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## THE GRAVESTONE OF METRODOROS FROM THE EXCAVATIONS OF THE SOUTHERN SUBURB OF CHERSONESOS TAURICA\*

In the course of excavating the Southern Suburb of Chersonesos Taurica in February 2022, an extremely interesting work of ancient sculpture and epigraphy was discovered – the gravestone of Metrodoros, son of Apollonides (fig. 1). This find is remarkable in many respects, above all because marble sculptures in a good state of preservation are not encountered frequently during archaeological explorations of Chersonesos and the other ancient city colonies of the Northern Black Sea Region. Besides that, it is the gravestone of a still quite young boy, while the overwhelming majority of known Chersonesean steles represent adolescent males, adults, and, most often, elderly people. The depiction of the deceased displays individualized features. Its style follows that of Roman portraiture customary in the metropolis. Finally, the epigraph on the stone has survived in its entirety, and a reading of it provides information not only about the dead youngster, but also sheds light on the technology used to make lapidary inscriptions in the Northern Black Sea region.

The gravestone takes the form of a slab containing a deep niche with an inscription below it. The central part with the relief and lettering has survived completely, together with a small fragment of the projecting lug that was used to mount the stone into its base. The upper part of the monument, probably made in the form of a pediment, has been lost, but on the upper edge of the slab there are two holes containing remnants of metal fastenings (fig. 2).<sup>1</sup> The architectural design (pediment, niche, and base) expresses in simplified form the idea of a funerary temple in which the deceased dwells forever. Inside the temple, within the deep niche, there is a high-relief depiction of the boy standing up, dressed in a chiton

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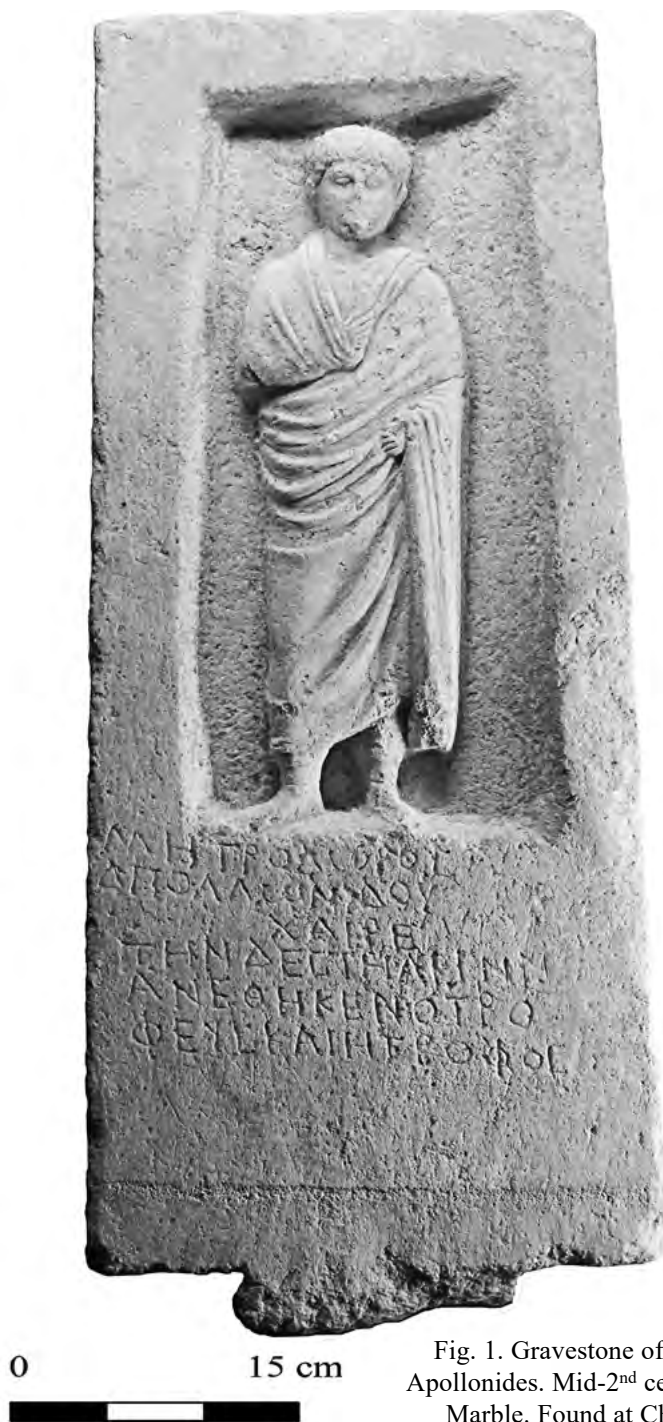


Fig. 1. Gravestone of Metrodoros, son of Apollonides. Mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, local work. Marble. Found at Chersonesos in 2022

and himation, with soft boots on his feet. The figure is presented in an entirely frontal view, with the traditional pose that is sometimes termed the “Aeschines pose”: the left hand holding up the edge of the himation; the right arm bent at the elbow, held in front of the chest, wrapped in the himation, which descends in even folds.

Funerary steles of this sort, with a depiction of one or two standing figures entirely enveloped in a long himation, were in exceptionally wide use in the ancient cities on the northern, western, and southern shores of the Black Sea. Along with the funerary repast, this is undoubtedly the most common category in the repertoire of grave monuments. Following Margarete Bieber, researchers trace the sources of the composition back to the art of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, to a statue of the orator Aeschines. The same formula is repeated in the figure of a youth from Eretria.<sup>2</sup> In the Hellenistic era, the statuary motif was adapted for relief gravestones and became very popular in the Roman period, during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.<sup>3</sup>

The basic elements of the depiction – the pose, composition, and clothing – are repeated, but the figures do differ in their details. The deceased’s right arm may be shown lowered, rather than across the chest. Sometimes the hand holds some attribute. Men will have a purse or a scroll. A scroll is also an attribute of youths and adolescents. Small children have a ball or a bird, and a dog might be sitting by their feet. Sometimes the fingers of the right hand or both hands are arranged in a ritual gesture, the thumb and next two fingers extended, the last two bent towards the palm. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, this was the way that people in various parts of the Mediterranean basin depicted the “hand of Sabazios” – a ritual gesture symbolizing salvation in the afterlife.<sup>4</sup>

The iconography of a standing draped figure is very familiar on Chersonesean gravestones. The earliest example of the type dates from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, the latest known from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD: the State Museum-Preserve “Tauric Chersonese”, inv. nos 4550,<sup>5</sup> 4552,<sup>6</sup> 16109,<sup>7</sup> 3669,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Bieber 1959, 359; for the Aeschines type see also Ridgway 1990, 226, pl. 109, Zanker 45–49, fig. 26; for the Youth from Eretria, see Ridgway 1990, 226.

<sup>3</sup> See Pfuhl–Möbius 1977.

<sup>4</sup> *Antichnaia skul’ptura Khersonesa* 1976 [Античная скульптура Херсонеса], 98, cat. no. 310; for gravestones with standing figure dressed in long himation in Chersonesos, see also pp. 395 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 304.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 305.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 306.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 309.

and 15400.<sup>9</sup> Characteristics of the pose and the way the drapery is treated put the relief of Metrodoros close to later works dating from the first half and middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century: State Hermitage, inv. no. X.1793.1 – the gravestone of Theagenes and Makaria,<sup>10</sup> the State Museum-Preserve “Tauric Chersonese”, inv. no. 3670 – the gravestone of Apollonides, son of Menandros.<sup>11</sup> In general, the presentation of this subject on Chersonesean steles follows the pattern customary for those found in Attica and Asia Minor, but with less diversity in the details.<sup>12</sup> In the case of the relief showing Metrodoros, for example, there is no depiction of attributes or symbolic gestures.

Considering the popularity of the motif of a standing figure dressed in a long himation, it is strange to note that it still has no single agreed interpretation in scholarly literature. Paul Zanker suggested that the himation (especially in combination with a scroll) is testimony to the intellectual pursuits of the deceased.<sup>13</sup> It is, however, completely obvious that not only philosophers or orators were depicted in such attire. Another hypothesis, advanced by Grizelda McClelland, is that the long himation points to “education”, more specifically, that on the gravestones of youths it denotes “a student”.<sup>14</sup> We would, however, add to these arguments the observation that men, women, and children of various ages were depicted in a cloak-like garment completely concealing the body, and so, in our opinion, such attire did not convey the occupation or profession, but rather the social status of the deceased. Roland Ralf Smith reached the same conclusion in a study of the portrait statues set up in the Greek cities of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. He deduces that in honorary sculpture, the aristocracy living in those places unambiguously preferred the himation to the toga, demonstrating their devotion to Greek tradition.<sup>15</sup> The cloak completely covering the body is seen by Christopher Hallett as a garment that accords with the code of correct behaviour for a citizen.<sup>16</sup> So, we should conclude that the long himation on relief gravestones is a kind of “social uniform” that, irrespective of age or gender, indicates that the deceased belonged to the society of some ancient polis, in the present case, to the city of Chersonesos.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 310.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 313.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 314.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., Piraeus, Archaeological Museum 222, from Athens.

<sup>13</sup> Zanker 1995, 83–89; Dillon 2006, 126.

<sup>14</sup> McClelland 2013, 122; Grandjouan 1961, 54, pl. 8, no. 390.

<sup>15</sup> Smith 1998, 64.

<sup>16</sup> Hallett 1998, 82 n. 54

As Grizelda McClelland showed in her studies of the gravestones of children in Attica, the attributes given to the dead correspond to various stages in the process of growing up that held significance not only for the children themselves or their parents. These stages were marked by public events and city festivals. Analysing the iconography and written sources (Poll. *Onom.* 2. 4, Aristoph. Byz. fr. 90 Slater), she identifies three age categories: infant and toddler (1–3 years old), prepubescent (4–12) and youth and ephebe (13–20). Metrodoros of Chersonesos belonged to the third category that preceded a young man becoming a full member of society and acquiring the rights of a citizen. In Athens, when a youth reached the age of 18, he would be registered in the family *demos*. It has been suggested that gravestones of this type depict the actual act of the festive ceremony by which a young person entered into adult life, but transferred to a funerary context. In other words, the “coming of age” of a son who died before his time takes place not in the real world, but in the afterlife. The information from written sources about the public and religious rituals that male children underwent relate to Athens in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. There is, however, every reason to suppose that those rituals persisted into the Roman period as well, especially on the periphery where people followed the example of Athens. Although today there is a lack of data from written sources on customs of this sort among the Chersoneseans and on the significance of the status of the *κουρσεῖον*, the iconography of the gravestones does attest to the preservation of polis traditions in the society and families of Roman-era Chersonesos too.

In the Roman period, craftsmen used standard prefabricated “work-pieces” – half-finished monuments that already had reliefs – to produce gravestones, while the inscriptions and the heads were created for each individual case. For this purpose, separately prepared marble insets were sometimes placed in niches cut into limestone slabs. There are known instances in which the inscription and the image on a stone contradict one another, something that can apparently be put down to the workshop having only a certain “blank” available.<sup>17</sup> In the relief of Metrodoros, the difference in style between the head and the figure is immediately striking. Evidently two craftsmen worked on the relief, one of whom prepared the slab and carved the figure in the niche, while the other sculpted the portrait head and possibly also made the inscription, as will be shown below. While the boy’s figure and the drapery of the clothing were worked in a highly schematic manner, the head stands out for its

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<sup>17</sup> McClelland 2013, 78.

three-dimensional treatment and the thorough modelling of the surface (fig. 3). The youngster has a rather elongated face with deep, well-worked eye sockets and rounded, childishly plump cheeks. The close-set eyes and protruding cheekbones invest the face with individuality. The coiffure is characteristic of Trajan's reign: the hair is separated into symmetrically even strands, while a neat fringe forms a semi-circular frame around the forehead. Such a hairstyle belongs to a type seen in what are termed the "early portraits" of Trajan (AD 100–115).<sup>18</sup> Bearing in mind that a style prevailing in the metropolis would have spread to the art of the city-colonies with some lag in time, the relief can be dated to the second quarter or middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

Sculptural likenesses on funerary steles made in the style of Roman portraits are not unique. They are known on gravestones from other centres of the ancient world in Roman times.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the relatively large number of portraits on the reliefs destined to be set up on graves can be considered a distinctive feature of Chersonesos. Well-known examples include the steles of Aurelius Victor,<sup>20</sup> Theagenes and Makaria,<sup>21</sup> as well as others.<sup>22</sup> The Chersonesean sculptures precisely follow the trends of Roman portraiture in the treatment of the hair and facial features, while in Bosphoran reliefs a local style and "Bosphoran" type predominate.<sup>23</sup>

This prompts the question: why did the Chersonesean craftsmen choose the Roman type of portrait, rather than a local or more generalized one? The style of a gravestone is a statement of this or that position. It is undoubtedly connected with the attitude of whoever commissions it. Among the various alternatives for grave monuments, the parents of the dead child selected those that most reflected their own values. It has been argued<sup>24</sup> that imitating imported Roman prototypes was a means with which members of the urban elite emphasized their loyalty to Rome. Such funerary reliefs were produced by local craftsmen, but under the influence of models from Asia Minor or the western shores of the Black Sea.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Fittschen–Zanker 1985, 39–84.

<sup>19</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 6692; Conze 1922, no. 206; Mühsam 1952, 57, 85, 90, 96, 107, pl. 17 no. 4 (Late Antonine); Walters 1988, 47, 50, 64, pl. 21 (Trajanic); Mook 1998, no. 495 (Late Hadrianic or Antonine).

<sup>20</sup> *Antichnaia skul'ptura Khersonesa* 1976, cat. no. 393.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 313.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. no. 314.

<sup>23</sup> See Kreuz 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Ivanova 1941 [А. П. Иванова, "Херсонесские надгробия с портретными изображениями", *Советская археология*], 120; Kadееv 1981 [В. Н. Кадеев, *Херсонес Таврический в первые века нашей эры*], 110, 136.

<sup>25</sup> Kadееv 1981, 179.



Fig. 2. The upper edge of the stone with sockets for metal fastenings



Fig. 3. Detail of the relief: the portrait head



Fig. 4. Detail of the relief: the arms, hands, and folds of the himation



Fig. 5. Detail of the relief: the lower part of the relief with the boots



We should note that this style was prevalent everywhere in the art of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, in all the ancient centres of the Mediterranean basin and the East that formed part of the Roman Empire, including the remotest regions,<sup>26</sup> becoming a parallel of sorts to Koine Greek. Above all, though, such steles were produced during the Roman period in Attica, Amisos, Sinope, Apollonia, and the cities of western and central Anatolia. It was a cosmopolitan style that cannot be regarded as typically Roman. In the Roman tradition, particular attention was paid to the head, but it is Greek forms that make up the basis of the iconography of the draped standing figure on the gravestone.

Judging by a number of features, such as the incorrect proportions of the arms and hands or the flattening of the drapery, the relief should be considered a fairly good piece of work by a local sculptor active in Chersonesos (figs. 4, 5). The material from which the gravestone was carved is coarse-grained marble. The dimensions of the slab are standard for smaller Chersonesean gravestones (height: 63.5 cm without the lug; width: 28.5 cm). Despite the thinness of the stone (7.0–7.5 cm), the sculptor did manage to cut into the marble to a considerable depth and to carve out the niche in such a way as to give the relief as much volume as possible while dealing with a stone of this size. The marble has been removed particularly deeply around the head, which stands out strongly from its background. Such techniques indicate that the craftsman had well-developed skills in working with marble. Evidently, although marble was an imported material for Chersonesos, the local sculptor who carved the boy's gravestone did not lack practice.

Examination of the surface of the relief produces a number of interesting observations. The boy's face and drapery show traces of the sculpture having been reworked. The contours of the eyes were gone over again intensively with a large tool. The boy's hair shows indications that a pointed chisel was used over the neat locks (fig. 3). Most probably, the additional work was occasioned by the need to improve the relief's appearance because it had suffered damage. In any case, the tool marks listed above date from a later time than when the relief depiction of the boy was created, as they were made on top of the original surface. The lines of the eyes have been drawn fairly crudely, even primitively, by a less-skilled hand. The hatching on the hair was done sloppily. Anyway, it is evident that people worked on the relief on at least two separate occasions.

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<sup>26</sup> In the ancient cities of Cilicia, for example. See Lafli 2017, 145–180, fig. 9 no. 3, Museum of Alanya; Temür 2018, cat. 4, 5, 9, Sinop Museum.

A six-line inscription is carved beneath the relief (fig. 6). The height of the letters is 1.0–1.5 cm, *phi* – 2.3 cm, *theta* and *omicron* – 1.0–1.2 cm.

Μητρόδωρος  
 Απολλωνίδου,  
     χαῖρε.  
 Τὴν δὲ στήλην<ν>  
 ἀνέθηκεν ὁ τρο-                      5  
 φεὺς καὶ ἡ τροφός.

Metrodoros, (son) of Apollonides, farewell. The tutor and the wet nurse set up this stele.

The inscription is carelessly carved; near the left edge of the plate the lines are warped, the letters are positioned at different levels. The first two lines begin immediately near the edge of the plate and, moreover, their first letters are placed above the ends of the lines. Lines 4 and 5 begin with a slight indentation and with “curvatures” in the middle section of the lines; their beginnings are not level with each other. In στήλην in the end of the fourth line, the carver cut a second letter *nu* by error.

Many letters have short triangular thickenings at the ends of the hastae. The *alpha* is fairly wide, with a straight horizontal hasta; the end of the right lateral line of the *delta* is projected upwards beyond the intersection with the left line; the *epsilon* is rather narrow with horizontal bars of approximately equal length; the *theta* and *omicron* are of different sizes and smaller than the other letters of the line. The *kappa* has broadly extended oblique hastae; the *mu* is wide with the ends of the oblique hastae at the same level as the lateral ones; in most cases, the oblique hasta of the *nu* does not reach the lower end of the right vertical hasta; the edges of the horizontal hasta of the *pi* extend slightly beyond the vertical ones; the *sigma* has a rectangular form; the *ypsilon* is written in the form of a vertical stroke slightly inclining to the right, similarly to a Russian “Y”; the vertical hasta of the *phi* projects beyond the width of the line and is inclined to the left; and the *omega* is cursive.

Certain palaeographic features of the inscription have parallels in the monuments of the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, e.g. in the proxeny decree of Cornelius Pudendus, which I. A. Makarov dates close to the third quarter of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD,<sup>27</sup> with the right hastae of the *alpha*, *delta*, and *lambda* occasionally projecting beyond the intersection with the left hasta.

<sup>27</sup> IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 356 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.14.html>).



Fig. 6. The epitaph of Metrodoros son of Apollonides

In addition to these palaeographic features, there is the use of cursive forms of *epsilon*, *sigma*, and *omega* in the decree in honour of the citizen of Sinope Gaius Valerius [--] of AD 106–115.<sup>28</sup> These letters have the same form in the proxeny inscription of a Herakleian citizen Dia[--], son of Demetrios, AD 129/130, where, in addition, the *ypsilon* sometimes has a form resembling the Russian “Y”.<sup>29</sup> In the inscription on the pedestal of the statue of Ariston, son of Attinas, AD 138, there is a *mu* close to a cursive type, with the ends of slightly curved oblique hastae at the same level as the lateral ones.<sup>30</sup>

The rectangular *sigma* appears on monuments dated to the period beginning from the middle to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, e.g. in the proxeny of the Amastrian P. (Ser?)vilius,<sup>31</sup> as well as in inscriptions of a private character dated to a wide range of the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the combination of rectangular *epsilon* and *sigma* with a cursive *omega*, where the letters have a more elongated form, can be found in a correspondence concerning the prostitution tax, which is usually dated to either 185/186 or to 222–235.<sup>33</sup>

Generally, considering the carelessness of the carver and the private character of the inscription, the type of the epitaph of Metrodoros is datable to the second or third quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

The second phrase of the epitaph may seem a trochaic tetrameter (with a prosodic mistake in the third foot), but this similarity to a poetic inscription is rather accidental.

Directly under the epitaph of Metrodoros, three lines of another inscription are discernible, carved in thin and rather shallow lines (fig. 7). Their text and the spacing of the words in the lines are absolutely identical to the last three lines of the main inscription (Τὴν δὲ στήλην / ἀνέθηκεν ὁ τρο/φεὺς καὶ ἡ τροφός). The height of the letters is 1.9–2.0 cm in the first line, 1.5 cm in the second and third lines. Considering that particular letters of this “lower” inscription are discernible also above (*mu* and *alpha* beneath it at the left edge of the relief at the level of the second and fourth lines and the *alpha* between the fourth and fifth lines of the

<sup>28</sup> SEG 48. 999 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.19.html>).

<sup>29</sup> IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 359 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.22.html>).

<sup>30</sup> IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 423 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.160.html>).

<sup>31</sup> IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 381, Makarov 2006 [И. А. Макаров, “Новые надписи из Херсонеса Таврического”], 90 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.17.html>).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. e.g. <https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.363.html>; *НЭПХ I* [Э. И. Соломоник, *Новые эпиграфические памятники Херсонеса*], 19 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.130.html>); IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 445 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.145.html>); IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 446 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.146.html>); IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 457 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.372.html>).

<sup>33</sup> IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 404 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.107.html>), SEG 57. 699.

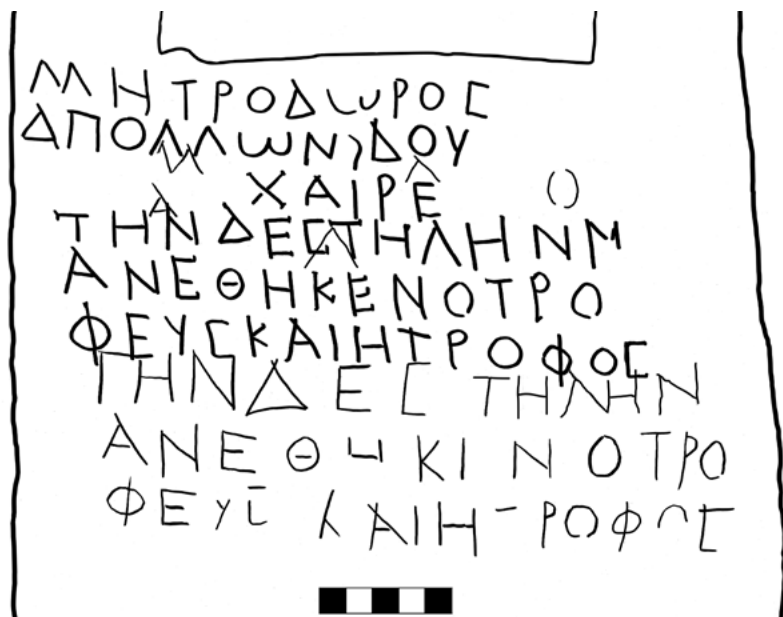


Fig. 7. The drawing of two inscriptions on the gravestone of Metrodoros son of Apollonides

main inscription), the name, the patronymic, and the word *χαῖρε* were positioned immediately under the relief and, moreover, the first letters of the name and patronymic were close to the left edge of the relief, while *XAIPE* was placed in the middle part of the line. In the last three lines of the “lower” inscription, the letters are distributed throughout the entire width of the plate with a slight indentation on the left and right.

The palaeographic features of the “lower” writing do not differ from those of the main inscription above them, but they were surely executed by the hand of an expert. Judging by the fact that the letters of the upper inscription overlap the “lower” one, it may be suggested that the text was designed by a professional carver (possibly one of the sculptors who cut the relief), and thus we see a so-called *ordinatio* – i.e. the primary layout of the plate intended for the grave stele.<sup>34</sup> In order to correctly position the inscription and to count the number of the letters in the lines, a small pointed chisel, coal, or paint were used to draw guidelines on the plate on which its text was carved. The letters of the final text were carved either directly over this marking or the latter was polished away from

<sup>34</sup> Mallon 1953, 145–160; Susini 1973, 9–12, 31–34; Grasby 2002, 152–156.

the surface of the block after finishing the execution of the inscription.<sup>35</sup> The guidelines were probably already traced during the preliminary preparation of the stone block at the sculptor's workshop where the relief was cut and the place for the inscription was prepared. This is suggested by the gravestones on which "blank" lines drawn with a thin chisel are preserved under the inscription.<sup>36</sup>

In the Black Sea region, Greek steles with such guidelines are fairly numerous, but this may be the first finding of a preserved layout for the text of an inscription. It remains unclear why the carver of the epitaph of Metrodoros did not employ it.

Both the name and the patronymic of Metrodoros, son of Apollonides, belong to the group of theophoric names, and like the other derivatives from similar stems, have already been attested in Chersonesos. Μητρόδωρος is among the names rooted in the cult of the Mother of Gods Kybele. Although her cult was not an official one during any periods of the lifetime of Chersonesos, nevertheless the worship of this goddess is traceable until the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.<sup>37</sup> The evidence of the worship of Kybele in Chersonesos includes the finds of the graffiti MAT, MA, and M from the mid-4<sup>th</sup> to the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC,<sup>38</sup> Μάτ(ηρ) θ(εῶν) on the wall of the red-figure krater of the late 5<sup>th</sup> to early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC,<sup>39</sup> and terracottas with a representation of Kybele of various statuary types dated to the period from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Among these, notable is the representation of an enthroned Kybele from the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and a figure from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC in a *corona muralis*.<sup>40</sup> The cult of this goddess took on special importance in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC that was related to her role as the Soteira.

<sup>35</sup> See the examples of the preserved layout of a text in Edmondson 2015, 119 n. 27. On the primary layout of inscriptions see also Strabo 14. 1. 41.

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Bosporan steles with reliefs: *CIRB-Album* 88 (Pantikapaion, first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), 142, 528 (Pantikapaion, 1<sup>st</sup> century AD), 695 (Pantikapaion, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).

<sup>37</sup> Bondarenko 2003 [М. Е. Бондаренко, *Пантеон Херсонеса Таврического*], 103–105.

<sup>38</sup> Solomonik 1976 [Э. И. Соломоник, "Некоторые группы граффити из античного Херсонеса"], 128–131; Solomonik 1978a [*Граффити античного Херсонеса*], nos 883, 1170, 1172–1175, 1178–1197, 1199–1201; Solomonik 1984 [*Граффити с хоры Херсонеса*], nos 10, 129, 166, 209, 210, 238, 425.

<sup>39</sup> Solomonik 1976, 129 fig. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Shevchenko 2005 [А. В. Шевченко, "Культ Кибелы в античном Херсонесе", *Античная древность в средние века*] 14–18; Shevchenko 2016 [*Терракоты античного Херсонеса и его ближней сельской округи*], 22–27 nos. 37–67.

The Doric form of this name – Μαρδόωρος – is found in epitaphs of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>41</sup> The activities of the astynomos Μαρδόωρος ὁ Λυσίππου are dated to the 220s BC.<sup>42</sup> The form of Μητρόδωρος appears in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD on the gravestone of the first archon Gazourios, son of Metrodoros,<sup>43</sup> and afterwards it is found beginning with the end of the 120s AD throughout the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

The personal name Μητρόδωρος belonged to πρόδικος Μητρόδωρος Διοσκουρίδου, who is known from the decree in the honour of the Herakleian resident Dia[--] of 129/130 AD,<sup>44</sup> and to one of the magistrates from the list of “those who applied their seals” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>45</sup> From the same time, a fragmentary epitaph of the daughter of a certain Metrodoros is dated.<sup>46</sup>

The names derived from the name of Apollo, who occupied an important place in the pantheon of Chersonesos, are found in Chersonesean inscriptions since the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Solomonik 1978b [Э. И. Соломоник, “Несколько новых надписей херсонесского музея”], 66 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.272.html>), *SEG* 28. 635; Makarov–Samoylenko 2013 [И. А. Макаров, В. Г. Самойленко, “Эпиграфические находки из куртины 19 оборонительных сооружений Херсонеса Таврического”], 66, no. 2 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.271.html>).

<sup>42</sup> Kats 2007 [В. И. Кац, *Греческие керамические клейма эпохи классики и эллинизма (опыт комплексного изучения)*], 442.

<sup>43</sup> *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 471 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.336-ru.html>). The name Γαζούριος Μητρόδωρου is found also in the epitaph of Gazourios and Daiskos, the sons of Metrodoros of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (Kadeev 1985 [В. И. Кадеев, “Новый надгробный памятник II в. н. э. из Херсонеса”], 66 [*SEG* 35. 859], cf. <https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.337-ru.html>). Apparently, these inscriptions are concerned with a grandfather and his grandson. This second Gazourios is mentioned among “those who applied their seals” in the decree dating to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (*НЭПХ* II [Э. И. Соломоник, *Новые эпиграфические памятники Херсонеса. Лapidарные надписи*], 112 [<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.90-ru.html>]). One of them – the grandfather or the grandson – appears in the dedication to the Parthenos by [--] son of Zethos on behalf of Gazourios, son of Metrodoros (*IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 412 [<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.117-ru.html>]). Cf. also *LGPN* IV s.v. Μητρόδωρος.

<sup>44</sup> *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 359 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.22.html>), see also <https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.85-ru.html>.

<sup>45</sup> *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 389, p. 594 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.87-ru.html>).

<sup>46</sup> *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 458 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.380-ru.html>).

<sup>47</sup> *LGPN* IV s.v. Among the theophoric names derived from *Apollo* (totally over 40 cases of the use of them are known), there have been encountered in Chersonesos Ἀπολλᾶς, Ἀπολλοδώρα, Ἀπολλόδωρος, Ἀπολλοφάνης, Ἀπολλωνία, Ἀπολλωνίδας, Ἀπολλωνίδης, Ἀπολλώνιος; the latter name is found more frequently than all the other ones put together.

The cult of Apollo appears evidently simultaneously with the foundation of the city. Judging by the presence of attributes of Apollo on coins beginning from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, including the monetary issue of 130–120 BC with the head of Apollo in a wreath and a tripod on the reverse, in the 4<sup>th</sup> to early 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, his cult had an official character.<sup>48</sup> The graffiti ΑΠ, ΑΠΟ, ΑΠΟΛ, ΑΑ, ΑΑΛΑ, and the like (some of these graffiti undoubtedly are abbreviations of theophoric names) bear evidence that Apollo was worshiped both separately from and together with Artemis and Latona.<sup>49</sup> The close connections of the Chersonesean polis with the largest pan-Hellenic centres of the worship of Apollo – Delos and Delphi – is confirmed by lapidary inscriptions of the Hellenistic epoch: on the donation of silver phials by Chersonesean residents to the Delian temple of Apollo<sup>50</sup> and on the decree granting the right of promanteia and proxenia to the ambassadors of Chersonesos.<sup>51</sup> The latter decree states that two Chersonesean ambassadors donated 100 head of cattle to the Delphian sanctuary of Apollo and twelve head to Athena. On Delos, there was even a special feast, Χερσονήσια.<sup>52</sup> Several Delian<sup>53</sup> and Delphian<sup>54</sup> inscriptions mentioning Chersonesites are dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC.

Afterwards, the worship of Apollo ceases to be a state cult, but finds of certain graffiti with his name suggest that this god continued to be worshipped even in the first centuries AD.<sup>55</sup>

The vocative Ἀπολλωνίδα is recorded in Chersonesos in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD on the gravestone of Apollonides, son of Menandros,<sup>56</sup> and the other examples (all in the form of the genitive – Ἀπολλωνίδου) are dated from the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Shevchenko 1998 [А. В. Шевченко, “Кульτ Аполлона в Херсонесе”, *Археология*], 99–105; Bondarenko 2003, 75.

<sup>49</sup> Solomonik 1978a, nos. 86–106, 108, 206, 242–282, 288–294, 1695; Solomonik 1984, nos. 185, 454; Bondarenko 2003, 74.

<sup>50</sup> Delos, *IG* XI. 2. 164 B<sub>6</sub> (276 BC); *IG* XI. 2. 203 B<sub>26</sub> (269 BC); *ID* 313 A<sub>74</sub> (235/234 BC).

<sup>51</sup> Delphi, *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 604 (192 BC).

<sup>52</sup> Delos, *ID* 328<sub>9-12</sub> (250–166 BC); 354<sub>23</sub> (218 BC); 366 A<sub>131-132</sub> (207 BC).

<sup>53</sup> Delos, *IG* XI. 4. 844 (early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC).

<sup>54</sup> Delphi, *FD* III. 5. 4<sub>9-10</sub> (362–360 BC); *FD* III. 207<sub>4</sub> (252/251 BC); *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 584<sub>20</sub> (195/194 BC).

<sup>55</sup> Bondarenko 2003, 77.

<sup>56</sup> *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 464 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.335-ru.html>).

<sup>57</sup> *ΗΕΠΧ* I 184 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.333-ru.html>); *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 359<sub>28, 31</sub> (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.22.html>); *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 357<sub>25</sub> (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.24-ru.html>); *ΗΕΠΧ* II 113 (<https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.85-ru.html>).



Χαῖρε or χαίρετε appeared on Chersonesean epitaphs at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and was used until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

An indication of who exactly installed the grave stele is encountered in prosaic epitaphs in those cases where the ordinary course of events was disturbed or if it was necessary to stress that the gravestone was mounted by a specific individual. There are two formulae for epitaphs of this kind: the inscription states that *a certain person built the monument to someone*, or, as in the case of the epitaph of Metrodoros, it is composed of two parts – firstly the name and patronymic of the deceased is communicated, sometimes with an indication of his or her years of life, and then the name is given of the specific individual who installed the stele.<sup>58</sup> In addition to different prefixed and non-prefixed derivatives from τίθημι,<sup>59</sup> forms of the verb ἵστημι were also used in Chersonesos to denote operations for installation of steles.<sup>60</sup>

Ὁ τροφεύς can have the meaning of either a *tutor* in the role of a *mentor*, or a *tutor* who is bringing up a child as his *foster father*. The word is employed in the first variant, e.g., by Plutarch. Writing about the education of Alexander of Macedon, he notes that the latter was tutored by numerous τροφεῖς καὶ παιδαγωγοὶ καὶ διδάσκαλοι, while Leonidas heading them was called τροφεὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ καθηγητής (Plut. *Alex.* 5; cf. also Soph. *Phil.* 343–344; Eur. *El.* 16). Krateros, son of Krateros, ἀρχίατρος of Antiochos VII Euergetes, was also such a tutor (τροφεύς) of the king's son Antiochos IX Philopator.<sup>61</sup> In Black Sea inscriptions, the word ὁ τροφεύς may have been recorded only once, and exactly in this meaning in the honorary decree of [--], son of Mathianos, from Tanais of AD 93–123.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>58</sup> The epitaph of the ναύκληρος Tertius Rufus informs us: τὴν δὲ στήλην ἐπεμψαν οἱ συγγενεῖς (CIRB 732, Pantikapaion, first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD).

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. the gravestone of the resident of Amastris Helis, son of Helis (IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 542 [https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.417-ru.html]), Chersonesos, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD: Ἦλις Ἡλίτα Ἀμαστριανὸς ἔθηκα τὸν βωμὸν καὶ τὴν ὀστοθήκην ἐμαυτῷ καὶ τῇ γυνεὶ μου.

<sup>60</sup> Thus a woman of Amastris named Chresima ἀνέστησεν (τὴν στήλην) for her husband (Chersonesos, AD 108/9, IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 543 [https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.416-ru.html]), while an inscription on the ossuary of M[--] Tyche informs us that her heirs and emancipated slaves *fecerunt*/[κατέστησα]ν it (Chersonesos, 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 508 [https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.415-ru.html]). Cf. also a fragmentary gravestone of the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD: τὸν [τύμβον] ? ἀνέστησεν (Chersonesos, IOSPE I<sup>2</sup> 486 [https://iospe.kcl.ac.uk/3.377-ru.html]).

<sup>61</sup> Delos, 129–117 BC, OGI 256, ID 1547; Nissen 2009, 107.

<sup>62</sup> ἐ[πειδὴ ὁ δεῖνα] Μαθιανου γεννηθεὶς ὁ π[αῖς(?) γονέων] καὶ τροφέ[ων .....] – “since [--], son of Mathianos, being [a child ? created by the parents] and tutors” – Arsenyeva–Byotger–Vinogradov 1996 [Т. М. Арсеньева, Б. Бётгер, Ю. Г. Виноградов, “Новые исследования в Танаисе”], 69–71; SEG 45. 1023.

To designate a *tutor* who became a *foster father*, the term ὁ τροφεύς is employed, e.g., in “Phoenissae” by Euripides: the Corinthian king Polybos who brought up Oidipous is so designated.<sup>63</sup>

Considering that in the epitaph of Metrodoros no names are specified either for ὁ τροφεύς or for ἡ τροφός, perhaps the meaning of a *mentor* or a *tutor* seems the more preferable of the two possible variants. If we were dealing with a *foster father* in the proper sense of this word, then we could expect the use of an expression, e.g., “ὁ δεῖνα τοῦ δέϊνος καθ’ υἱοθεσίαν δὲ τοῦ δέϊνος”, with an indication of the name of the foster father or some other similar formula.

Thus, the gravestone of the adolescent Metrodoros, son of Apollonides, was set up by his household – the tutor and the wet nurse. It remains only to guess why this was not done by his parents or relatives. Possibly, an answer to this question would allow us to explain why the relief was remade and why the inscription was executed so carelessly and unprofessionally.

In conclusion, let us turn to the matter of the artefact’s archaeological context. The gravestone of Metrodoros was found 1.2 metres to the south-west of the external face of a defensive wall with buttresses from the late Hellenistic and Roman era in square 82/142 during the dismantling of the baulk at the level of the rock, on the territory of the necropolis of ancient Chersonesos. The excavations of this highly important part of the ancient city, begun in 2021, are presently being actively continued, yielding fresh finds every day. In the same sector in June 2022, the gravestone of Ariston, son of Ariston, was discovered. Its time of creation was close to that of the relief monument to Metrodoros, and the two gravestones are also similar in type: the deceased is depicted frontally, standing, and draped in a himation. The monument to Ariston is, however, far richer. It was sculpted with great mastery. The figure is placed in a naiskos and not simply an aedicule. The naiskos is framed by two pilasters with capitals and topped with a pediment, in the centre of which a round shield is set, while in the lower corner there is the figure of a female mourner. Ariston is entirely clothed in a long cloak and has sandals on his feet. He was undoubtedly an important and highly placed inhabitant of Chersonesos in the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

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<sup>63</sup> Eur. *Phoen.* 44–45: παῖς πατέρα καίνει καὶ λαβὼν ὀχήματα Πολύβωι τροφεῖ δίδωσιν.

## Abbreviations

НЭПХ I – Solomonik 1964

НЭПХ II – Solomonik 1973

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The paper is devoted to the publication of a newly found gravestone from the excavations of the Southern Suburb of Chersonesos Taurica. The funerary stele belongs to a known Chersonesean type: the deceased is depicted within an aedicule niche, frontally, completely wrapped in a long himation. The youth's head displays individual features. The style of the work echoes peculiarities of the Roman portraiture of Trajan's reign. The composition of the stele, the character of the drapery and the hairstyle make it possible to date the relief to ca. 125–150 AD. The gravestone was produced locally, in Chersonesos, with the portrait most probably being added to an already half-finished workpiece. The epigraph on the stone has survived in its entirety (the type is datable to ca. 125–175 AD), and a reading of it not only provides information about the dead youngster, Μητρόδορος Ἀπολλωνίδου, but also sheds light on the technology used to make lapidary inscriptions in the Northern Black Sea region. Directly under the epitaph of Metrodoros, three lines of another inscription are discernible, carved in thin and rather shallow lines. Their text and the spacing of the words in the lines are absolutely identical to the last three lines of the main inscription; some letters of this “lower” inscription are discernible also above. It may be suggested that this is a so-called *ordinatio* – i.e. the primary layout of the plate intended for the grave stele.

Статья посвящена публикации нового надгробия из раскопок Южного пригорода Херсонеса Таврического. Погребальная стела относится к хорошо известному в Херсонесе типу: умерший изображается в нише-эдикуле фронтально стоящим, полностью облеченным в длинный гиматий. Голова юноши имеет индивидуальные черты; стиль исполнения повторяет особенности римского портрета периода правления Траяна. Композиция стелы, характер драпировок юноши и стиль волос позволяет датировать рельеф второй четвертью – серединой II в. Надгробие было изготовлено на месте, в Херсонесе, скорее всего, портрет был добавлен к шаблону-заготовке. На памятнике полностью сохранилась эпитафия (ее шрифт датируется 2-й – 3-й четвертью II в. н. э.), прочтение которой дает информацию не только об умершем подростке по имени Μητρόδορος Ἀπολλωνίδου, но и проливает свет на технологию изготовления лапидарных надписей в Северном Причерноморье. Прямо под эпитафией Метродора можно видеть три строки другой надписи, вырезанной тонкими неглубокими линиями. Их текст и разбивка слов по строкам полностью идентичны последним трем строкам основной надписи, некоторые буквы этой “нижней” надписи различимы и выше. Можно предположить, что это так называемое *ordinatio* – то есть первоначальная разметка плиты, предназначенной для надгробной стелы.