FROM THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS CULTS IN TAURIC CHERSONESUS*

IGOR A. MAKAROV

Recently in an article discussing new epigraphic materials from Tauric Chersonesus1 E.I. Solomonik published a photograph (see Fig. 1) of a fragment of a marble slab with the remains of a badly damaged inscription. The text of the fragment was deciphered by the author as follows:

1. - - -
2. - - - ἈΜΟΥΨΑΦΙ
3. ΣΙΩΠΟΙΣΕΡΜΑΙΟΙΣ
4. ΣΕΤΑ. ἘΑΙΠΑΤΑΙ
5. ὉΝΚΑΙΚ ἈΘΥΠΕΡ
6. ΘΕΩΙΕΡΜ
7. Σ.ΑΤ
8. ΣΑ
9. ΠΑΡΑ.ΕΣΙ.Ε.ΟΙΕΡΜ
10. ΠΑΡΑΠΕΜΠΕ.ΟΤΣΕ
11. - - -

E.I. Solomonik restored certain lines as follows: Line 2 — [τοῦ δ]όμον ψάφι[σμα], the end of Line 3 — τοῖς Ἔρμιαίο[ις], the beginning of Line 10 — παραπέμπε[ι] τ]οῦς ἔ [- - -]. On the basis of the script used, Solomonik dated the inscription to the 2nd century BC and defined it as “a resolution connected with the cult of Hermes and the games associated with him”. As a parallel for the newly discovered inscription Solomonik drew attention to a slab dated to the 2nd century BC containing a hymn in honour of Hermes and, it is assumed, the names of those who had been the victors at the said games (IOSPE I2, 436). In my opinion, this inscription deserves more detailed examination.

If we turn to the palaeography of this inscription it should be noted that it resembles most closely of all epigraphic documents from Chersonesus a decree

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1 Solomonik 1996, 44.

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in honour of the ambassador of Mithradates Eupator (IOSPE I^2, 349; NEPCh II, 110), a decree in honour of Diophantos (IOSPE I^2, 352), an inscription in honour of the capture of Kalos Limen (IOSPE I^2, 353) and an inscription mentioning the fortress of Napitas (NEPCh I. 1). It is sufficient to draw attention to the following characteristics of the script, which the inscriptions mentioned above have in common: the *alpha*, which is open at the top and which has a broken or curved crossbar, *nu* with a shortened second vertical, *kappa* with short diagonals, a small, round *omicron*, *pi* with a short right vertical and an *omega* that is elongated in shape with side strokes in the form of separate triangles. Overall the style of the script points to the second half of the 2nd century BC — the most tense period