

# THE LATE CLASSICAL CEMETERY OF THE AYIOS DIONYSIOS RAIL STATION IN PIRAEUS

Evangelos Kroustalis,  
Aris Tsaravopoulos (Athens – Greece)

**Keywords:** Piraeus harbor, cemetery, Late Classical, Eetionian gate.

**Abstract.** An extended part of the city's cemetery has been excavated in the port of Piraeus dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> B.C. It consists of 54 graves of several types. The majority of them are enclosed in rectangular funerary enclosures (*periboloi*) of various sizes, collective or individual. The prevailing burial practice is that of inhumation; however some cremations are also present.

## Introduction

In spring 2007, during the renovation of the rail tracks, antiquities were discovered at the platforms area of the Ayios Dionysios station in Piraeus. The rescue excavation that followed has uncovered an extended part of a cemetery<sup>1</sup>.

The site of the excavation is located by the northwestern coast of the Piraeus harbor (Fig. 1). The existence of a cemetery at this point is not surprising, since just about 260 m. to the south / southwest lies the northern branch of the city's ancient walls and the Eetionian gate. This gate that was at the northwestern corner of the Piraeus fortification allowed access to the city to those coming from the north and the west (Steinhauer 2003: 44). In ancient times cemeteries were normally located outside the cities' walls, arranged alongside roads. Although this pattern was certainly the case in Piraeus too, as early travelers have mentioned the existence of an extended cemetery off the Eetionian gate, only few tombs have been properly excavated so far. This lacuna in the archaeological evidence is largely due to the rocky landscape in the area that has yielded the graves easily recognizable to any aspiring looter. Dragatsis and Kyparissis, who investigated some graves and funerary enclosures (*periboloi*) during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, noticed that most of the tombs had been robbed long before their time (Dragatsis 1910: 79, Kyparissis 1926: 189). The subsequent building and industrial development of the territory that took place during the 20<sup>th</sup> century deteriorated further the situation and caused unrecoverable damage to the archaeological record. Consequently, the excavation at the Ayios Dionysios station will contribute to cover this gap, as it has revealed an extended part of the ancient city's cemetery.

## The excavated plot

The excavation covered an almost square plot with dimensions 25 x 22,7 m. Technical matters prevented us from expanding our research to the whole area simultaneously and made us to dig its eastern and western part successively. Thus, before the beginning of the excavation at the western part, the monuments of the eastern part had to be covered with earth. The fact that the site lies inside the rail course is responsible for some damage caused to the monuments. In order for the rail track to be installed at end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the surface of the ground had to be leveled. As a result all the surface finds were swept away, while at the same time the rocky surface of the ground by the northern and southern edge of the excavated plot was severely

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<sup>1</sup> The investigation of the site, which lasted from September 2007 to October 2008, took place under the auspices of the 26<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities and was financed by the Railway Organization of Greece. The work was conducted by E. Kroustalis under A. Tsaravopoulos' supervision.

damaged. Further serious damage was caused at a later time, when a deep trench was dug vertically to the rails, in order for a massive draining pipe to be constructed. That trench partly destroyed a series of graves located alongside the northern edge of the site.

### **The arrangement of the cemetery**

Despite the exposure of the site to all the above hazards the majority of the 54 investigated graves were found neither looted nor disturbed in any way (Fig. 2-4). Most of the tombs are organized in four rows running from east to west. The majority of them are also enclosed in quadrangle *periboloi* (see also supplementary table after the text). At least five funerary *periboloi* have been uncovered. All of them survive to their lowest course of masonry, which is about half a meter tall, and they are made of limestone, porous stone and more rarely conglomerate blocks.

The central part of the excavated plot is occupied by a big enclosure 15 m. long and at least 5,3 m. wide (*peribolos A*, fig. 3-4). These dimensions make this *peribolos* one of the largest ever found. In its initial form, when it would stand to a height of some meters, consisting of 3-4 courses of masonry - as was the rule for monuments of this type (Garland 1982, 128) - it would definitely be an imposing structure. *Peribolos A* was enclosed on its northern, eastern and western sides, while its southern side - that was the rear one - was left open. Its front wall, which is 1,3 m. wide, consists of a course of laterally placed stone blocks, while its side walls are just 0,67 m. wide and consist of a course of stone blocks placed at length. Inside the *peribolos* at least 14 tombs of various types were excavated. By the intervention of a secondary lateral wall a smaller compartment was formed at its eastern end separating a group of four tombs from the rest. In comparison to the graves excavated in the rest of the cemetery, those enclosed in *peribolos A* were relatively richer in funeral gifts, a fact that seems to concur with the expenses that would have been required to build a structure of this magnitude.

About 1 m. to the north spreads a second parallel *peribolos* of less massive construction (*peribolos B*). The precise length of it is unknown, since its eastern end lies under the platform of the station. However its preserved dimensions are 9,50 x 5,30 m. Its outer walls (northern and western) encompass a series of seven parallel graves of several types. With the addition of lateral and rear walls built either of rubble masonry or of erected plaque-shaped limestones, separated compartments are formed, each of which surrounds an individual tomb (Fig. 3, 8-10). It is evident that the construction of these compartments, whether realized simultaneously or successively, took place after the accomplishment of the underlying burials. This is evident by the fact that some of the intermediate walls were founded either on the covering slabs or on the filling of the burial pits. After its construction each of these compartments was filled with earth up to the top. Thus, a tumulus was formed above the graves, the soil of which was retained by the surrounding walls. Between the lateral walls that enclose three of these tombs (no 6, 14 & 19) narrow channels are formed, where drinking vessels were found. The fact that all these vessels had their bottoms perforated shows that they had been used for the performance of *choae*. Some of these vessels lied tightly wedged deep into these channels, a fact that clearly indicates that their placement in that position could have taken place only simultaneously with the construction of the enclosures.

The practice of constructing separate enclosures filled with earth above individual graves occurs in the case of two more grave groups in this cemetery. The first group consists of five tombs running alongside the central part of the dig's northern boundary (Fig. 4, gr. no 21, 22, 52, 53 & 54). The second group, which includes two graves (no 39 & 40), lies at the western side of the excavated area. These two graves are also surrounded by a wider quadrangle *peribolos* (E). Although partially preserved, this *peribolos* seems to have been enclosed on all its four sides (fig. 3, 7). Its width and its preserved length are 6,4 and 4,1 m. respectively. Attached to its northern wall lies another small *peribolos* (dimensions: 4,7 x 4,8 m.), also enclosed on its four sides. This encompasses a pair of graves too (no 36 & 37).

Finally, the fifth funerary *peribolos* (C) lies close to the central part of the dig's northern edge and to the north of *peribolos* B. Although certainly II-shaped and about 2,6 m. wide, its precise length and the number of graves it initially encompassed remain unknown, since its western side wall and the greatest part of its main northern wall were destroyed in modern times during the construction of the adjoining draining pie.

The fact that all the above *periboloi* have their main sides facing north as well as that most of the tombs in the cemetery are arranged in parallel rows running from east to west, clearly indicates that not far from the northern edge of the excavated area a road must have existed running parallel to the *periboloi* and the grave courses. This road, which was probably destroyed during the construction of the rail tracks or that of the subsequent draining pie, must have constituted the spine of the cemetery. The desire of the cemetery occupants to ensure a position close to that road seems to have been responsible for a denser arrangement of the two northerner grave rows.

### **Burial practices and Grave typology**

Although both inhumations and cremations are represented, the dead were in their overwhelming majority inhumed. Out of the 54 excavated tombs 50 contained a single inhumation, 3 a single cremation, while 1 tomb (no 13) enclosed two burials, one inhumation and one cremation (Fig. 9-10).

In the case of the inhumations several grave types were used. The most frequent one is that of the pit grave, which comprises 38 samples (Fig. 5-6). About half of them were covered with massive slabs (Fig. 7), 5 with flat or curved ceramic tiles, while the rest of the graves were found uncovered and filled with earth. Three tombs of this type had also their walls and bottoms partly or entirely covered with stucco (no 33, 39 & 49). One variation of the pit grave is the pit-tile grave (Fig. 8-9). In this case, which occurs 5 times in the Ayios Dionysios cemetery, the dead, who lied at the bottom of the burial pit, was covered with a gabled chamber constructed of curved terracotta tiles. In practice this construction functioned as a clay coffin. After the burial the upper part of the pit was filled with soil. Since covering slabs were unnecessary to this type of grave, the presence of a carved *patoura* (namely of a flange running alongside the grave mouth to facilitate the seat of slabs) in the case of two tombs (no 15 & 16), indicates that both had been formerly used as covered pit graves. Another rarer variant of the pit grave is the pit-cist grave (Fig. 11). In this case part of the grave was cut on the solid rock, while the rest of it was formed either by erected stone plaques or by built walls. Three tombs of this type were found (gr. no 2, 20 & 36). In addition, a pair of twin sarcophagoi, made of porous stone, was discovered (Fig. 12). They were covered with monolithic gabled lids.

Most of the above tombs belonged to adults. However, seven evidently or presumably<sup>2</sup> infant and child graves were also found dispersed amongst those of the adults. Two of them were pit graves (no 51 & 53), another one was pit-tile grave (no 16), and a fourth one was tile grave founded on the surface of the solid rock and covered with earth. Three terracotta larnaces were also excavated (fig. 13, gr. no 24, 32 & 35). A common feature of all except for one of these graves is that they were oriented from east to west. The only exception to this rule, tomb no 35 that was oriented from north to south, had to follow a different orientation due to space inadequacy. Contrary to the infant and child graves, the adult' graves were in their entity oriented from north to south, viz. vertically to the main sides of the funerary enclosures. Despite the consistency of the adult graves' orientation, the position of the dead inside them varied, since some of them lied with their heads directed to the north and others to the south. This was the case even in respect of tightly bounded graves, such as the two sarcophagi (no 30 & 31). In fact,

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<sup>2</sup> Only in pit-tile grave no 16 were skeletal remains of a child found, while in the absence of similar evidence from the rest of the graves their attribution to infants or children has been based on their small dimensions. However, this criterion constitutes an indication, not a proof.

it would seem more reasonable to assume that it was only in the case of the infants and children that some symbolic meaning could have been assigned to the orientation of the graves, while the arrangement of the adults' tombs seems to have been determined by the passage a road from their north that would run from east to west.

In the four cremations found several burial processes had been used. In one case the dead was incinerated and buried at the bottom of a pit grave (Fig. 14, gr. no 14), which was enclosed by both an individual and a collective *peribolos*. In two other cases (gr. no 11 & 12), after the dead had been cremated, their ashes were collected in plain hydriae, which were placed inside little square pits (Fig. 15). One of these vases retained its lid that consisted of a lead leaf *in situ*. In the case of tomb no 13 the body was burnt inside a spacious burial pit (Fig. 9-10). After the accomplishment of the incineration its remnants were gathered inside a ceramic ash-urn that was laid at a corner of the same pit. Subsequently, the vase was buried under a heap of ashes, which constituted the pyre remains, while in the end the pit was filled with earth. Sometime later the burial pit was reused and extended to comprise a male's inhumation laid under a tile chamber.

### **Sculptural monuments**

Several fragments of marble *stelae* and lekythoi have been found. The majority of them came from the northern part of the cemetery, where relatively thick layers of soil existed. It has been impossible to establish the exact position, where these monuments initially stood. Among them only one relatively small lekythos, decorated with a *deksiosis* scene, was found in a good state of preservation (Fig. 16). Unfortunately, the rest of the material is very fragmentary. Dragatsis has published seven *stelae*, which have come from the vicinity of our excavated area (Dragatsis 1910: 65-70).

### **Funeral gifts**

In general, the kind and number of grave goods found in the Ayios Dionysios cemetery seems to comply with the image we have from other cemeteries of the Classical times. These items have been usually neither numerous nor particularly precious. The most common find excavated from males' tombs was an iron strigil (found in 17 tombs, fig. 6) often accompanied with a little lekythos. Such lekythoi were found not only inside tombs, but also outside spread throughout the cemetery. Their total number approaches to one hundred (Fig. 17). Other types of vases such as pyxides, little jugs and drinking vessels were also found in some graves (no 2, 10, 20, 25, 42, 46 & 49). Fragments of solid *alabasters* of porous stone have been numerous (fig. 18). They were located either next to graves or inside them, usually above the burial level (gr. no 3, 10, 15, 42, 43, 45, 48 & 52). Iron and bronze nails were also a frequent find (in 17 tombs). They were usually found dispersed around the body, varying in number from one to some tens. A handful of such nails were found folded in a lead curse tablet that came from the filling of grave no 13 (Fig. 19). A pair of curse tablets was also discovered in sarcophagus no 30, put in the palms of the dead, while a series of such tablets was also located outside the graves in several parts of the cemetery (Fig. 20). Nine graves have yielded bronze (gr. no 9, 15, 26, 39, 42, 46 & 49) and silver coins (gr. no 37 & 47), while other funeral gifts that were occasionally found comprise bronze mirrors (gr. no 20, 26, 31 & 49), big *alabasters* of alabaster (Fig. 6 & 11) (gr. no 20, 43, 49 & 52), bronze and iron rings (gr. no 33 & 28 respectively), glass (gr. no 15, 20 & 47) and clay beads (gr. no 9, 26 & 29), iron (gr. no 48 & 49), bronze (gr. no 34) and bone pins (gr. no 33). In tomb no 41 a simple golden earring was also found.

Contrary to the spirit of frugality that governs the majority of the graves in regard to the quantity and quality of their grave goods, some tombs were significantly wealthier (especially tombs no 20 and 49). They all seem to have belonged to women. Tomb no 20 apart from one *alabaster* of alabaster, a bronze mirror, a pyxis and several other items yielded 34 clay disks, decorated with relief heads of facing Athena Parthenos (Fig. 11, 21-2). Most of these disks preserve on their surface remnants of golden leaf. Similar gilded disks decorated with Athena's heads, Gorgon heads or stars have been found in several parts of Greece inside tombs. They are

dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C., while their interpretation as attachments that would have been sewn or glued on the cloth or the shroud of the dead seems plausible. Their number in tomb 20 is surprisingly large. Four similar disks decorated with Gorgon heads were also found in tomb no 9 (Fig. 23), which was unfortunately looted. Finally, tomb no 33 contained few, but delicate items. Distinguished position among them possesses a crystal pendant, decorated with an enigmatic incised dragon.

### Quarry

Immediately to the south of the cemetery, the presence of a series of semicylindrical grooves as well as of several carved quadrangle cavities that spread on the rocky surface of the ground manifests that the site had been used as a rudimentary quarry. The extraction of limestone blocks from this point seems to have been occasional and limited to the production of raw material required for the manufacture of covering slabs for the adjacent pit graves. It is also possible that some of the stone blocks of the funerary *periboloi* were taken from there, although this could have been the case only for the limestone blocks. The initial precise extent of this quarry is unknown, since the southern part of the ground surface was lowered during the construction of the rails at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Chronology

Even though the moveable finds, which come from the cemetery, have only been preliminary studied, the presence of numerous little usually black glazed lekythoi, of a type that occurs in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (Fig. 17) (Sparkes - Talcott 1970, 316, no 1140), combined with the almost absolute absence of unguentaria, indicates that the lifespan of the cemetery must have covered the last few decades of the Classical period. In addition, the presence of the monumental funerary *periboloi*, as well as of the relief marble *stelae* and the lekythoi, shows that the cemetery must predate the legislation of Demetrios of Phaleron (317/6 B. C.), which prohibited the costly demonstration of wealth in the funerals (Garland 1982, 127).

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Evangelos Kroustalis,  
e\_kroustalis@yahoo.gr,  
26<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities.  
Αρισ Τσαραβοπουλος,  
aristsaravopoulos@hotmail.com,  
26<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities.

### Summary of grave features

| Serial No | Grave type   | Burial type       | Grave orientation         | Body orientation | Major finds   | Enclosure type          | Archaeological status | Gender - Age          |
|-----------|--|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1         | pit grave with partially built mouth, uncovered  | inhumation        | N-S                       | N                | 1 iron strigil, 3 nail heads.   | ?                       | undisturbed           | young male            |
| 2         | pit-cist grave, indications of covering slabs (patoura).                                     | inhumation        | N-S                       | ?                | 1 miniature pyxis, 1 fragmentary kantharos, 2 disk-phaped pyxis lids, 1 black glazed clay clot              | collective              | looted                | adult                 |
| 3         | pit grave covered with flat ceramic tiles  | inhumation        | N-S                       | ?                | 1 fragment of solid porous stone <i>alabaster</i> , 1 bronze nail   | no                      | looted                | young male            |
| 4         | pit grave, uncovered   | inhumation        | N-S                       | S                | 4 iron nails  | no                      | disturbed             | adult                 |
| 5         | tile grave   | inhumation        | E-W                       | ?                | 2 murex shells  | no                      | partially disturbed   | infant                |
| 6         | pit – tile grave   | inhumation        | N-S                       | N                | 1 iron strigil, 1 little lekythos, 1 bronze tool  | collective & individual | undisturbed           | young male            |
| 7         | pit grave, uncovered   | inhumation        | N-S                       | N (?)            | 1 bronze tool   | no                      | ?                     | adult                 |
| 8         | pit grave, uncovered   | inhumation        | N-S                       | ?                | –   | no                      | ?                     | adult                 |
| 9         | pit grave, covered with slabs  | inhumation        | N-S                       | S                | 4 gilded clay disks decorated with relief Gorgon heads, 1 bronze coin, 2 clay beads.                        | collective              | looted                | adult                 |
| 10        | pit grave, uncovered   | inhumation        | N-S                       | ?                | 1 fragmentary kantharos, 1 lekythos, 1 little lekythos, 1 fragment of solid porous stone <i>alabaster</i> . | no                      | looted                | adult                 |
| 11        | secondary cremation in an hydria, mouth sealed with a lead sheet.                            |                   | Vertical handle facing S. |                  | –   | ?                       | undisturbed           | adult                 |
| 12        | secondary cremation in an hydria   |                   | Vertical handle facing E  |                  | –   | no                      | slightly disturbed    | adult                 |
| 13        | pit grave with double burial: a) secondary cremation in clay urn, b) tile roofed inhumation. |                   | N-S                       | a) –<br>b) N     | 1 curse tablet encompassing a group of bronze nails, burial b: 1 iron strigil.                              | collective & individual | undisturbed           | a) ?<br>b) adult male |
| 14        | pit grave, uncovered   | primary cremation | N-S                       | N                | 1 perished iron object, above the pit: 1 loom weight  | collective & individual | undisturbed           | adult                 |
| 15        | pit – tile grave, pit in second use.   | inhumation        | N-S                       | ?                | 2 glass beads, 1 bronze coin, 2 fragments of solid porous stone <i>alabasters</i> .                         | collective              | undisturbed           | adult                 |
| 16        | pit – tile grave, pit in second use.   | inhumation        | E-W                       | E                | 1 iron strigil, 1 iron nail   | individual              | undisturbed           | male child            |

|    |   |            |     |   |  |                         |                     |                  |
|----|---|------------|-----|---|--|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 17 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | S | 1 iron strigil, 1 pyxis  | ?                       | undisturbed         | adult male       |
| 18 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | S | –  | ?                       | undisturbed         | adult            |
| 19 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 iron strigil   | collective & individual | undisturbed         | adult male       |
| 20 | pit-cist grave, covered with slabs                  | inhumation | N-S | N | 34 gilded clay disks decorated with relief heads of Athena Parthenos, 1 <i>alabaster</i> of alabaster, 1 bronze disk-shaped mirror, 1 cylindrical lead object, 1 pyxis, 1 conical bead of blue glass et. al. | collective              | undisturbed         | adult female     |
| 21 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 iron strigil, 1 black glazed lamp.   | ?                       | partially disturbed | adult            |
| 22 | pit grave, covered with flat ceramic tiles          | inhumation | N-S | ? | 1 little lekythos  | individual              | undisturbed         | adult            |
| 23 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 iron strigil, 2 little lekythoi, 6 iron nail heads   | ?                       | undisturbed         | young mail       |
| 24 | terracotta larnax                                   | inhumation | E-W | ? | –  | ?                       | undisturbed         | infant           |
| 25 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 iron strigil, 1 little lekythos, 1 cup, 2 little jugs, 1 iron nail.  | individual              |                     | adult            |
| 26 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | S | 1 bronze coin, 1 bronze disk-shaped mirror, group of little clay beads, 1 bronze nail  | ?                       | undisturbed         | adult female (?) |
| 27 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | –  | collective & individual | undisturbed         | adult            |
| 28 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 iron ring, 1 iron strigil  | collective & individual | undisturbed         | adult male       |
| 29 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | ? | 1 little jug   | collective              | looted              | adult            |
| 30 | porous stone sarcophagus with monolithic gabled lid | inhumation | N-S | S | 2 lead curse tablets pierced by bronze nails   | collective              | undisturbed         | adult            |
| 31 | porous stone sarcophagus with monolithic gabled lid | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 pyxis, 1 bronze disk-shaped mirror   | collective              | undisturbed         | adult            |
| 32 | terracotta larnax                                   | inhumation | E-W | ? | –  | collective              | disturbed           | infant           |
| 33 | pit grave, covered with slabs                       | inhumation | N-S | N | 1 crystal ellipsoid pendant decorated with an incised dragon, 1 bronze ring, 1 bone pin  | collective              | undisturbed         | adult female     |

|    |  |            |     |       |   |                         |                 |            |
|----|--|------------|-----|-------|---|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 34 | pit – tile grave   | inhumation | N-S | N     | 1 bronze pin  | collective & individual | undisturbed     | adult      |
| 35 | terracotta larnax  | inhumation | N-S | ?     | –   | collective              | undisturbed     | infant     |
| 36 | pit-cist grave   | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 1 little lekythos   | collective              | disturbed (?)   | adult      |
| 37 | pit grave with partially built mouth, covered with slabs | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 1 silver coin, 1 iron strigil, 6 iron nails   | collective              | disturbed       | adult male |
| 38 | pit grave, covered with slabs                            | inhumation | N-S | S     | 1 iron ring, 17 iron nails  | no                      | undisturbed     | adult      |
| 39 | pit grave with built mouth, covered with 2 gabled slabs  | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 1 bronze coin, 4 iron nails, part of an iron strigil (?), 1 murex shell   | collective & individual | looted          | adult male |
| 40 | pit grave, covered with flat ceramic tiles               | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 1 fragmentary unguentarium, 1 bronze nail, 4 iron nails   | collective & individual | looted          | adult      |
| 41 | pit grave, covered with curved ceramic tiles             | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 1 golden earring, 1 iron nail   | no                      | undisturbed (?) | adult      |
| 42 | pit grave, uncovered                                     | inhumation | N-S | N     | 2 bronze coins, 1 cup, 2 little lekythoi, fragments of stone vases  | collective              | undisturbed (?) | adult      |
| 43 | pit grave, uncovered                                     | inhumation | N-S | N (?) | 2 little lekythoi, 1 <i>alabaster</i> fragment of alabaster, 1 fragment of solid porous stone <i>alabaster</i> .                          | collective              | disturbed       | adult      |
| 44 | pit grave, uncovered                                     | inhumation | N-S | N     | –   | no                      | undisturbed     | adult      |
| 45 | pit grave, uncovered                                     | inhumation | N-S | ?     | 2 fragmentary solid porous stone <i>alabasters</i> , part of an iron strigil  | no                      | disturbed       | adult male |
| 46 | pit grave, covered with slabs                            | inhumation | N-S | N     | 1 pyxis, 1 bronze coin, 1 bronze nail   | collective              | undisturbed     | adult      |
| 47 | pit grave, covered with slabs                            | inhumation | N-S | S     | 1 silver coin, 1 iron strigil, 14 iron nail heads, 1 conical glass bead, 1 little lekythos  | collective              | undisturbed     | adult male |
| 48 | pit grave, covered with slabs                            | inhumation | N-S | S     | 1 iron strigil, 1 iron pin, 22 fragmentary iron nails (mainly heads), 3 fragments of solid porous stone <i>alabasters</i> .               | collective              | undisturbed     | adult male |
| 49 | pit grave, covered with slabs                            | inhumation | N-S | N     | 1 alabaster, 2 bronze coins, 1 iron strigil, 1 bronze disc-shaped mirror, 22 bronze nail heads, 2 iron pins, 1 pyxis, 1 little jug et al. | collective              | undisturbed     | adult male |
| 50 | pit grave, uncovered                                     | inhumation | N-S |       | 1 iron strigil, 1 <i>alabaster</i> fragment of alabaster, 3 iron nail heads.  | collective              | undisturbed     | adult male |



|    |   |            |     |   |   |            |             |                         |
|----|---|------------|-----|---|---|------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 51 | pit grave, uncovered                          | inhumation | E-W | ? | –   | no         | ?           | child<br>(or<br>infant) |
| 52 | pit grave, covered with flat<br>ceramic tiles | inhumation | N-W | ? | 1 <i>alabaster</i> of alabaster, 3 fragments<br>of solid porous stone <i>alabasters</i> , 1<br>fragmentary strigil (?), 1 little<br>lekythos. | individual | disturbed   | ?                       |
| 53 | pit grave, covered with slabs                 | inhumation | E-W | ? | –   | individual | undisturbed | infant                  |
| 54 | pit grave, covered with slabs                 | inhumation | N-W | N | note: excavation still in progress  | individual | undisturbed |                         |



Fig. 1. Aerial photo of the harbor of Piraeus with the locations of the Agios Dionysios cemetery and the Eetionian gate marked (source: Google Earth).

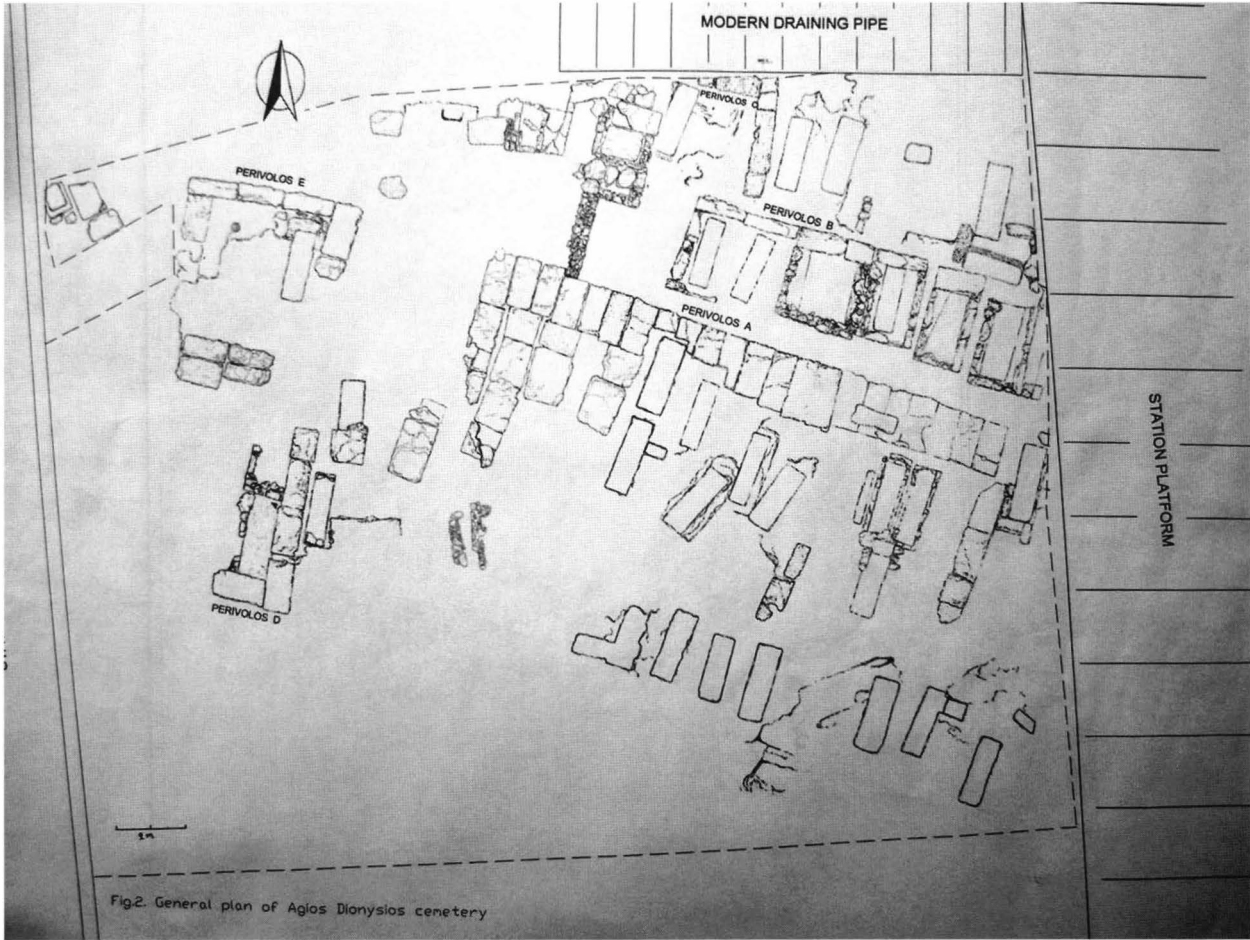


Fig.2. General plan of Agios Dionysios cemetery

Fig. 2. General plan of the excavated area (drawing: Ir. Gkion).



Fig. 3. The eastern half of the excavated area. Aerial photo.



Fig. 4. The western half of the excavated area. View from north.



Fig. 5. Pit grave no 28 with the dead and the grave gifts *in situ*. At the southwestern corner of the burial pit (down to the right) an iron strigil is discerned.



Fig. 6. Pit grave no 49 with the dead and the grave gifts *in situ*. By the feet of the skeleton among others lie: an *alabaster of alabaster*, a disk-shaped bronze mirror, an iron strigil, a little jug and two iron pins.



7. Pit graves no 18 (left) and 26 before the removal of their covering slabs. At their background lies the northern main wall of *peribolos B*, at their right the eastern side wall



8. Pit-tile grave no 6 enclosed in its individual *peribolos*



9. Grave no 13 enclosed in its individual *peribolos*. The western part of the burial pit is occupied by a gabled tile chamber, while by the northern wall of the grave lies an accumulated heap of



10. Grave no 13 with the ash-urn *in situ* in the middle of a heap of ashes.



11. Pit-cist grave no 20 with the dead and the grave gifts *in situ*. Among others are discerned: a disk-shaped mirror (by the right shoulder), a pyxis, an *alabaster* of alabaster and numerous little clay disks similar to those on fig. 22

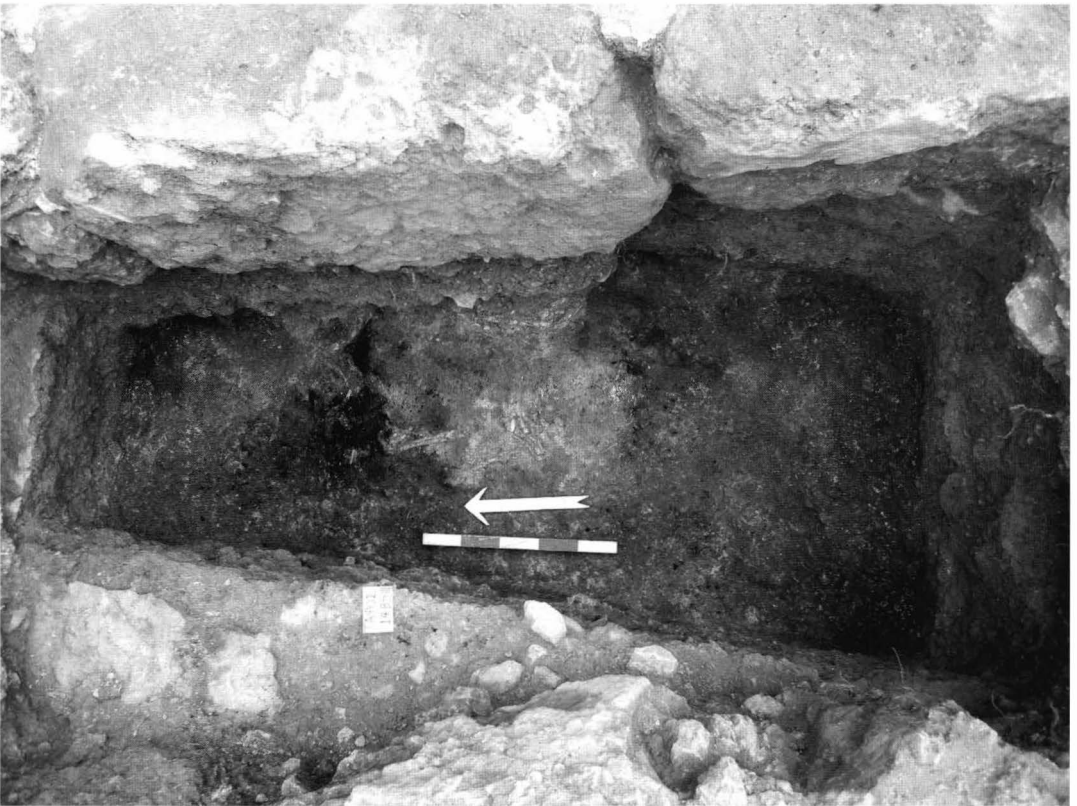


12. The twin porous stone sarcophagi no 30 (left) & 31 and to their left the pit-cist grave no 20 with the dead *in situ*. The fourth grave is pit-cist grave no 2. These four graves occupy the eastern part of *peribolos A*.





13. Grave no 24. It consists of a terracotta larnax that lies in a shallow pit.



14. Cremation grave no 14. The bottom of the pit is covered by a layer of ashes that contains few charcoaled skeletal remains.



15. Grave no11. The ash-urn (hydria) lies *in situ* at the middle of the small burial pit. The vase retains its lead lid folded around its mouth.



16. Marble *lekythos*, probably a *sema* (grave marker) or boundary marker of a *peribolos*



17. A group of little clay lekythoi, 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.



18. A solid porous stone *alabaster*. Abundant vases of this type, destined exclusively for funerary use, were found at the Ayios Dionysios cemetery located next to graves of inside them.



19. Lead curse tablet (*katadesmos*) *in situ* in tomb no 13. The tablet enclosed a group of bronze nails.



20. Lead curse tablet pierced by a bronze nail.



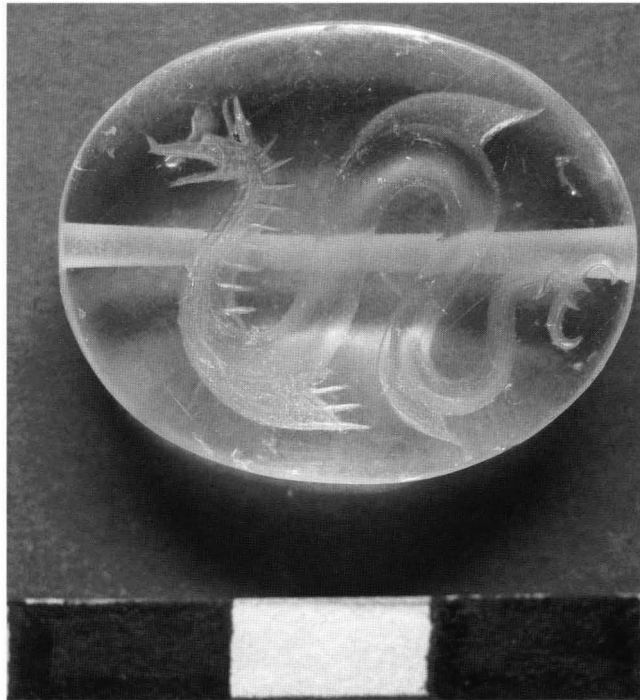
21. Partial view of the bottom of gr. no 20. The (female) dead is surrounded by a lot of little gilded clay disks similar to those illustrated on fig. 22. Above her



22. Some of the 34 in all clay disks found in gr. no 20. They are decorated with relief heads of Athena Parthenos, while most of them preserve on their surface remnants of golden leaf. They were probably sewn or glued on the shroud of the dead.



23. Clay disks with relief Gorgon heads found in gr. no 9. The three smaller disks preserve on their surface remnants of golden leaf. They were of the same use as those of fig. 22.



24. Crystal pendant decorated with an incised dragon. From gr. no 33.