
PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.

PART II.

XL. *Observations upon Five antient Persian Coins, struck in Palestine, or Phœnicia, before the Dissolution of the Persian Empire. In a Letter to Mathew Maty, M. D. Sec. R. S. from the Rev. John Swinton, B. D. F. R. S. Custos Archivorum of the University of Oxford, Member of the Academy degli Apatisti at Florence, and of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in Tuscany.*

S I R,

Read June 20, 1771. **T**HE coins before me, as well as several others similar to them, were undoubtedly struck, in some of the cities of Syria, Palestine, or Phœnicia, before the reduction of those provinces, and the conquest of the Persian empire, by Alexander the Great. This, if I am not mistaken, was first remarked by (1) M. Baudelot; who has been lately followed herein by (2) M. l'Abbé Barthelemy, and (3) M. Pellerin. I intirely agree with all those learned men in what they have advanced relative to those coins, and shall now beg leave to submit a few cursory observations upon five of them (as the subject is extremely curious) to the consideration of the Royal Society; which may possibly

(1) Baudel. *l'Utilit. des voyag. &c.* p. 638. A Paris, 1693.

(2) *Journ. des Sçav. &c.* T. LIII. Aout, 1760. p. 279, 280.

(3) Peller. *Recueil de Medail. de Rois, &c. Explicat. de la Vignette*, p. iii. iv. A Paris, 1762.

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serve to evince the truth of what has been offered by those celebrated antiquaries, on this head, and set this matter in the clearest light.

I.

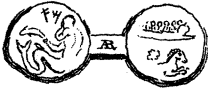
The first of the medals to be considered here (see TAB. XIII. n. 1.) was given me some years since, by my worthy friend, the Reverend and learned Mr. Thomas Crofts, late chaplain to the British factory at Aleppo, and formerly of Wadham College, Oxford; who brought it with him to England, out of the East. On one side we discover Atergatis, Adergatis, or Der-ceto, taken by several learned (4) men, for the Dagon of Scripture, nearly as we find that pagan divinity described (5) by Diodorus Siculus, and Lucian, with a pigeon before her, and a fish in her right hand. On the other, we perceive a galley, or small vessel, on the sea, with rowers in it; under which there appears a sea-horse, or rather a sea-monster, of a very particular form. Near the face of Adergatis, the two Phœnician letters **F** **U**, MA, present themselves to our view. The piece is in good conservation, having suffered very little from the injuries of time.

That this silver medal must have been anterior to the dissolution of the Persian empire, we may fairly collect from the reverse; which agrees in every particular, but the sea-horse, with the reverse of a Daric, that undoubtedly preceded the abovementioned event, and exhibits the very same Phœnician letters, with which it is adorned. But this will be rendered incontestable by a bare inspection of the draught of that

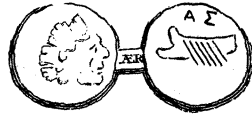
(4) Seld. *de Diis Syris*, Syntagm. II, cap. iii. Andr. Beyer. ad Joh. Seld. ubi sup. p. 300.

(5) Diod. Sic. *Bibl. Hist.* lib. II. Lucian *de Dea Syr.* apud Johan. Selden. ubi sup. Vid. Athen. *Deipnosoph.* lib. VIII.

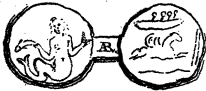
TAB. XIII. n. 1.



TAB. XIII. n. 2.



TAB. XIII. n. 3.



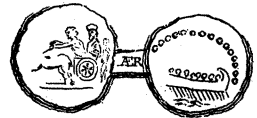
TAB. XIII. n. 4.



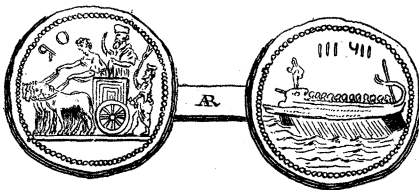
TAB. XIII. n. 5.



TAB. XIII. n. 6.



TAB. XIII. n. 7.



Daric, and others of similar coins, in the (6) plate referred to here.

That this piece was struck at Ascalon, a very ancient and celebrated city of Palestine, there is, I think, little reason to doubt. Dagon, or Atergatis, was a deity of the Philistines, to whom Ascalon appertained, as we learn from (7) Scripture; and therefore may very naturally be supposed to have been worshiped there, as well as in the other principal cities belonging to that people. We are assured by (8) Diodorus Siculus, and Lucian, that Ascalon was famous for the worship of Atergatis, or Derceto, and the superb temple of that deity there. The coins of Ascalon (9) not infrequently exhibit Atergatis, with a pigeon, as here; pigeons (10), as well as fishes, having been considered as sacred animals, bearing a near relation to Atergatis, if not as objects of religious worship, in that city. The reason of this is given us in few words, by a (11) very learned author, who sets the point here insisted on beyond dispute. I own, indeed, the divinity in question is said to have had a temple at Hierapolis, and to have been worshiped there; but this, according to the great (12) Mr. Selden, seems to be a mistake. Besides, the goddess of Hierapolis was worshiped under (13) a human form, and not with the tail of a

(6) *Numism. Antiqu. &c.* à Thom. Pemb. et Mont. Gom. *Com. collect.* p. 2. T. 75.

(7) 1 Sam. v. 2, 3, 4, 5, &c.

(8) Diod. Sic. & Lucian. *ubi sup.*

(9) Joan. Vaill. *Numism. Imperator. &c.* à Pop. Rom. *Dit. Græcè loquent. &c.* p. 81. Henr. Noris, *An. et Epoch. Syro-Maced.* p. 510. Lipsiæ, 1696. (10) Joh. Selden. *ubi sup.* p. 192—202. Amstelodami, 1680. (11) Id. *ibid.* (12) Seld. *ubi sup.* p. 192. (13) Id. *ibid.*

fish, as Derceto is represented on the medal I am considering. Nor do I remember ever to have seen Atergatis, or Derceto, in that form, or attended by a fish and a pigeon, as on my medal, on any of the Hierapolitan coins. Lastly, I have a brass medal of Ascalon (see TAB. XIII. n. 2.), in my small collection, with a galley, or little vessel, on the water, and rowers in it, as we find exhibited by the piece before me, over which the two Greek letters ΑΣ plainly appear; which seems most clearly to evince, at least the high probability of, the point in view. It must therefore be allowed extremely probable, if not absolutely certain, that the coin considered here was struck at Ascalon, though current throughout Syria, Palestine, and Phœnicia, before the reduction of those provinces by the arms of Alexander the Great.

As no chronological characters on the piece in question present themselves to our view, it will be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to ascertain, with any precision, the time when it first appeared. However, I cannot help thinking it probable, that the coin was struck about 351 years before the birth of CHRIST, when the (14) provinces of Palestine and Phœnicia were subdued by Artaxerxes Ochus, soon after they had revolted from him. The people of those provinces might then have used money similar, at least in some respects, to that which was current in Persia, either out of compliment to, or by the positive order of, that prince. This, I say, might not improbably have been the case; but that it really was so, I must not presume absolutely to affirm. Be this, however, as it will, a circumstance

(14) Diod. Sic. *Bibl. Hist.* Lib. XVI.

will occur, in the explication of the fourth medal to be considered here, that will bring no small accession of strength to the notion I would now recommend to the attention of the learned world.

With regard to the two Phœnician letters exhibited by this coin, they seem either to form the word **MA**, which in Phœnician not improbably denoted **WATER**, or the **SEA**, (15) as in Arabic, or to be the two first elements of the word **MAIVMA**, in Syriac (16) signifying likewise **WATER**, the name of the port and place of the magazine of naval stores, such a port and place having formerly appertained both to **Ascalon** (17) and **Gaza**. For those two Phœnician letters, preserved on many medals, (18) can scarce always be looked upon either as the whole or part of the proper name of the place where the coins were struck, as they seem first to have appeared in different towns; though it must be owned, that **MAIVMA**, as applied to the ports of **Ascalon** and **Gaza**, was (19) considered as the proper name of a town, erected at a small distance from each of those two cities. However, I should rather take the word **MA** to have denoted **WATER**, or **THE SEA**, as a small vessel on the sea is visible on these coins, and the word **MAIVMA**, as applicable to the ports of **Ascalon** and **Gaza**, seems not to have (20) been used long before the time of **Constantine the Great**:

(15) *Gol. Lex. Arab.* p. 210. *Val. Schind. Lex. Pent.* p. 994. *Hanoviæ*, 1612.

(16) *Gothofred. apud Henric. Noris, ubi sup.* p. 511.

(17) *Sozom. Lib. ii. c. 4. Henr. Noris, ubi sup.* p. 511, 512.

(18) *Numism. Antiqu. &c. à Thom. Pemb. et Mont. Gom. Com. collect.* p. 2. T. 75. n. 7, 8.

(19) *Henr. Noris, ubi sup.* p. 511. (20) *Id. ibid.*

unless we would suppose it to denote AN HVN-DRED, and to refer to some remarkable occurrence, from whence the Persians dated their computation of time, in the days of Ochus, to us at present utterly unknown.

II.

The second medal (see TAB. XIII. n. 3.) I received, as a present, from the Reverend and learned Mr. Crofts, who brought it with him from Syria, at the same time that he gave me the first. Atergatis, or Der-ceto, on this silver piece, holds a *concha-marina*, or sea-shell, in her left hand; but, in all other respects, it is so similar to the former as sufficiently appears from the draughts of them both, that it may almost, if not absolutely, pass for a duplicate of the same coin. The piece, however, has been but indifferently preserved; so that without the assistance of the medal already described, it would have been of no great service to the learned world.

As the two Phœnician characters, that occur on the first medal, have been intirely defaced on this, by the injuries of time, I can offer nothing relative to them here. It may not, however, be improper to observe, that neither this nor the former medal has yet, as far as I can find, been ever communicated to the learned world.

III.

The third medal (see TAB. XIII. n. 4.) is a very small silver piece, and was presented to me by my worthy and learned friend, the Reverend Mr. Thomas Crofts, who brought it with the other two, above described, out of the East. The reverse, which exhibits the two Phœnician elements **F** **U**, MA, and a galley,

or small vessel, full of rowers, on the water, almost intirely agrees with that of two Persian Darics (21), as will appear from an inspection of the draughts of them, in the plate here referred to. This indicates the piece to have been struck in Palestine, or Phœnicia, before the dissolution of the Persian empire, probably at the same time that the two former first appeared. On the other side we observe a laureated antient head, which I take to represent Jupiter Marnas, a deity worshiped (22) at Gaza, a celebrated antient city, at no great distance, 3 parasangs only, from Ascalon; who might therefore probably have had divine honours paid him there, as well as at Gaza; and consequently we may attribute the coin to either of those cities, though, on account of the head of Jupiter Marnas, I should rather prefer Gaza. This, I say, appears to me extremely probable; but that either the laureated head really represents Jupiter Marnas, or the piece was certainly struck at Gaza, I must by no means take upon me absolutely to decide.

If the head on this medal should not be imagined to point out Jupiter Marnas, the local deity worshiped at Gaza, it may perhaps be supposed to represent some hero, or the founder of Ascalon, or Gaza. Be that, however, as it will, as either this very coin, or one exceedingly similar to it, has a place assigned it in (23) Lord Pembroke's noble collection, it can scarce be allowed to pass for an inedited coin.

(21) *Numism. Antiqu. &c. à Tho. Pemb. & Mont. Gom. Com. collect.* p. 2. T. 75. n. 7, 8.

(22) *Henr. Nor. ubi sup.* p. 494. *Golii not. ad Afragan.* p. 142.

(23) *Numism. Antiqu. &c. ubi sup.* p. 2. T. 75. n. 8.

IV.

The fourth (see TAB. XIII. n. 5.) is a small brass medal, that may pass for an unedited coin, though one not unlike it has been published by M. Baudelot. On one side a human figure, that probably represents a king of Persia, with a Persian tiara on its head, in a triumphal car, drawn by two horses, and driven by a similar figure, with a Persian tiara likewise on its head, presents itself to our view. On the other, a vessel navigated by rowers, resembling that exhibited by the three foregoing coins, may be clearly discerned. The piece has been well preserved, and was undoubtedly anterior to the reduction of Syria and Phœnicia by Alexander the Great. For that the person in the car is a Persian, we may infer from the tiara on his head, which occurs on the heads of several Persian figures (24) in the ruins of Persepolis; and that he was a royal personage, appears from hence, that the kings of Persia only had their effigies impressed on the Persian coins. It is true, some of the figures in the ruins of Persepolis are the produce of the Parthian times, and several of them even coeval with some of the princes of the house of Sassan, and consequently of still a later date. But, notwithstanding this, the figures now in view were undoubtedly Persian, and fully evince the point they are brought to prove; but had they been Parthian, that would have made no alteration in the present case, as the Persians and the Parthians ought to be considered as one and the same nation, and their attire as one and the same.

(24) Engelbert. Kämpfer. *Amœnitat. Exoticar. Fascic. p. 345, 342, 340, &c. Lemgovix, 1712.*

That the piece then was struck in Palestine, or Phœnicia, whilst under the domination of the Persians, there is, I think, little reason to doubt; though it may, perhaps, be not altogether so easy to ascertain, with any precision, the time when it first appeared. There is, however, one period, and one only, as I apprehend, in the Persian history, to which this may, with the strictest propriety, be referred; and that is, immediately after the reduction of Sidon, by Artaxerxes Ochus, when the Phœnicians, who had before entered into an alliance with Nectanebus, king of Egypt, and asserted their independency, made their (25) submission to him. This happened in the year of the Julian period 4363, about 351 years before the (26) birth of Christ. That prince having then intirely subdued the Phœnicians, who had revolted from him, and reinforced his army with a body of 10000 Greeks, resumed his design of invading Egypt; and, (27) after the surrender of Jericho, probably advanced at the head of his forces to Ascalon and Gaza, through which he might have passed, on his route to that country, though he seems to have undertaken the Egyptian expedition, or rather to have entered Egypt, the following year. Upon his arrival at Ascalon, he may naturally be supposed to have struck some of the pieces, at least, considered here; and particularly that which is the present object of my attention, with the representation of a Persian king, in a triumphal car, upon it. For this must seem naturally to have announced the intire reduction of Syria and Phœnicia, that had just before submitted to him.

(25) Diod. Sic. ubi sup.

(26) Jac. Uffer. *Annal.* ad An. Jul. Period. 4363. p. 146,
147. Genevæ, 1722.

(27) Solin. cap. 35.

As therefore the coins in question are found in (28), and come from, those parts of the East; I would willingly flatter myself, that what is here advanced will meet with the approbation of the learned.

There is one farther circumstance relative to this coin, which must not be omitted here. Over the Persian monarch's head, at a small distance from it, we may easily discover a kind of letter (29), not appertaining, as it should seem, to the Phœnician alphabet; which, as I apprehend, may be taken for an antient Persian character. It not a little resembles that endowed with the power of the short A, deduced from the Zend and Pazend, by (30) Dr. Hyde; as also

(28) Peller. ubi sup.

(29) This coin seems to have been struck either at Ascalon, Gaza, or Acco; as most of the similar coins hitherto published probably first appeared in one of those cities. But the names of all those places begin with an *Ain*, not an *Aleph*, and therefore the character in question cannot be supposed to have appertained to any of those names. Whereas Ardhâr, Ardschâr, or Artaxerxes, the name of the king, in whose reign the coin seems to have been struck, has for its first letter, an *Aleph*, not an *Ain*; and therefore the character on this piece may be presumed, after what has been said, to point at that name. And this will be rendered still more probable by the position of the Persian character I am here considering. It is placed over the head of the great personage in the triumphal car, or rather almost contiguous to the tiara with which it is covered. This appears to me almost decisive in favour of what is here advanced. If any learned man, however, should dissent from me in this particular, I shall not quarrel with him for adhering to his own opinion. Baudel. Peller. pass. Barthel. Schikard. *Prosap. Pers. Proem. et alib.* Tubingæ, 1628.

(30) Vid. Lit. in Libr. Zend & Pazend, juxta apographum D. Hyde, usitat. &c. apud D. Hyd. in *Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers.* Ed. Oxon. 1760. *Memoir de Litterat.* Tom. XXXI. p. 358. A Paris, 1768. That the Persians used the Assyrian letters in the days of Herodotus, we learn from that celebrated historian. But, notwithstanding this, they might likewise have used other antient alphabetic characters, at least in some part of the inter-

two others belonging to two of the antient Persian alphabets published by M. Anquetil du (31) Perron, to which he assigns the power of A. All which if we admit, it may probably be considered as the

val between the commencement and the dissolution of the Persian empire, if not throughout that interval. And that they had actually then such characters, the coin under consideration here gives us good reason to believe. But we must not positively assert this, since nothing certain or decisive, without the farther assistance of antient coins, or other genuine monuments of antiquity, can be offered in support of such an opinion.

The very learned M. la Croze, takes the antient letters of the Persians, so many specimens of which have been given us by Dr. Hyde, to have been originally deduced from the Syriac alphabet. But this is by no means certain. That they are, however, more antient than has been hitherto generally imagined, will be readily acknowledged, by all who admit the character in question to be one of the letters of the antient Persic alphabet, as I am inclined to believe it is. But neither must this be laid down as a fact, till it is confirmed by other antient coins, or by other authentic monuments of antiquity, that may be intirely depended upon. Herodot. lib. IV. c. 87. Matur. Veys. la Croze, apud Joan. Chamberlayn. *Dissertat. &c.* p. 129, 130. Amstelædami, 1715.

(31) M. Anquetil du Perron has lately published, at Paris, his translation of the Zend-Avesta of Zeratusht. In the preliminary discourse, or introduction to which, he has been pleased to abuse and ridicule two of the most respectable members of our University, as well as me. This conduct is the more extraordinary, as, by his own account, the polite and friendly reception he met with from us, during the two days he resided in Oxford, towards the close of January, 1762, ought to have inspired him with sentiments very different from those of hatred and aversion to the whole English nation; which he, though greatly obliged to them both in the East Indies and in England, discovers in many parts of his first volume. But I mean not at this time to recriminate. Nor indeed is there any need of a recrimination. His own account of the treatment he met with at Oxford, from the gentlemen he has so grossly abused, is a much severer reflection upon him than any thing I have said, or could have said, of him, here.

In my present circumstances it would be improper for me to characterize his translation of the Zend-Avesta, as I might seem to be acted by too vindictive a spirit, if I delivered here my true sentiments of it. But I would beg leave to recommend to the

initial letter of Ardshîr, Ardschîr, or Artaxerxes, the name of the prince in whose reign, and by whose command, the piece was struck. This, if allowed, will be an additional proof of the truth of what has been here advanced, relative to the time in which the medal first appeared, as well as to the occasion of that appearance, hinted at above. It is certain, such initial letters sometimes represented the names of kings and great men amongst (32) the Greeks, who were neighbours to the Persians, and were imitated by them in several particulars, even as early as the year wherein I believe this coin to have been struck. This observation will throw no inconsiderable light upon what I would now propose to the consideration of those that are the best versed in this branch of literature, and render my elucidation of the medal before me, as well as of the others considered here, not altogether unworthy the attention of the learned.

V.

The fifth medal (see TAB. XIII. n. 6.) is extremely similar to the fourth, but very ill preserved (33). The

learned world the perusal of a little piece lately published *, highly meriting their attention; the ingenious author of which, a most valuable member of our University, though a very young man, is at least a match for M. Anquetil, in the knowledge of the Arabic, Persian, Turkish, &c. languages, as well as other branches of oriental literature, and seems to have done him tolerable justice, by giving us a clear and adequate idea of this performance. However, I may possibly hold him up to the public, in his proper colours, on some future occasion.

(32) *Erasm. Frœl. Not. Element. Numism. Ant.* p. 138, 142. Viennæ, Pragæ, et Tergesti, 1758.

(33) I shall beg leave in this place to remark, that we find a noble Persian silver medallion (see TAB. XIII. n. 7.), published by M. Pellerin, with a Persian monarch, in a triumphal car, drawn

* *Lettre à Monsieur A. — du P. —, à Londres, 1772.*

former,

former, however, differs from the latter in this, that it exhibits a lacquey, or slave, as it should seem, following the triumphal car. This renders it still more probable, that the figure in that car was intended to represent a person of the first distinction, or rather a Persian monarch. Both of these coins have been hitherto unpublished (34), though of medals similar to them, in conjunction with several others of the same kind, one (35) of the most valuable parts of Lord Pembroke's inestimable collection has been formed.

If there were originally any characters on the piece last described, they have all been effaced by the injuries of time. From the fourth medal I have attempted to elucidate in this paper, it seems to appear, that certain antient Persian letters, as well as Phœnician, are sometimes handed down to us, by this species of coins. A draught of one of them, in the (36) plate here referred to, may possibly be thought, by some, to bring a fresh accession of strength to such an opinion.

Thus have I endeavoured to illustrate five very valuable antient coins, struck in Palestine, or Phœ-

by two horses, and followed by a lacquey, or slave, on one side, as here, attended by the Phœnician legend $\rho\theta$; which is manifestly equivalent to the three letters עֲרֵך , ARC, the second character being a Phœnician monogram, formed of *Resch* and *Caph*. On the other side, we discover a galley, navigated by rowers, and adorned with one of the *Dii Patæci*, at the stern. Over the galley, there appears a date; which may, perhaps, denote 203, or 213, if we suppose the character representing *Ten*, now defaced, to have originally occupied the chasm in the middle of the numerical characters, though the æra to which this refers I cannot take upon me to ascertain. The letters עֲרֵך , ARC, evince the piece to have been struck at ARCA, or ARCE, a city of Phœnicia, between Byblus and Heliopolis, called by the Greeks Ἀρχη , or Ἀρχαί , as we learn from Stephanus Byzantinus. *Steph. Byzant. in voc.* Ἀρχη . *Vid. etiam Lucae Holstenii not. in loc.*

(34) *Numism. Antiqu. &c.* p. 2. T. 75.

(35) *Numism. Antiqu. &c.* p. 2. T. 75. & 87. n. 2.

nicia, before the time of Alexander the Great, almost intirely unnoticed by any other writer; and this purely in order to excite others of more learning, greater abilities, and better versed in these matters, to consider with proper attention, and treat more copiously, a very curious subject, hitherto but barely touched upon by the learned. And as the paper now sent you may not improbably produce such an effect, it may possibly contribute to the farther extension of the knowledge of antient medals, at least by introducing to future discussion several important points, relative to that species of literature, at present utterly unknown. You will therefore excuse the trouble given on this occasion, by,

S I R,

Your much obliged,

and most obedient, humble servant,

Christ-Church, Oxon.

March 16, 1771.

John Swinton.

(36) *Numism. Antiqu. &c.* ubi sup. p. 2. T.87. n. 2.