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Cover: Restoration work on the columns of the Pronaos of the Temple of Apollo
at Didyma

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Excavations at the Necropolis of Panormos

This summer, in collaboration with the Miletus Museum, excavations were carried out at a necropolis near Panormos, the ancient harbour of Didyma. The necropolis was first identified by archaeologists from the Didyma excavation team in autumn 2011, after geologists reported a concentration of ancient ceramics in a modern drainage trench.

The first aim of this year's campaign was the examination and documentation of the visible contexts exposed by soil erosion in the profile of the modern trench. Further objectives included the clarification of the extent of the necropolis with the aid of geophysical investigations, and the acquisition, through targeted excavations, of data concerning burial density, burial type and chronology.

Some important observations can already be made about the necropolis of Panormos. First, no uniform or typical burial pattern can be ascertained. Both inhumations and cremations placed either directly into the ground or else into vessels (pithoi, amphorae, hydriai) were uncovered. Occasionally, one or more miniature vessels were included as grave goods. In addition, coarse wares such as 'cooking pots' seem to have figured regularly among the grave inventories.

Concerning the origin, age and state of health of the buried individuals, more information is expected from planned anthropological investigations and strontium isotope analyses. The composition of the necropolis population is of particular interest given the situation of the necropolis, namely in the immediate vicinity of the harbour that formed the main access point to the internationally important sanctuary of Didyma.

Preliminary study of the pottery indicates that the burials date to between the mid-7th and late-6th centuries BC. Locally-produced vessels were found alongside a wide range of imports from Etruria, Corinth and Athens as well as Egypt and Cyprus.

Anja Slawisch – Mehmet Bilici

