts of Archaic Pottery and CL-HE Pottery at the Crossroads. Black triangles indicate probable locations of cemeteries defining Wiseman’s site

How are we to understand the general use of the area during these periods based on the character, density, and distribution of material? Wiseman referred to Kromna as a “town” bordered by cemeteries, but his principal basis for this interpretation was literary evidence, which can now be dismissed (Section 5.1 above). The archaeological data must be examined on its own terms and doing this reveals that during the Archaic and Classical periods, much of the area referred to as Kromna (cf. Fig. 5.13: the area between LR LOCAs 11 and 23) was not used firstly as a “town” or “settlement” but as an extensive group of cemeteries, along with some cultic features. The two predominant signatures for the site are “mortuary” features such as graves and tombs, and to a lesser extent, possibly “religious” artifacts and features like figurines, votive jars, altars, and sanctuaries. The best evidence for specifically “settlement” debris occurs beyond the group of graves and cemeteries that coalesce at the crossroads.

The best evidence for a predominantly “mortuary” character of the site are, of course, the distribution of physical cemeteries and graves documented by Wiseman, and more recently, by Rife. Wiseman defined three separate Archaic-Hellenistic cemeteries at Kromna on the basis of sarcophagi and high-quality finewares: 1) near the ‘cart-road’ below a low ridge; 2) at the southwestern edge of the rise to the Ayios Dimitrios Ridge;
and 3) an area a few hundred meters south of the first quarry west of the crossroads.\textsuperscript{62} The first cemetery is probably to be associated with LOCA 9005, a dense cluster of high-quality AR-HE finewares, and Mortuary LOCA (=ML) 10, a line of graves carved into the soft limestone ridge (Fig. 5.16); it is impossible to plot the exact location of the other two cemeteries but (based on Wiseman’s description) the southeastern one should be in the vicinity of ML 37 and LOCA 9003 and the western one not far from LOCAs 9163 and 9164, although it may also be located slightly further west. Rife’s recent study identified an unfinished sarcophagus of AR-CL date (ML 16) in the quarry on the northeastern edge of the site (ML 16, near LOCA 9133); an early-middle Roman chamber tomb group at the crossroads at the place Wiseman had labeled a “cave”,\textsuperscript{63} and another AR-CL sarcophagus (ML 37) to the east, in an area reportedly rich in sarcophagus fragments (according to a local resident).\textsuperscript{64} He also noted LR tombs in the ridge of Perdhikaria. Finally, in the autumn of 2005, the Greek Archaeological Service excavated sixteen graves of Archaic-Classical date immediately to the northeast of LOCA 9132, at the northern end of the quarry area; this area had been identified by EKAS as a place of exceptionally high diversity of artifacts. These features are represented with crosses and triangles in Figures 5.16 and 5.17 below.

\textsuperscript{62} Wiseman 1963, 271, with reference to Fig. 1 on p. 251: “Cemeteries near the cart road on the southwest side of the low ridge at Section 9 (Fig. 1, D), at the southeast edge of the ridge which slopes up sharply to the Haghios Demetrios crest, and a few hundred meters south of the first quarry west of Section 9 mark the extent of settlement”. See also Wiseman 1978, 66.

\textsuperscript{63} Wiseman 1978, 66, and 65, Fig. 74.

\textsuperscript{64} Tartaron et al., Forthcoming.
Figures 5.16. Kromna in the Archaic-Hellenistic period, showing the cemeteries defining Wiseman’s site (black triangle), Mortuary LOCAs (red crosses), and LOCAs.

Figures 5.17. Kromna in the Archaic-Hellenistic period, showing the period’s most diverse units (green dots), Wiseman’s cemeteries (black triangle), additional known graves (crosses), and LOCAs.
Additional cemeteries can also be located, albeit with less certainty, on the basis of the distribution of AR-HE artifacts. It is difficult, of course, to distinguish “mortuary”, “cultic”, and “domestic” contexts from pottery scatters and in general, there has been only limited scholarly discussion about the “signatures” of different kinds of sites in Mediterranean landscapes. In a discussion of signatures of sanctuaries and shrines, Alcock noted that most surveys have used inscriptions and architecture as the predominant criteria, along with the presence of votives and figurines, greater quantities of high-quality finewares (black-glazed, red-figure, but especially open shapes), and the location of the site. Assemblages of this sort, however, could be easily confused with “mortuary” areas like cemeteries, which would have many of the same kinds of artifacts. In their catalogue of sites, for example, the AEP project noted Archaic-Classical “sanctuaries” with fineware, black-glazed miniature cups and kraters, figurines, tiles, and lamps and “cemeteries” and graves with drinking cups, miniatures vessels, black-glazed fineware, rooftiles, pithoi and coarse and plainwares. Such overlaps in signature are an unfortunate element in working with surface assemblages and must be considered on a case by case basis.

In respect to pottery sherds, mortuary space can be more easily distinguished from “domestic” and “agricultural” space by the higher densities and variety of finewares. Scholarship on the cemeteries of the Corinthia between Geometric and Hellenistic times

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67 See, for example, Runnels 1994, Sites A5, A15, A16, A21, B77, and C41.

68 I thank Joseph Rife for discussing this issue with me and look forward to his further work on the topic for Kromna.
has highlighted the significant quantities of ceramic finewares deposited either within or immediately outside graves, as grave goods or libations.69 In Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic times, grave assemblages include, first and foremost, small cups (especially skylphoi) and pitchers (especially oinochoai) or kylikes; and, with slightly less consistency, unguentaria, kantharoi, bowls, aryballoi, red-figure vases, pyxides, lekythoi, miniature vessels, amphoriskoi, and lamps; occasionally, other ceramic artifacts like figurines, phialai, and loomweights are present.70 Although such a range of ceramics is also found in rural houses and domestic contexts of the Classical and Hellenistic periods,71 in mortuary contexts finewares exist in abundance and form the predominant signature of the assemblage. Moreover, tile graves are not uncommon in the Classical period,72 and even various coarsewares, like amphorae and pithoi, are used for burials in the Corinthia, although they become less common after the sixth century.73 At the North Cemetery, for instance, several large urns (kraters and large amphorae) of Archaic date were used for infant or child burials, and the investigators suggested that a few large


70 See Palmer’s section (especially pp. 78-81) in Blegen, Palmer, and Young 1964, with discussion and catalogue of artifacts from Archaic-early Roman graves of the North Cemetery. In Roman graves, Palmer 1964, 82, noted fewer offerings; typical offerings included unguentaria, lamps, and objects of a more domestic nature (casseroles and deep bowls).


72 At the North Cemetery, tile graves were common from the fifth century BC, and again in the early Roman period: see Blegen, Palmer and Young 1964, 73-75. A few tiled graves were noted at the Lechaion cemetery (Eliot and Eliot 1968). Tile graves are also not an uncommon form of burial in Hellenistic: see note by Pemberton 1985, 272-73, for the Hellenistic period.

73 For discussion and examples in a Corinthian context, see K. Dickey, Corinthian Burial Customs, ca. 1100 to 550 BC, PhD Dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1992, 36-43, 71, 95, and Appendix II. Dickey cites early examples of transport amphorae, coarse kraters, and pithoi used for pot burials.
cooking vessels may also have been used for similar ends. To summarize this discussion, cemeteries of Archaic and Classical date should be evident in surface assemblages especially by the high quality and diversity of finewares, and to a lesser extent by tiles and large storage vessels; the abundance of certain classes of fineware, especially skyphoi, phialai, oinochoai, miniature vessels, and lekythoi, provide the best evidence for graves and cemeteries.

There are a number of areas at the crossroads that are, by the character and diversity of their assemblages, better interpreted as additional cemeteries of the Archaic-Classical period than the debris left by former settlement (5.18-5.21 below). Certainly the high-diversity Classical period units immediately east/southeast of the crossroads contain a wide array of quality finewares (oinochoe, kraters, lekythoi, pyxides, and skyphoi) and probably represent cemeteries (Figure 5.11, 5.18-5.20); the excavation of graves at the eastern end of this area in 2005 (see above) would corroborate this hypothesis. The Archaic material immediately south-southwest of the crossroads and the quarries probably also represent graves, since skyphoi and high-quality finewares (pyxides, miniatures, oinochoai, Attic pottery, loomweights, lamps) are widely distributed throughout this area (Figures 5.18-5.20); in fact, it is easy to imagine that the area between the three black triangles on the western side of the site (Fig. 5.18a) are cemeteries or scattered graves. That the distribution of amphorae and pithoi (Fig. 5.21) also correlates with these areas should not surprise us given the facts considered above—that large storage vessels are commonly used for pot burials to the end of the Archaic period; while these kinds of artifacts might also indicate “habitation” and “industrial” debris in other contexts, here, in the midst of areas identified as cemeteries, they can more easily be understood as mortuary. Hence, the concentration of diverse units (Fig. 5.18) on both sides of the road from Kenchreai probably suggests mortuary spaces;

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74 Blegen, Palmer, and Young 1964, 73, 102, 113. The use of large coarse wares for “pot burials” is common in Greece, especially in the Archaic period and becoming less common in later periods. For discussion, see Dickey 1992, 36-43; A. Foley, *The Argolid 800-600 B.C.: An Archaeological Survey*, SIMA Vol. 80, London 1985, 34-55, for eighth and seventh century examples from the Argolid; and D.M. Robinson, *Necrolynthia. A Study in Greek Burial Customs and Anthropology*, Olynthus Part XII, Baltimore 1942, 166-73. Robinson surveys (168-70) the evidence (as known then), noting examples of fifth and fourth century BC pot burials from Athens.
additional scattered skyphoi, lekythoi, and fineware to the east and southeast could also
represent additional scattered roadside graves, although we cannot rule out habitation.

Figures 5.18a & 5.18b. Fineware at the crossroads in the AR-HE period. Image on
left shows overall count of fineware; image on right shows overall count of skyphoi.
Black triangles indicate Wiseman’s cemeteries.

Figure 5.19a & 5.19b. Image on left shows units with lekythoi (green dot), pyxides
(blue), and oinochoai (red) against background of units with skyphoi (peach).
Image on right shows miniature vessels (bright green).
Wiseman and Tartaron et al. also suggested that the “cultic” elements of Kromna, such as miniature “votive” vessels, figurines, several perirhanterion rims, and a miniature alter, indicated a nearby sanctuary or shrine, but these are features also common to mortuary contexts and it is difficult in any case to isolate one kind of activity from another without very specific functional indicators (like inscriptions). In only one case (Fig. 5.16: LOCA 9003), on the edge of a low ridge to the southeast of the quarries, is the evidence specific enough to suggest a shrine or sanctuary: monumental architecture, figurines, miniature vessels, and perirhanteria rims. There are also, of course, the two dining rooms (LOCAs 9131 and 9132) situated immediately west of the graves in-between quarried zones, but how these relate to the mortuary features is unclear. It is possible, of course, that there were other shrines at the crossroads, but with artifact signatures similar to those of cemeteries, it is hardly easy to define them. The forthcoming preliminary report by T. Tartaron et al. details these features at significant length.

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75 Tartaron et al., Forthcoming; Wiseman 1963, 272; 1978, 66.

76 T. Tartaron et al. forthcoming.
What stands out, nonetheless, in the mapping of artifact types is how little evidence there is for what we might call a “town”. In light of the high density of black-glazed finewares, including skyphoi, miniatures, and votive cups, as well as the various areas definitely identified as cemeteries or graves, it is difficult to see Kromna proper as essentially a nucleated “settlement”. Wiseman noted habitation debris in the area but was not specific about its location. Tartaron et al. also suggested “habitation” and “industrial” debris in the area such as storage and cooking vessels at LOCAs 9005 and 9007, but how these kinds of activities could have occurred in areas associated with burials is hard to imagine. Storage vessels like pithoi and amphorae, in any case, are not incompatible with a mortuary landscape, and there is nothing necessarily “domestic” or “industrial” about the assemblages found at Kromna in the Archaic and Classical periods.77

Figures 5.21a & 5.21b. Presence of amphorae (left) and pithoi (right) at the Crossroads in the AR-HE period. Black triangles indicate estimated cemetery locations for Wiseman’s site.

If Archaic-Classical habitation is not found at Kromna proper, there is evidence for settlement east, northeast, and southeast of the main quarry area. Tartaron et al. mention some good candidates for AR-CL habitation in this area (Fig. 5.17), including LOCA

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77 There may, of course, have been houses and ordinary buildings in the area, but the most significant signature is the cultic and mortuary one, discussed below.
9126 to the northeast of the site, and two “farmsteads” (LOCAs 9154 and 9163) several hundred meters to the south, although these farms appear close to the probable location of Wiseman’s western cemetery. Indeed, there are abundant remains on and immediately north of the Perdhikaria ridge as well as east/northeast of the cemeteries that could represent habitation. We should also not rule out the possibility that the lower-density distribution of amphorae, pithoi, fineware, kitchenware, and coarsewares to the north, south, and east of the crossroads area represent scattered farmsteads in a more dispersed pattern of settlement. The cluster of units with kitchenware sherds (Fig. 5.22a) to the northeast of the quarries and northwest of Perdhikaria may be fair indicators of domestic or industrial contexts during this period. And where finewares do not indicate graves, coarsewares could signal habitation (5.22b below).

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Figures 5.22a & 5.22b. Presence of kitchenwares (left) and coarsewares (right) at the crossroads in the AR-HE period. Black triangles indicate cemetery locations for Wiseman’s site.

Finally, the restriction of Archaic pottery to the area outside of (south of) the quarries (Fig. 5.15a above) provides additional clues about the history of the crossroads in the Greek period. The use of the quarry at the crossroads for mortuary purposes dates from

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78 Tartaron et al. forthcoming, note, for example, that LOCA 9163 included fineware, roof tiles, storage jars, amphorae, loom weights, millstones, lamps. See Pettegrew 2001 and 2002 for the problems of identifying habitation from survey data.
the Classical period, and certainly by the fifth century BC. Burying the dead in the quarries could, of course, have occurred in conjunction with their exploitation, but the presence of Classical-period graves is perhaps better explained as post-dating an already quarried industrial area than being contemporary with it. One possible explanation for the shift of the cemetery northward into the quarries in the early Classical period is that it corresponded to a concomitant shift of quarrying activity elsewhere, perhaps to the line of Hexamilia quarries to the west.

In sum, the site of the crossroads in the Archaic and Classical period is a complex one, with thick overlapping layers of coarse and fine wares, storage jars and pithoi, fine wares, and even votives. Arguably, however, the concentrated thickness and diversity of Archaic and Classical material is not the waste of an important town, but higher quality debris associated with the use of quarry area as a crossroads, with a range of graves, cultic buildings, and commemorative features. In the Archaic era, the cemetery centered to the southeast of the quarries, and in the Classical period, it incorporated the quarries. “Habitation” existed not as a concentrated aggregate within this zone of cemeteries, but outside and beyond it, scattered in lower densities across the landscape.

The presence of cemeteries and sanctuaries where the roads of Corinth came together would have made this area highly visible to travelers, visitors, and passersby. The existence of farmsteads nearby attest to habitation to the south and east, and the broad scatter of high-density Classical-period artifacts on the ridge of Perdhikaria and immediately to the north (Fig. 5.5) attests to a variety of rural buildings related to the exploitation and use of the area in the Classical period. But the most distinct feature of


80 Consider the close relationship between quarrying and cemeteries in the area. Tartaron et al., forthcoming, have noted, for instance, the recovery of an unfinished sarcophagus (ML 16) from the quarry. Unfortunately, it cannot be dated more precisely than the late Archaic-late Classical period. Tartaron et al., Forthcoming, suggest that quarrying occurs at Kromna during the late Classical period.

81 Wiseman 1978, 68.
the material record at Kromna proper is that this Classical “town” was, in most respects, a group of cemeteries situated at a significant node on the road to or around Corinth.

**Early Roman Period**

The Hellenistic period for Kromna is poorly represented at the crossroads, but the installation of a substantial olive press in the quarries occurred probably during Corinth’s abandonment, or at least in the earliest phases of Roman colonization. In the early Roman period (Figures 5.7, 5.9, 5.13b, 5.14b, and 5.23-5.27 below), the crossroads revived and again became an important structure on the Corinthian Isthmus. The sites that developed in this period include especially an extensive area immediately southwest of the site of Kromna and the bluff and lower slopes of the Perdhikaria ridge. These areas were presumably covered with building and habitation, since early Roman amphorae, fineware, and kitchen/cooking ware were all found in the area (Fig. 5.23-5.24), especially immediately below (north-northwest of) the ridge of Perdhikaria.

The broad distribution of ER amphorae south of Perdhikaria is interesting in light of the relatively lighter signature of ER fineware and kitchenware in the same area. This pattern could indicate the weaker identification of ER finewares and kitchenwares; in any case, it highlights the significance of transport amphora over the broader area of the crossroads. Various types of ER amphorae are represented, including Rhodian and especially Koan-type, suggesting connections to both eastern and western markets. Finewares consist of Eastern Sigillata A and B, pointing to contact with Asia Minor and Syria. Both amphorae and fineware indicate a significant first century and early second century use of the crossroads, probably as an extensive area of settlement, directed toward both agriculture and a system of redistribution between the largest nodes of the Isthmus: Corinth town, Isthmia, Kenchreai, and the northern Corinthian Gulf.

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Figures 5.23a & 5.23b. The crossroads in the early Roman period, showing presence of early Roman amphorae (purple) and early Roman fineware (green). Black triangles are Wiseman’s cemeteries and red crosses represent additional graves.

Figures 5.24. The crossroads in the early Roman period, showing distribution of units with early Roman kitchen/cooking wares (red). Black triangles represent Wiseman’s cemeteries, and red crosses represent graves.
Figure 5.25. Distribution of units with Ancient and Roman Glass

The place of the crossroads within regional and extra-regional markets is further suggested by the presence of a sizable olive press on the edge of the quarries. S. James’ study of this feature has shown that the press bed is substantial enough that it could have accommodated significant local crop demands; she has estimated that the press could have handled processing the fruit from some 2,000 trees of some 100 stremmata (10 ha) in a two month season. This would be consistent with a period of intensive olioculture, which would well describe the early Roman era. In the high empire, oil processed at this location may have been transported into the city center, shipped off to Kenchreai, or to the festival at Isthmia. The principal value of processing oil at the crossroads was that the location was mid-point between the numerous travel and settlement nodes of the Isthmus; agricultural produce could easily be redistributed from here toward any of these destinations. Concentrations of ancient millstone and groundstone equipment in the


84 James’ forthcoming study of olioculture in the Corinthia economy should highlight how a place like Kromna functioned within a regional economy.
area are visible in Figure 5.26 below and, if dating to the early Roman period, might confirm James’ suggestions about the nucleated character of olive pressing.

There are two other significant features of the early Roman crossroads. First, the ER pattern bears a similar, but not exact, resemblance to the preceding Archaic-Hellenistic (Fig. 5.27). Like the preceding period, the densities trail off rather quickly to the north of the Corinth-Isthmia road; on the other hand, the ER material is generally located south of the densest AR-HE material, covering the Perdhikaria Ridge. Nonetheless, several of the ER sites (Cf. Appendix I for definition), indicated by the hatch lines in Fig. 5.27, do in fact center over and are adjacent to high-density AR-HE units. The correlation is particularly strong for the site immediately north of Perdhikaria where the Early Roman LOCAs occur over some of the densest patches of AR-HE units. It is difficult to know what this represents, but it is possible that settlement in the ER period refurbished abandoned buildings from the preceding era. Certainly, the excavation of the urban center and private houses in the Corinthia has demonstrated that rehabilitation often occurred in terms of the structured landscape of the preceding period (see Ch. 6).
Figures 5.27. The crossroads in the early Roman period, showing early Roman sites / LOCAs (black hatch marks) against the backdrop of Archaic-Hellenistic material. Green dots represent units with five or more AR-HE artifacts; yellow background shows simple presence. The black triangles represent Wiseman’s cemeteries.

On the other hand, there is one significant area of the crossroads lacking Early Roman material: Kromna proper, the site of the Classical cemetery. Even if we recognize in the Early Roman pattern a significant underestimation of the actual amount of pottery on the landscape (Ch. 4), there is still remarkably little Early Roman pottery found in the quarries when compared, for instance, to the concentration of Early Roman material in the area to the southwest. Does the weak evidence for early Roman presence in the quarries proper suggest a respect for the use of the area as a cemetery? While the founding Roman colonizers could and did pillage and reuse tombs and graves when they wanted to,85 there is no evidence in this case that they simply desecrated the area by, for example, converting it into domestic or industrial space. On the contrary, the cemetery

85 The Romans reused Archaic and Classical graves in Corinth: see Blegen, Palmer, and Young 1964, 65, 70, and 78; and Shear 1930, 426-28.
would have been highly visible to Roman colonizers and in fact there are several early Roman graves in the area. J. Rife, for instance, has documented the constructing of Roman chamber-tomb groups in the vicinity of the quarries (Figure 5.16: near the Late Roman sites #12 and 21, and LOCA 9005), demonstrating the continuity of the mortuary structure of the crossroads. One chamber tomb group was forged out of a limestone plateau at the probable crossroads of the Corinth-Isthmia road and the road to the north (Fig. 5.16: LOCA 9006), with steps leading down to several chamber tombs.86

Late Roman Period

The Late Roman period at the Kromnian Crossroads is more visible than the early Roman period because its material culture is diagnostic and is consequently easier to identify. We should keep in mind, then, that what we say about the crossroads in this later period may sometimes also apply for the area in the earlier Roman period—although certainly this is difficult to measure.

One of the most distinct features of the late Roman landscape at Kromna and elsewhere is the strong pattern of overlap with earlier periods, especially the early Roman (see Fig. 5.13-5.14, 5.28). As with the earlier Roman period, there is evidence for continuity in the use of the area in this period for burial. An early Byzantine shaft grave, for instance, is found among the ER chamber tomb group in the area of Late Roman Site #12 (5.28a), and graves of this date were noted in the northern and northwestern bluff faces of Perdhikaria (5.28b).87 As for habitation and buildings, there is clear overlap of late Roman site #’s 7, 8, 9, and 11 with the Early Roman sites (Fig. 5.13-5.14, 5.28), which presumably highlights the continuity of activity in the area over the course of the Roman period. The limestone plateau overlooking the crossroads, into which was built the early Roman chamber tomb noted above, became in the Late Roman period a dense

86 Cf. Wiseman 1978, Fig. 74.

87 See Tartaron et al. Forthcoming; and J. Rife “Death, ritual and memory in Greek society during the early and middle Roman Empire.” PhD. Dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1999; and Rife, personal communication.
area of occupation (Fig. 5.28a: Late Roman LOCA 21) and the large olive press 
equipment found in this area could date to this period, which would confirm again the 
continued use of the area as an agricultural center for processing the harvest of the olives.

![Figure 5.28a & 5.28b. Kromna and Perdhikaria, showing late Roman sites / LOCAs 
#s 6, 8-12, and 21-23 (blue outlines), against a backdrop of the major features in the 
area, tombs (crosses), highest diversity AR-HE units (green dots), and ER LOCAs 
(red outline and hatch mark).]

The Late Roman material is more extensive than the preceding period, but this can 
be expected from a more diagnostic period. Nonetheless, there does appear to be a 
material expansion back into the northern part of the crossroads area, a part that had 
previously been used for cemeteries. This does not appear to represent simply additional 
Late Roman graves, for transport amphorae form the most consistent signature 
throughout the quarry area, albeit in fluctuating amounts (Fig. 5.29). LR finewares (Fig. 
5.30a), and to a lesser extent kitchenwares (Fig. 5.30b), also form a consistent material in 
the crossroads generally, although the latter is not well represented in the quarry 
specifically. Nonetheless, the evidence together does suggest a Late Roman inhabitation 
and use of the quarries, constituting a veritable departure from the previous period and 
perhaps relating to more relaxed attitudes toward the dead at least from the fifth and sixth 
centuries, the period to which most of this pottery dates. This interpretation might also
help to explain the high diversity Late Roman site (Fig. 5.28a: LOCA 23) with LR cooking ware, fineware, and transport amphoras at the northeastern corner of the crossroads area, occupying the former location of what must have been a Classical-period sanctuary (evidenced by perirhanterion rims).

Figures 5.29. The crossroads in the LR period, showing count of LR amphorae (blue) / unit at increments of 1-2, 3-5, 6-11, 12-22 sherds. Black triangles are Wiseman’s cemeteries, while red crosses represent additional graves.

Figures 5.30a & 5.30b. The crossroads in the late Roman period, showing units with late Roman fineware (green) and kitchenware (red). Black triangles are Wiseman’s site borders, while red crosses represent graves.
A good glimpse of the complexities of the continuous use of localities at the crossroads in antiquity can be seen in the dense and diverse concentrations of late Roman material at the southern end of the Kromnian crossroads area (Fig. 5.28b: LR Site #s 6, 8, 9), directly below the ridge of Perdhikaria. In the spring of 2001, two fallow fields lying just below the ridge were deeply plowed, and bulldozed on their edges, exposing significant quantities of well-preserved artifacts and architecture, including tiles, fineware, medium-coarse and coarse ware, amphorae, kitchenware, pithoi, glass, marble revetment, obsidian flakes, marble architectural moldings, stone blocks, and small column fragments. The Late Roman period material was especially diverse, producing an array of coarse wares, finewares, cooking wares, and basins, including vessel types like LR Amphoras, Phocaean Ware forms 3 and 10, and even LR lamps. The densities were significant enough that this area was declared a LOCA (9221, = LR Div LOCA #9) at the time of investigation and given the generic title, “The Plowed Field Site”, which has, remarkably, stuck to this day. Bulldozing in the same year below the northwest point of Perdhikaria cut into more Late Roman deposits, uncovering significant quantities of LR amphoras, cooking wares, and finewares, as well as ancient pithoi, tile, and glass fragments. This area was designated LOCA 9070 (= LR Div LOCA #6), and was designated as a villa of Late Roman date. And finally, regular intensive survey revealed an additional high diversity area of LR material at the northeastern end of the Perdhikaria bluff (LR LOCA 8).

In each of these Late Roman sites but especially #9, it is possible to get a sense for the flow of use of the area across the entire Roman period. The early and middle Roman periods are well represented, with examples of amphoras, cooking wares, Eastern Sigillata, Çandarli Ware, and ARS Form 50; the latter artifacts of the late 2nd-late 3rd centuries AD were exceptional in our survey. The Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods are impressively represented by a rich variety of artifacts. The presence of ancient building material on the site, and evidence for associated architecture—scattered cut stone blocks, large tiles, column fragments, marble revetment and architectural...
moldings—indicate again that prestige buildings, substantial in size and ornately dressed, once stood on the spot. In 2002, this area was investigated through geophysical prospection, after deep plowing pulled up a clear line of cut stone blocks. The geophysical work confirmed that a complex of walls perhaps 30 meters long existed in the area, related to an ashlar-constructed rectangular building (on a roughly east-west orientation) in the southern part of the site. We might guess that a substantial complex, such as a villa or church, marked this area in a late phase in the use of the area.

The proximity of the other Late Roman sites #'s 6 and 8 are difficult to explain except as part of a broader complex of buildings situated on the lower slopes of the ridge.
of Perdhikaria at the southern end of the major area of the Kromnian crossroads. Beyond
the prehistoric use of Perdhikaria, the ridge and the slopes below it were used again from
the Archaic period and remained in use through Late Antiquity. The early Roman
signature is particularly strong, and extends southward onto the plateau itself. The most
diverse units of the Late Roman period appear to lie at the end of a long-term
development of the early Roman use of the area, although now concentrating on the
slopes below the ridge.

Late Roman Site #9 (Cf. Figure 5.13b) provides the best evidence for a continuing
pattern of reinhabiting a specific space along the road from Kenchreai. Its ideal location
along this road, overlooking the entire Kromnian crossroads, and the building
investments of an earlier Roman date, must have been factors that contributed to the
site’s strong late phase of occupation. We should note again that LR site #9 does not
occur in isolation, but, like other areas in the traveled land of the Eastern Corinthia, was
part of a mosaic of rural structures marking the countryside. These patterns show that
significant settlement during the Classical and late Roman periods was not limited to the
area of the plowed field but extended to the north, east, and west. In light of this, the
LOCA described here should not be interpreted as an isolated rural farmstead /villa but as
a well-preserved, denser cluster of buildings in an otherwise high-density area, perhaps in
some relationship to the other buildings spread between Rachi Boska and Kromna. A
confirmation of this is indicated by the proximity of the other LR sites within only half a
kilometer of Site #9.

How do we explain the late Roman cluster of settlement within a general carpet of
late Roman material? Taking a slightly broader view of the entire Isthmus, by analyzing
the most abundant class of LR artifacts identified in the EKAS survey—amphoras—
highlights the character of LR intensive land use in the territory (Fig. 5.32). Although LR
amphoras are distributed across the entire eastern Corinthia, they cluster and thicken in
two main locations: along the ancient road running west from Isthmia and across the
broad area of Kromna-Perdhikaria. The probable interpretation of this pattern is that a
variety of buildings developed at important locations at the network of roads on the Isthmus—buildings and cultural debris thicken where roads come together and cross.

Figure 5.32. The Isthmus in the late Roman period, showing count of late Roman amphorae (blue) / unit at increments of 1-3, 4-10, and 11-21 sherds. Black triangles are Wiseman’s cemeteries, and red crosses represent graves. Roads follow probable ancient courses.

5.2.5. The Character of a Crossroads

As modern scholars and archaeologists, we desire to name our subjects by terms that will make them understandable to us: farmsteads, villas, hamlets, and towns, for example. Placing the material world is an important part of creating our own landscapes and images of the past for a local region or city. But for landscape archaeologists, naming is also a process that simplifies the material record, flattening complex spatial and temporal patterns into digestible categorical terms.

This, I would posit, is the problem we encounter when we try to understand and categorize the pattern of settlement and land use on the Isthmus: what, exactly, do we call
it? How should we understand the territory in the area between Kromna and Perdhikaria? The area was not a town, at least not in the sense that it was known as a polis or astu in antiquity. And yet, it was thick with rural buildings and habitations, and consequently, not the setting for a typical villa. There were cemeteries at the northern end in the quarry, and the area certainly had cultic features in the Classical period. In the broad Roman period, Kromna served a mixture of agricultural, mortuary, industrial, domestic, and religious functions. The significant amounts of Roman fineware and storage vessels point to markets, and the pressing of olive oil on location lends support for an inland emporium. The settlement itself is characteristic of an extensive village or town, but the intersection of so many roads in the area made it a significant traveler’s node. This chapter, in its examining of one particular area, has simply referred to such a busy place as the crossroads.

More important for my purposes were the variety of activities and phenomena that occurred in a single area in the course of antiquity: cemeteries, industry, mining, habitation, cult, and agriculture. Although it is difficult to distinguish habitation debris from other kinds of activities, especially at a diachronic level, it seems altogether probable that this area, situated at the convergence of roads, formed a market and exchange center just shy of the big city itself, where merchants and craftsmen from different parts of the Mediterranean gathered to sell their goods, saving themselves the trip of traveling to Corinth itself. The high frequency of late Roman ceramic wares, which we discussed at length in the previous chapter, presumably relates to the importance of this area as a trading center in Late Antiquity.

The discussion above has also highlighted the general pattern and flow of the use of the crossroads through Late Antiquity. It has suggested that late Roman habitation and land use at Kromna were embedded in both a general structure of place and in particular localities in the landscape. The general sense of continuity of the use of the overall area is evident in the importance of the crossroads over the course of three periods. In the Archaic and Classical periods, the area immediately north of Perdhikaria appears to have
been settled, while the quarry and an area to its south/southwest was used as a cemetery and for cult, possibly after quarrying in this area had come to an end. Early Roman settlement and buildings spread over several extensive areas on the ridge of Perdhikaria and southwest of the quarry, while in the Late Roman period, buildings were dispersed across the entire area, reoccupying the Classical-Hellenistic cemeteries to the north. Although such subtle shifts in pattern do point to major cultural differences over time, the crossroads nonetheless remained one of the most important structures in the territory of the city, a point of junction where travelers met market facilities, many private houses and ornate villas, religious sanctuaries, numerous graves, and agricultural and industrial structures—before passing on to Corinth town, Kenchreai, Isthmia, or the Corinthian Gulf. The longevity of use of such an important extra-urban structure in antiquity points to the continuing material vitality of the city in the world through the sixth century, even despite the disruptive forces of invasion, earthquake, and plague.

5.3. Embedded Structures of the Eastern Corinthia

While this current study has focused on the crossroads as a case study for the later antique history of the Isthmus, it ultimately underscores the more general pattern of continuity of settlement in the Corinthia. The “embedded” countryside that has been the subject of discussion above was more extensive than even the crossroads, as material continuity is common to late Roman settlement in the region generally.

5.3.1. Continuity and Reuse in the Corinthia

Beyond the area of Kromna (discussed above), a Late Antique “embeddedness” is also evident in the well-known sites of the Corinthia recorded by topographers of the twentieth century: H. Fowler, R. Hope Simpson, Faraklas and Sakellariou, and especially James Wiseman who wandered across the Corinthia in the 1960s, revisiting older sites
and recording new ones. If we examine all of the sites listed on Wiseman’s map (Figure 5.33) that lie west of the canal as far west as the Longopotomos River, and north of an imagined line running between Mt. Phoukas (Apesas) and Mt. Oneion, there is a notable pattern of late Roman to earlier periods (Figure 5.34). At least 12 of these 19 sites (63%) showed evidence for the LR period, and almost all of the sites (n = 18; 95%) produced material that could be dated to some time in the broader Roman period. The late Roman component always occurs in conjunction with earlier Archaic-Early Roman phases: 11 of the 12 LR sites (92%) have an Early Roman phase, and all 13 (100%) of the sites have a Classical and/or Hellenistic phase. Put in different terms, 92% (n = 11 of 12) of the early Roman sites have a late Roman phase, and 68% of Classical sites produced late Roman material. Most of these sites have occupational histories spanning the Classical to Late Roman period.

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89 This includes all the major sites from Wiseman’s Chapter 3 (The Isthmus) and 5 (The Western Corinthia) that were noted on his Figure 39. Hence, it includes Vigla, Kato Almyri, and Galataki (Solygia), even though these are south of Mt. Onium. Cf. Wiseman 1978, 44: Fig. 39. The sites with asterisks indicate that these areas were reinvestigated as part of the Eastern Korinthia Survey and that new chronological information has been added.

90 For a basic list of late Roman sites of the Corinthia, which is mainly based on Wiseman 1978 but generally lists the main sites, cf. Rothaus 2000, 151-55. The appendix to this dissertation adds additional late Roman “sites” from the eastern Corinthia, but the point of my study is to go beyond the site!
We can expect, however, that these figures significantly underestimate the correlation between the periods as they are based mainly on non-systematic casual surveys of the sites. More intensive methods would provide finer chronological nuance, as they did, for instance, in the EKAS survey of the land adjacent to the sites of Gonia and Yiriza. These sites had previously been identified only as prehistoric sites but, following intensive survey, also gained CL-LR phases as well. The chronological components for these sites, as well as Kromna and Perdhikaria, in Figure 5.34 below (indicated by asterisk) are based on the results of the EKAS survey. Other sites of the Corinthia would show similar chronological diversity if surveyed intensively. It is important to remember too that the sites in Figure 5.16 are at the upper end of the settlement threshold, and are not representative of the typical smaller late Roman site of the Corinthia.
### Figure 5.34. Sites of the Corinthia, north of the Oneion Range and west of the Isthmus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Type</th>
<th>AR</th>
<th>CL</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>LR</th>
<th>Roman / (Broad)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Aetopetra</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ay. Charalambos</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ay. Yerasimos</td>
<td>Habitation / Cemetery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examilia</td>
<td>Architectural Frgs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galataki (Solygia)</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonia*</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isthmia</td>
<td>Sanctuary / Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kato Almyri</td>
<td>Habitation / Cemetery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenchreai</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korakou</td>
<td>Habitation / Cemetery</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kromna*</td>
<td>Habitation / Cemetery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lechaion</td>
<td>Harbor / Sanctuary</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loutro Elenis</td>
<td>Habitation?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulki</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perdhikaria*</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanatopi</td>
<td>Fort / Tower</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigla</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voukiana</td>
<td>Habitation / Cemetery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiriza*</td>
<td>Habitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2. *Continuity and Reuse in the Eastern Korinthia Survey Area*

Another telling signature of Late Roman continuity in the Corinthia, evident in the EKAS data, is the correlation and relationship or LR material to earlier periods. On the one hand, the general pattern of EKAS survey units indicates a strong relationship between earlier and later parts of the Roman period. For instance, 148 of 193 survey units (76.8%) with early Roman pottery also yielded late Roman material. There were many more units with late Roman pottery *without* an earlier component, but given the general problems in recognizing early Roman pottery (Cf. Ch. 4), there are presumably also many more units where the earlier material was there but was identified to a broader period like “Roman.” In any case, a very strong pattern exists between earlier and later Roman periods. And second, survey units with late Roman components also bear a
stronger relationship to units from the preceding Greek period, as 60% of units with Archaic-Hellenistic material (n = 447 of 745) also had late Roman material. Given the relative abundance of both AR-HE and LR material in the area, this second pattern of overlay may in part be random.

The Late Roman Sites / LOCAs on the Isthmus tell a similar story. Although Late Roman pottery spreads continuously throughout the area surveyed by EKAS, there is, as argued above (and in Appendix I), both a chronological and spatial configuration to the most diverse Late Roman material. Spatially, the most diverse concentrations of Late Roman artifacts occur in two places (Fig. 5.35), immediately south and west of the site of Isthmia proper (LOCAs 13-19) and in the area near Kromna and Perdhikaria (7-12, 21-23). Most of the Top 50 diverse Late Roman units (37 of 50) and two thirds of the LR LOCAs focus in those two areas. The remaining LR densest units and LOCAs are located east of the village of Xylokeriza (3-5, 20, 24) and in the area of Kenchreai (1 and 2). No concentrations occur in the area of Yiriza-Gonia, Ayios Dimitriros ridge, or in the coastal areas of the southeastern Corinthia, although LR pottery was found in all these places. In spatial terms, then, the LR artifactual landscape of the eastern Corinthia can be described as continuous, with dispersed but uneven concentrations, especially centered in the vicinity of Isthmia and Kromna-Perdhikaria.

Chronologically, most of the LR LOCAs provide evidence for earlier uses. Two thirds of the LR LOCAs yielded pottery datable to the early Roman period, spanning the late first century BC to mid-third century AD, and every site yielded Archaic-Classical and Classical-Hellenistic pottery, usually in plentiful amounts, and including varieties of amphorae and storage vessels, kitchen wares, black-glazed finewares, skyphoi, oenochoe, kraters, and painted roof tiles. Again, because the Late Roman material is so abundant, we should expect random overlay, which would not be meaningful at the historical or

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91 Even LOCA #21 is directly adjacent to units with Early Roman material, and LOCA #10 is situated on a bluff with an associated tomb of Early Roman date and thereby has an earlier phase of use.
cultural level. On the other hand, in some cases, the data of the two periods patterns too closely to be entirely random: the LR units probably represent continued use.

Fig. 5.35a and 5.35b. LR concentrations in the eastern Corinthia against backdrop of LR artifactual carpet (in yellow). Fifty most diverse LR units (blue dots), and the image on the right shows the LR LOCAs.

The Early Roman densest units and LOCAs (Figures 5.36), for instance, share a pattern very similar to the most diverse Late Roman units and LOCAs. As with the Late Roman period, the densest Early Roman units and sites are dispersed throughout the main corridor, but focus again in the area immediately to the south and west of Isthmia and in the area of Kromna-Perdhikaria. Again, two thirds (ER LOCA #s 6-11, 13-19) of the Early Roman LOCAs and the densest ER units (n=34 of 50) concentrate in these two areas, with the remaining ones in the areas of Kenchreai especially but also east of the village of Xylokeriza; one high density ER unit and LOCA is located in the area of Yiriza-Gonia. The background carpet of ER artifacts is not nearly as continuous as the Late Roman or Archaic-Hellenistic (see below), but as the previous chapter argued, this is mainly a result of poor recognition of the pottery in the area. A more complete identification of the ER pottery would fill out the artifactual carpet for this period rather well.
For the Archaic-Hellenistic period (Fig. 5.37), the fifty most diverse units show even greater nucleation, but again concentrate in the same two areas, immediately west of Isthmia (n=6 units) and especially in the area of Kromna-Perdhikaria (n=30 of 50 units); these two areas claim over two-thirds of the AR-HE highest diversity units and may indicate cemeteries. The other two main concentrations are immediately east of the village of Xylokeriza (n=six units), in the areas of LR LOCA 4, 20, and 24, and at the coastal site of Vigla in the southeastern Corinthia (n =6; see Figures 5.37a). One high diversity AR-HE unit occurred immediately below the heights of Rachi and is probably associated with the rubbish from the settlement there. One other high diversity AR-HE unit occurred between Yiriza and Gonia. As with the LR period, the high visibility of AR-HE black glaze pottery facilitate the documenting of the continuous carpet for the AR-HE period. Although AR-HE pottery is found near Kenchreai, Ayios Dimitrios

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92 The analysis has been conducted for the broad “Archaic-Hellenistic” period in order to ‘include’ the greatest amount of overlapping broad period data, such as “Archaic-Classical,” “Classical-Hellenistic”, and “Archaic-Hellenistic.” The fact that this analysis patterns so well justifies the grouping, but one could conduct a finer-scale analysis of, for instance, simply “Archaic” and “Classical” period material. See Caraher, Nakassis, and Pettegrew 2005 & 2006.
ridge, in the southern Corinthia (in the hidden valley of Lakka Skoutara), and near Yiriza-Gonia, it is most diverse near Isthmia and the crossroads, arguably suggesting cemeteries.

Examining these three temporal landscapes in terms of diversity (and for the ER period, in terms of density: see Appendix I), then, demonstrates the concentrating of the material from these periods in the EKAS territory in two main locations—the area south and west of Isthmia and the area of Kromna-Perdhikaria—with less extensive and consistent concentrations in the vicinity of Kenchreai, east of Xylokeriza, the vicinity of Yiriza-Gonia, and Vigla (for the AR-HE periods). The results of all this are shown below in Figures 5.38 and 5.39, which displays Late Roman LOCAs against the background artifactual carpets and fifty densest units of AR-HE and ER periods.

Figure 5.37a and 5.37b. AR-HE Concentrations in the Eastern Corinthia against backdrop of AR-HE artifactual carpet (in yellow). The image on the left shows most diverse AR-HE units (green dots) in total survey area, while image on the right focuses on concentrations in areas north of Oneion.
Figure 5.38a and 5.38b. LR LOCAs against background carpet (yellow-red scale) and densest units of two periods. Image on the left shows LR against AR-HE period, with green dots indicating unit is among the fifty most diverse AR-HE units. Image on the right shows LR against ER period, with red dots indicating unit is among the fifty densest ER units. In both images, the artifactual carpet for the period is indicated by the yellow-red scale.

Figure 5.39. LR LOCAs (blue outline) against Top 50 AR-HE units (green) and Top 50 Early Roman units (red)
How do we explain this patterning? First, as the figures above appear to suggest, there is a striking degree of continuity in the intensity of uses of broad areas of the Eastern Corinthian landscape between the AR-CL period and Late Antiquity. Although material from each of these three periods was found in all surveyed areas of the Eastern Corinthia, including the valley of Lakka Skoutara in the S. Corinthia, the densest and most diverse areas concentrate in the locations discussed above, especially in the stretch of land extending from the site of Isthmia for about two kilometers, and the extensive areas framed by Perdhikaria on the south and Kromna on the north. The importance of these areas through antiquity is suggested by the patterns of repeated habitation and confirm the settlement patterns discussed in section 5.2: generally dispersed and continuous Roman settlement, concentrating in part at nodes like Isthmia and Kromna. This, as I will discuss again below, may in part be explained by the travel networks in the Corinthia and the cemeteries, settlements, and markets that existed at those locations.

Second, there is a striking degree of long-term continuity and longevity in the intensity of use of specific localities in the landscape. Hence, not only is there a long-term continuity in the intensity of inhabiting general areas of the landscape, but also arguably even in spaces no larger than several hectares and often much smaller than this. Such, for instance, is the case where thirteen of the LR LOCAs (#s 1-5, 7-9, 11, 14, 15, 17, and 18) overlay or are directly adjacent to ER LOCAs. As I will conclude below, this pattern of overlap is probably culturally and historically meaningful, and is to be connected with long-term use of the areas through Late Antiquity and the embeddedness of the place.93

5.4. The Crossroads of Greece

This chapter (along with Ch. 4) has made several interrelated arguments about settlement and land use on the Isthmus in the Roman period. Contrary to what might be suggested by the literary sources (Ch. 3), it has argued that the Isthmus in the Roman / Late Roman period was replete with structures and buildings. The physical material on

93 Ch. 6 picks up this theme through a discussion of the reuse of the same buildings over time.
the Isthmus was denser and more continuous than that suggested by ancient literary sources and modern scholarship, and busier than the typical countryside studied by archaeological survey. The chapter has argued that the use of the countryside from the third to seventh centuries occurred in terms of a structure of place hundreds of years old. Continuity and reuse of places over the *longue durée* was related to a configuration of places that developed in the early Roman period, if not before. The rural *structures* of ancient Corinth were, in other words, stable and long lasting, contributing to and sustaining the social and economic life of the city through the sixth century AD. And finally, while this particular territory was variously used and functioned in different ways, there can be little doubt that one of the most important factors structuring land use, habitation, and building activity in the area was the significant volume of travel to and from the urban center and harbors, and across the Isthmus. Although there were significant redefinitions of the structures of the territory during Late Antiquity, the Isthmian land of the eastern Corinthia never permanently suffered in its fundamental role as a crossroads.

In sum, the countryside that ancient travelers never named was teeming with activity, and these unnamed rural buildings formed structures that related to the role of the city in a landscape. The longevity in use of this area as well as specific localities in the area challenge overtly negative visions of the city in Late Antiquity by showing that a basic structure of place in the city that had emerged at a deeper point in the city’s history remained important to the end of antiquity. We can end by reexamining several major questions that have frequently surfaced in discussions of the Roman and late Roman Corinthia.

**5.4.1. Town, Countryside, and Patterns of Settlement**

How should we understand the relationship between Corinth town and its territory, and especially the city and its eastern landscape? This question has surfaced in many discussions of the city because of the overwhelming weight of the literary testimony,
which have focused only on Corinth’s commercial character. In rejecting the appeal of these sources, J.B. Salmon stressed (1984) that the economy of the Greek polis was principally derived from its rich agricultural territory (including both the coastal plain and the Isthmus) and that commerce was a significant but secondary resource; the urban center was embedded in its rural world. D. Engels, on the other hand, in his discussion (1990) of the wealth of the Roman city and in an explicit attack on the economic models proposed by Weber and Finley, argued that Roman Corinth could never have had the economic status of an “agro-town” (to borrow Weber’s term) and must have depended fundamentally on alternate resources. Taking a cue from the literary testimony, he suggested that “service” to the numerous travelers that came to the city was the major basis of the city’s economy. His discussion downplayed the significance of agriculture for the Roman economy, even suggesting that extra-urban rural settlement was generally “nucleated”, focused in villages that would have absorbed any and all economic surpluses. Through a series of statistical acrobatics about hypothetical urban and rural population, property ownership, and rents and surpluses, Engels’ alternate model cut away the countryside altogether, essentially dismissing its place for the life of the city. These two main monographs of Corinthian history in the Greek period and Roman period have presented essentially different images of the relationship between Corinth town and territory.

Archaeological fieldwork has largely disproved Engels’ picture of a nucleated settlement system. Salvage excavations by the Greek Archaeological Service and archaeological surface survey, have populated the countryside with Roman suburban and rural villas in both the eastern and southern Corinthia. Even twenty years ago, Gregory and Kardulias, in their studies of extra-urban settlements in the Corinthia, had argued that the existence of Late Antique habitations like the garrison at Isthmia, the villa at Akra Sophia, and settlements of marginal lands (e.g., Evraionisos) did not exist in isolation and indicated the vitality and continuity of the city of Corinth.\(^94\) They conjectured a network

\(^{94}\) T.E. Gregory and P.N. Kardulias, “Geophysical and Surface Surveys in the Byzantine Fortress at Isthmia,” in \textit{Hesperia} 59 (1990), 467-511; P.N. Kardulias, \textit{The Byzantine Fortress at Isthmia, Greece and the transition from Late Antiquity to the Medieval Period in the Aegean}, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State
of rural villas that interacted with the Byzantine fortress at Isthmia, the urban center, and
the wider world. In a similar vein, Richard Rothaus has recently highlighted the
agricultural and suburban character of the handful of villas known from the Corinthia,
suggesting that most of these villas were Late Antique in date and culturally oriented
toward the urban center as though villa owners wished to remain active in civic life. For
Rothaus, the landowners did not abandon the towns for the countryside but continued to
derive their identity from it.

All of these assessments were made prior to a major archaeological survey and, in
fact, laid the groundwork for such a survey. The Eastern Korinthia Archaeological
Survey did not cover an extensive amount of territory but the scale of the intensive
survey was much greater than that of previous surveys in the Corinthia, and consequently
allow us to address questions of town and country. On the basis of the EKAS data, this
chapter (coupled with Ch. 4 and 6) has presented a very different vision of the Roman
countryside than those suggested by both ancient and modern authors. While ancient
geographers, historians, and travelers conceptualized and talked about the Corinthian
landscape only in terms of its famous places, surface survey has shown that the areas
between these places were replete with rural farmsteads, buildings, and installations.
Contrary to the position of some modern scholars (who have perhaps read the ancient
testimony too positivistically), the material evidence confirms a thick and continuous
habitation of the Isthmus in the Roman / Late Roman period.

University 1988; T.E. Gregory, “An Early Byzantine Complex at Akra Sophia near Corinth,” Hesperia 54
(1985), 411-28; P.N. Kardulias, T.E. Gregory, and J. Sawmiller, “Bronze Age and Late Antique

95 Gregory and Kardulias 1990, 506.

96 Rothaus 2000, 26-29.

97 This should caution against relying on literary testimony to build up a model of rural land use. Even for
a city as famous as Corinth, the literary sources simply do not speak about forms and patterns of settlement;
we must rely on the methods of archaeological survey if we want to understand the kinds of buildings and
places found between the major nodes.
If survey has shown that the eastern territory was replete with farmsteads, villas, and extra-urban installations, it was not in any sense a “typical” Greek countryside, relatively isolated and dotted with country houses evenly spaced across the landscape. The Isthmus, rather, was thick with houses, buildings, and structures that concentrated (unevenly) in areas like the crossroads, and was busy with the traffic that poured over land and sea to, from, and around Corinth. While there is evidence for Roman-period settlement throughout the EKAS region, it is the travel nodes of Corinthian territory, where roads come together and intersect, that material debris concentrates and thickens. A comparison of artifact densities at these nodes with, for example, the densities of more isolated areas in the southeast Corinthia (or even with the plateaus and ridges on the Isthmus) demonstrate a major difference in the continuousness and thickness of Roman debris. Moreover, buildings on the Isthmus were highly visible along the transportation routes in the region and could never have formed the kind of isolated rustic scenery that we might imagine for an ancient Greek countryside; only in parts of the southeast Corinthia do we find such out-of-the-way places.

In light of this broad pattern, it is better to see the eastern countryside in the Roman period not as a counterpart or even complement to the urban center, but an *extension* of the city to the harbors. The Isthmus was, so to speak, the front yard of the city for it was territory that most travelers passed through on the way to, from, and around Corinth. The city’s markets and *emporia* that modern scholars often associate only with the urban center were found also in the city’s eastern territory, including most notably the two harbors Lechaion and Kenchreai, but as importantly, at major crossroads like Isthmia and Kromna. This chapter used Kromna as an example of the kind of area that was significant to the Roman city of Corinth. At the major crossroads of the Isthmus west of Isthmia, it was a point of convergence for travelers coming from or going to Isthmia, Kenchreai, the Corinthian Gulf, Corinth town, or the Argolid (via Corinth). In the Roman period, a variety of sites dotted the area of the crossroads, including private houses and villas, numerous tombs, (presumably) installations related to markets and
exchange, quarries, and agricultural installations. This chapter has focused on the crossroads, but there were also numerous scattered villas and residences.

What was the relationship between territory, agriculture, and commerce? Contra Engels, there is no need to pit the city’s agricultural resources against its commercial resources, as though either were insignificant to the ancient economy. Our examining of Kromna has shown how the two might function together in the same location to support the local economy. The installation of large-scale olive presses at the crossroads facilitated the processing of the olives harvested in the area; the oil could then be shipped to respective destinations, whether Corinth town, Kenchreai, Isthmia, or supra-regional markets. Quarrying activity in the limestone ridges near Kromna (presumably) continued in the Roman era, and limestone blocks were transported from here to their respective destinations. We can probably also imagine that a variety of other local products, such as Corinthian ceramics and honey, were sold and traded here at the crossroads to travelers on their way. The abundance of both eastern and western goods—amphorae from Palestine and the Aegean and finewares from Africa and Asia Minor—point to a variety of Mediterranean products that were either being imported to the city of Corinth or were redistributed to those passing across the Isthmus. Some of the most important connective nodes of the Isthmus—Kenchreai, Isthmia, the ship-road at the diolkos, and the Corinthian Gulf—lay within a four kilometer radius of the crossroads. Kromna, then, fed into an integrated local and regional economy that united its commercial, agricultural, and other resources into a single location. It formed an extension of the city onto the Isthmus and connected Corinth town with its larger nodes, Isthmia and Kenchreai.

In the second century AD, the orator Aelius Aristides was called to give an oration for the cycle of the Isthmian games. His speech of praise names many anecdotes and aspects of Corinthian history worthy of praise, but his panegyric centers on the place of Poseidon’s isthmus in connecting the metropolis of Corinth to the wider world.98

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98 Or. 46.22-27.
This is the strangest and at the same time most pleasant of all spectacles on the earth—people on each side sail in and sail out at the same instant with favorable breezes and men put out to sea and into port with the same winds in this land and sea alone of all, and everything from everywhere comes here both by land and sea, and this is the reason why the land even from earliest times was praised as ‘rich’ by the poets, both because of the multitude of the advantages which are at hand and the felicity which is embodied in it. For it is, as it were, a kind of market place, and at that common to all the Greeks, and a national festival, not like this present one which the Greek race celebrates here every two years, but one which is celebrated every year and daily….[26-27] What more evidence would one offer of its [Corinth’s] greatness than that it has been extended to all the seas and has been settled beside and along them, not just the one but not the other, but all of them equally….Indeed, you would see it everywhere full of wealth and an abundance of goods, as much as is likely, since the earth on every side and the sea on every side flood it with these, as if it dwelled in the midst of its goods and was washed all around by them, like a merchant ship.

Aelius Aristides highlights a central motif of Corinth’s identity—the city and the Isthmus as a market place—also mentioned by authors before him (such as Livy 33.32) and after him (Libanius Decl. 25.46). Although Livy would highlight the place of Isthmia as a market in the Hellenistic period, Aelius Aristides gives the entire eastern landscape, extending to its seas, the character of a broad emporium surrounding Corinth town. While panegyric cannot translate into a settlement pattern equivalent, it would also be a mistake not to recognize an essential truth in this speech of praise: that the Isthmus really did feed into the city’s cultural identity (as a commercial town) and its economic resources. In the end, there can be little doubt that one of the most important factors structuring habitation and building activity in the eastern territory was the significant volume of travel to and from the urban center and across the Isthmus. The Corinthian Oration of the second century AD was right to call the city the “promenade” (peripatos) and the “prow and stern” of Greece. This chapter has offered some suggestions for the material correlates to these otherwise vague descriptions.99

5.4.2. The Continuity of the Rural World

How did the character of extra-urban habitation change between the early and late Roman periods? What was the nature of the difference, for example, between rural settlement at the beginning and end of the Roman period?

99 Favorinus, The Corinthian Oration 7-8, 36.
As noted above, many scholars who have discussed settlement patterns for the Roman Corinthia have underscored the later Roman character of extra-urban settlement. Hence, archaeological research by T.E. Gregory and P.N. Kardulias demonstrated the frequency of Late Antique habitation of both coastal regions of the Corinthia (Akra Sophia) and marginal lands like the island of Evraionisos in the Saronic Gulf and argued that such habitation might be a LR phenomenon. R. Rothaus likewise focused on the Late Antique settlement in the Corinthia and suggested, ultimately, that extra-urban villa owners were still tied to the city center. Scholars of Corinthian settlement have focused on the later Roman period because it is so highly visible in the countryside.

This study, on the other hand, has identified some of the source problems in reading ceramic deposition for the early and later Roman periods. It has consequently argued that for the city’s principal connective eastern territory (the Isthmus), there is greater evidence for material similarity than difference between early and late Roman periods. The pattern of land use confirms a Late Antique continuity of regional structures developed by the late first or second centuries AD, and in some cases, the use of the same locations and buildings over time (Ch. 6). Continuity and reuse of places on the Isthmus in Late Antiquity, in other words, were related to a configuration of places that had developed hundreds of years previously. If we seek difference in the overall pattern of Corinthian settlement across the Roman era, we may need to continue to look elsewhere, in the less traversed regions of the Corinthia.

In the vision of habitation proposed above, the real material change for the Isthmus came not in the late 4th century, but in the late sixth, when the evidence for the region’s participation in trade networks declined and the signature of habitation went with it. The rural structures of ancient Corinth were stable and long lasting, contributing to and sustaining the social and economic life of the city through the sixth century AD. Although there were certainly significant redefinitions in the territory during Late Antiquity, the land of the eastern Corinthia never permanently suffered in its fundamental role as either a crossroads or an agricultural territory. And despite the decline and
fragmentation of the image of the city (as a traveler’s cosmopolis) in Late Antiquity (Ch. 3), the physical landscape remained vital to the city’s economy. The longevity in use of the Isthmian challenges overtly negative visions of the city in Late Antiquity based on a fragmentary literary tradition.

5.4.3. The Question of the Late Antique Countryside

We can conclude by returning to the broader historiography of rural settlement in the eastern Mediterranean between the fourth and sixth centuries AD. Against the old Jonesian consensus that agriculture was certainly in decline during this period,\(^{100}\) there is now an overwhelming wave of historical scholarship, a new consensus, in fact, that sees Late Antiquity as a period flourishing in rural buildings and activity, large-scale investments for profit, as well as overall settlement and population.\(^{101}\) Even the Theodosian and Justinianic law codes, which constituted the historical basis for the old consensus, have been reread in a more positive light as indication of the government’s promotion of landholding and investment.\(^{102}\) A variety of archaeological excavation and survey has only added fuel to the fire of former views of an impoverished Late Antique countryside.\(^{103}\)

In an Aegean context, extensive and intensive surveys have played into this revisionism by producing evidence for the ‘rehabilitation’ of the countryside with dispersed farmstead sites after an Early Roman pattern of nucleated settlement. Arguably, however, such a boom-and-bust vision of the Greek countryside is based in part on a misreading of the archaeological abundance of Late Antique material relative to

\(^{100}\) E.g., Jones 1964, 812: “It is generally agreed that there was a decline in agriculture in the later Roman empire.” Mango 1980 (44): “It is an undeniable fact that from the fourth century onwards more and more land was going out of cultivation, and it is highly likely that the main cause of this was taxation”


\(^{102}\) This is discussed most fully in Cynthia Kosso’s, *The Archaeology of Public Policy*, 2003, 13-30, especially pp. 15-18

\(^{103}\) See Banaji’s introductory chapter, 1-22; or Hirschfeld 1999, for discussion of the archaeology.
a perceived early Roman absence. Reading ceramic survey data without taking into account relative differences in diagnosticity between periods has served to highlight settlement difference, rather than continuity, between the Early Roman period and Late Antiquity. Whether such differences are real or perceived for other regions of Greece must be measured using some of the methods outlined in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

This chapter has shown that Late Antique habitation in the Eastern Corinthia lay at the end of a constant pattern of land use and occupation stretching, arguably, back to the Archaic-Classical period. The results of the EKAS survey highlight these patterns of continuity and reuse of the same places over long periods of time. The close correlation of later Roman pottery in terms of earlier material in the whole corpus of survey units confirm such an interpretation, and the specific patterning of artifacts in the most diverse of these units only strengthen this interpretation. There was, in other words, a long-term continuity of both the broader structures (i.e., important areas like Kromna) in Corinthian territory and the more specific use of particular places in the land (i.e., the very same fields).

This chapter has argued that the correlation of late Roman scatters and previous periods may be explained by the general stability of the process of investing in areas in the land that signified and effected stability and continuity in land use, embedding both a structure and sense of place in the landscape. The ancient placing of the land interacted with both topographic features of the Eastern Corinthia—the natural transportation routes are arguably the most important factor but even the cavernous rocky crags of the marine terraces were significant factors—and the inhabiting of the landscape through material investments. The constructing of rural buildings, towers, and villas, the modification of the land in the form of terracing and movement of earth and stone, the installation of agricultural features like enormous pressing weights, the building of tombs and religious architecture, the development of roads in the area all stabilized and structured the use of places in antiquity and consolidated a landscape at the crossroads of the world. The
clustering of the densest and most diverse units in two main locations, south and west of Isthmia and the crossroads known as Kromna, indicate the important communities that developed at key nodes in the Corinthian landscape and that lasted through antiquity. Although these settlements were hardly mentioned in the accounts of ancient historians and writers, they nonetheless formed a constant part of the material structure of place that was the Corinthia in antiquity.

In an important work on the Byzantine fortress at Isthmia, P.N. Kardulias argued that examining the transformation of the site from sanctuary to fortress in the terms of ecological adaptation could show a strong sense of continuity of social complexity between antiquity and Byzantium. Seen from the perspective of energy expenditure, there is greater evidence for continuity at the site of Isthmia than change, and this encourages a healthier view of the continuity of the city of Corinth itself to which the fate of Isthmia was linked closely in the Roman period. This chapter has argued from surface assemblages for an even broader degree of continuity in the use of important places in the landscape into the sixth century at least. An ancient structure of place—with Corinth as a crossroads, best seen in settlements such as Kromna—and the longevity of investing in particular localities in the landscape provide broad evidence for the continuity of the structures of the physical territory through Late Antiquity. If other regions seem to indicate change in the Late Antique landscape, the busy countryside of the land west of Isthmia shows material stability in tune with an embedded structure of place.

If this is correct, we can see in the Corinthia a deeply structured rural world already in place in the third century AD. Investments made in rural places in the early days of the Roman colony—in the form of buildings, field houses, terracing, walls, agricultural installations, roads, and wells and cisterns—structured later use of those places in Late Antiquity. To be sure, as in the city, this was not a mechanistic or an even process, but occurred in conjunction with the new needs of each successive period and the rebuilding

that followed periodic disruptive events like major earthquakes and invasions. There were areas in the countryside that emerged in both the early and later Roman periods that did not exist at an earlier date, but the degree of continuity in particular places is nonetheless compelling, especially in respect to the city’s role as a crossroads corridor in the Mediterranean. As chapter six will suggest, ordinary structures like villas and houses commonly (re)occupied the same places over very long periods of time, a process that renewed the ancient world in new forms.

If the history of the Corinthia in Late Antiquity has long been explained through a discourse of decline, this is a result of focusing too myopically on the remains of large-scale public architecture excavated in the city of Corinth, the site of Isthmia, Kenchreai, and Lechaion. If we look at the broader Corinthian landscape, we gain a picture not only of a stability of places in the land, but even the longevity of a structure of place, Corinth at the crossroads. When examining the Corinthia at this coarser chronological and spatial scale, the traditional historiographic bad-guys of Late Antiquity—whether Germanic invaders, earthquakes, plagues, or Christianity—appear not to have permanently disrupted the momentum of habitation in the fourth to sixth centuries AD. Even the decline of the imagined landscape of famous Corinthian places (Ch. 3) and the source tradition for the city in this period says very little about the overall structure of the rural world in Late Antiquity. At this broader scale, regardless of redefinitions of public space and the radical revision of the image of the city, the Corinthian landscape retained its traditional physical shape and configurations of place until the early seventh century. Corinth on the Isthmus, embedded in traveler’s nodes like the crossroads, had a late vitality and health. This is essentially the paradox and contradiction inherent to a landscape study in Late Antiquity: despite dramatic redefinitions in this period, there are also remarkable continuities.

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