

XII. *Interpretation of Two Punic Inscriptions, on the Reverses of two Siculo-Punic Coins, published by the Prince di Torremuzza, and never hitherto explained. In a Letter to M. 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 Apatifti at Florence, and of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in Tuscany.*

DEAR SIR,

Read April 11, 1771. **T**HE two Punic legends, of which I am now to attempt an interpretation, have been published, together with five others, by the Prince (1) di Torremuzza, in his volume of ancient inscriptions, printed at Palermo, in 1769. As the coins, on which they have been preserved, seem extremely curious, and are unnoticed by any other author; the Royal Society will indulge me the liberty of transmitting them my sentiments of those very valuable remains of antiquity, in this paper, drawn up in the shortest and most concise manner possible.

(1) *Sicil. et adjacent. insular. veter. inscript. nov. collect. &c. class. XX. p. 292, 293. Panormi, 1769.*

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I.

The first of these minute inscriptions, (See TAB. III. n. 7.) which is the first of those published (2) by the Prince di Torremuzza, in the place here referred to, adorns a fine Punic tetradrachm, as it should seem, well enough preserved; which on one side presents to our view the head of a woman, and three fishes; but, on the reverse, the head of an horse, behind which stands a palm tree, attended by an inscription, in the exergue, formed of seven Punic letters. The workmanship, as well as the types, is probably similar to that of the silver medals of Menæ, by me described and explained, in (3) one of my former papers.

The first of the letters, of which this inscription is composed, will be allowed an *Ain* of the usual Punic form. This may be collected from the (4) coins of Menæ, just mentioned, as well as others, that might easily be produced. The second seems to be *Nun*. But it has been inaccurately taken, and is in reality *Mem*. This is likewise clearly evinced by the (5) legends on the reverses of other similar Siculo-Punic coins. The third is undoubtedly the Punic

(2) Ibid. p. 292.

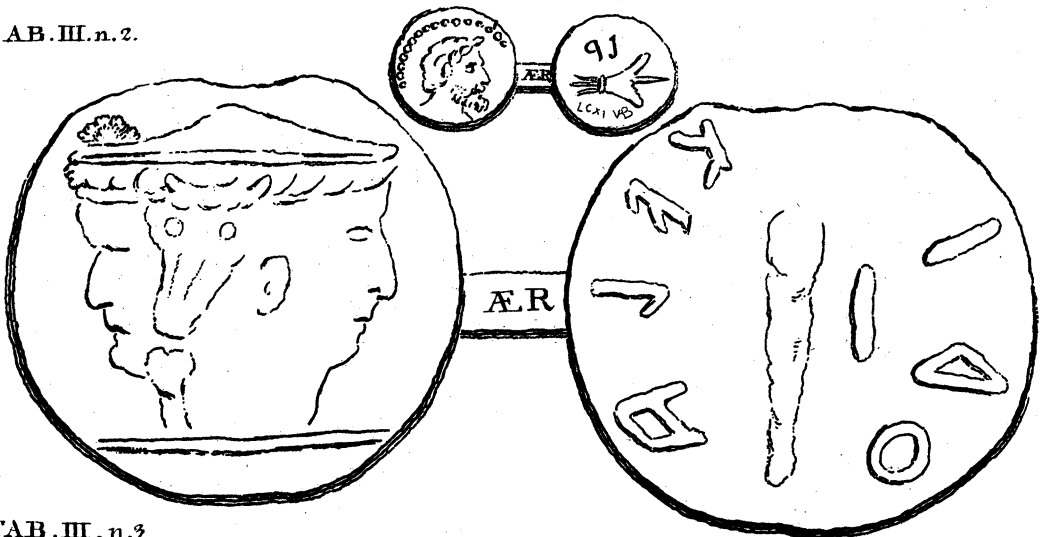
(3) *Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. LIV. Tab. xi. n. 1. p. 99, 404.

(4) *Philosoph. Transact.* ubi sup.

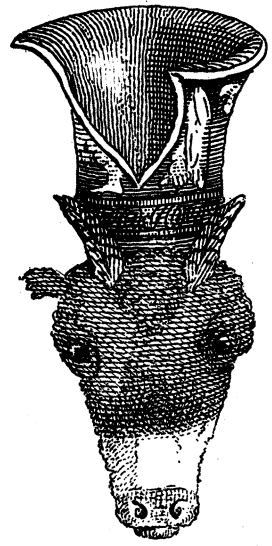
(5) *Philosoph. Transact.* ubi sup. D. Bernard. Aldret. *Var. Antiquedad. de Espan. &c.* p. 177—180. D. Vincen. Juan de Lathanof. *Mus. de las Medas. desconocid. Español.* Tab. 45. En Huesca, 1645. Peller. *Recueil de Medaill. &c.* Tom. Trois. p. 22. pl. 88. n. 5. A Paris, 1763. *Memoir. de Litterat. de l'Academ. des Inscript. & Bell. Lettr. &c.* Tom. Trentiem. p. 417. pl. ii. n. 8, 9, 10, 12. A Paris, 1764.

TAB. III. n. 1.

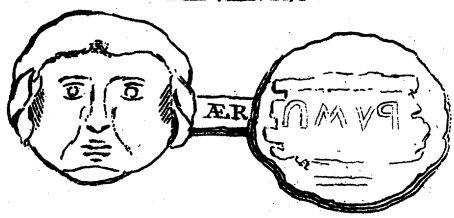
TAB. III. n. 2.



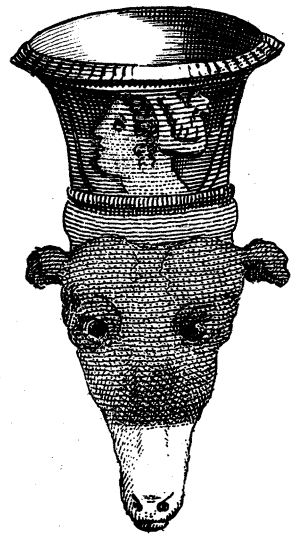
TAB. III. n. 3.



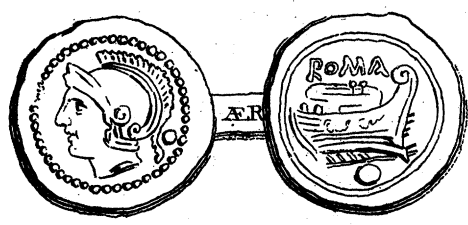
TAB. III. n. 5.



TAB. III. n. 4.



TAB. III. n. 6.



TAB. III. n. 7.

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TAB. III. n. 8.

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or Pœnician *Samech* (6), nearly as it appears in the famous Maltese inscription, and not unlike the form of that element exhibited by one of those found at Citium, now in the Bodleian Library, Oxon. The fourth and sixth are so (7) like the Punic and Phœnician *Ghimel* that they cannot well pass for any other element. The fifth is manifestly *Hbeth* (8), though it seems to have somewhat suffered from the injuries of time. The seventh (9) greatly resembles the most common figure of *Tbau*, and therefore we cannot be much mistaken if we take it for that letter. The powers of the Punic characters forming the inscription standing thus, we may, I conceive, read the whole AM SEGHEGT, or SEGEGTH, which is but a small variation from the word SEGESTE, or SEGESTA, the Greek and Latin name (10) of a considerable maritime city of Sicily, not far from Eryx, where money was coined, after the Greeks (11) had possessed themselves of the place. The medal therefore adorned with this minute Punic inscription may, without any impropriety, be supposed to have been emitted from the mint at Segesta, as the Punic words, AM SEGHEGT, or SEGEGTH, POPVLVS SEGESTANVS, appear upon it, when the Cartha-

(6) *Philosoph. Transact.* ubi sup. Vol. LIV. Tab. xxii. p. 394. *Memoir. de Litterat. &c.* ubi sup.

(7) *Philosoph. Transact.* ubi sup. Tab. xxiv. p. 403, 409.

(8) *Philosoph. Transact.* ubi sup. p. 404. & Tab. xxiv.

(9) *Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. LIV. Tab. xi. p. 99. & Tab. xxiv. p. 404.

(10) *Christ. Cellar. Notit. Orb. Antiqu. Lib. II. c. xii. p. 397, 398.*

(11) *Fil. Parut. La Sicil. Num. in Num. di Segest.*

ginians were masters of that city, and occupied all the adjacent territory appertaining to it.

That the Carthaginians were actually possessed, for a certain period, of that part of Sicily where Eryx and Segesta had their situation, does not only appear (12) from ancient history, but likewise from a long Punic inscription, found at the former of those places. This inscription has been (13) published by the Prince di Torremuzza, who extracted it from Sig. Antonio Cordici's manuscript history of Eryx, with a copy of which he was supplied by Sig. Domenico Schiavo, in the very valuable and learned work mentioned in the beginning of this paper.

That such rough and uncouth words as SEGHEGT, or SEGEGTH, with vowels scarce sufficient to form, or facilitate, the pronunciation, were not unknown to the Carthaginians, we may infer from the words SBAQTNI, ENKARA, ESCQVAR, FIEGKV, GHERQ, IGHASESC, and many others that occur in the remains of the ancient Punic tongue, which (14) at present exist in the vernacular language of the Maltese.

From what has been here advanced, it is incontrovertably clear, that SEGESTE, or SEGESTA, is a word of a Punic origin; which, indeed, has been observed by the famous Bochart. That learned au-

(12) Polyb. Diod. Sic. Liv. Oros. &c. *Univ. Hist.* Vol. vi. p. 829. et alib. Lond. 1742.

(13) *Sicil. et adjacent. insular veter. inscript. nov. collect. &c.* class. xx. p. 296, 297. Panormi, 1769.

(14) *Canonico Gio-Pietro Francesco Agius de Soldanis, in Dizionario Punico-Maltes.* pass. In Roma, 1750.

thor has (15) sufficiently exploded the fabulous account of Acesta, the pretended founder of Segesta, given us by some of the ancient writers; though, for want of the assistance of the Punic coin before me, he could not hit upon the true name the city now in view, at least when the medal I am considering first appeared, went under amongst the Carthaginians.

As no chronological characters occur on the piece considered here, the time when it was struck cannot, with any precision, be ascertained. That operation must, however, have preceded the conclusion of the first Punic war; since the Carthaginians, by the treaty of peace which terminated that war, ceded the (16) whole of their possessions in the island of Sicily to the Romans. Nay, the medal I am endeavouring to throw some light upon was probably prior, perhaps many years, to the surrender of Segesta (17) to the Romans, in the beginning of the first Punic war, when the inhabitants of Segesta put the African garrison there to the sword, about 258 years before the birth of CHRIST; the Carthaginians seeming never to have been possessed of this ancient city, after that tragical event.

(15) Sam. Bochart. *Chan. lib. I. c. 27. p. 563, 564.* Francofurti ad Moenum, 1681.

(16) Polyb. Liv. Orof. Zonar. &c. *Univ. Hist. Vol. vi. Lond. 1742.*

(17) Polyb. Diod. Sic. Liv. Orof. &c. *Univ. Hist. Vol. vi. p. 829. Lond. 1742.*

II.

The second of the two abovementioned (See TAB. III. n. 8.) inscriptions, which is the sixth of those published, in the place above referred to, by the Prince di Torremuzza, is composed of seven letters. Of these the first and second are undoubtedly *Ain* and *Mem*, as we may certainly infer from a similar inscription, on the reverses of other Punic coins, that have been (18) heretofore explained. The third must be *He*, as it so (19) much resembles a form of the Greek *Epsilon*; the antient figures of the fifth element in the Greek, Phœnician, and Samaritan alphabets having (20) been originally the same. The sense of the inscription seems likewise absolutely to require this. The fourth letter is apparently *Mem* (21), as will be allowed by every one in the least acquainted with the ancient Siculo-Punic, and Siculo-Phœnician, characters. The fifth is *Hbeth*, or *Heth*, as we may collect from (22) other medals, similar to that on

(18) *Philosoph. Transact. Memoir. de Litterat. de l'Acad. des Inscript. & Bell. Lett. &c.* D. Bern. Aldret. D. Vincen. Juan de Laftanos. Peller. ubi sup.

(19) Sig. Haverc. *de Lit. Græc. Dissert.* p. 248, 249 Vid. *Sylog. Scriptor. qui de ling. Græc. rectè pronuntiat. &c.* Lugduni Batavorum, 1736.

(20) Vid. Hadr. Reland. D. Bern. de Montfauc. Don Luis Joseph Velazquez, Chish. aliosque Scriptor. quam plurim.

(21) *Philosoph. Transact. Memoir. de Litterat. de l'Acad. des Inscript. & Bell. Lettr. &c.* Aldret. Laftanos. Peller. &c. ubi sup.

(22) *Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. LIV. Tab. xxiv. p. 408, 409. & Tab. xi. n. 1. p. 99, 404.

which

which this legend has been preserved. Part of this element, however, has been defaced by the injuries of time; which to demonstration appears (23), not only from coins already published, but likewise from others preserved in the cabinets of the great and the curious, to which easy access may be had. The sixth must be *Nun*, as we may conclude from all the abovementioned (24) coins. The draught of it, however, given us by the Prince di Torremuzza, seems somewhat to resemble one of the forms of *Mem*, and therefore it was probably not taken with the utmost accuracy; the Prince, perhaps, not being so thoroughly conversant with the various figures of the Siculo-Punic, and Siculo-Phœnician, letters, and learned men but little acquainted with those figures pretty frequently mistaking one similar letter for another. This character likewise is apparently different from the form of *Mem*, in the same inscription, and seems not a little to resemble the usual form of *Nun*; as will appear to every one, examining it with proper attention. The seventh is *Thau*, as will be admitted, I believe, by every one versed in this branch (25) of literature. The inscription, therefore, of which I am at present attempting an interpretation, is formed of the two words עַם הַמַּחְמַרִּים, AM HAMMAHANTH, HAMMEHNOTH, or HAMMENOTH, POPVLVS MENENIVS, or MENA-

(23) *Philosop. Transact.* Vol. LIV. p. 99, 404, & Tab. xi. n. 1. p. 99. *Memoir. de Litterat. &c.* ubi sup. Pl. II. n. 7, 8, 9, 10, 12. p. 417. Aldret. Laftanof. Peller. &c. ubi sup.

(24) *Philos. Transf. Mem. de Litterat. &c.* A dret. Laftanof. Peller. ibid.

(25) Barthel. Peller. &c.

RVM POPVLVS, as we may find rendered incontestable by other (26) similar coins.

In Hebrew the prefix ה is not seldom added to the (27) beginning of the proper names of provinces, cities, and towns. So וירגלו את־העי, AND VIEWED AI. Jehof. vii. 2. מן השטים עד הגלגל, FROM SHITTIM TO GILGAL. Mich. vi. 5. וכל־עיר, הגלעד, AND ALL THE CITIES OF GILEAD. Jehof. xiii. 25. To which I could add many more instances of the same mode of expression, that might, with equal facility, be produced. As the Punic and Phœnician languages therefore (28) agreed in most points with the Hebrew, we may naturally suppose the Phœnician, or Carthaginian, inhabitants of Menæ to have impressed the words עם המחנה, AM HAMMENOETH, upon their most ancient coins.

The medal, which has conveyed down to us this inscription, through such a series of ages, is of the tetradrachmal form, and of a very considerable antiquity. It has a place assigned it in the (29) very valuable cabinet of the Prince di Torremuzza, though he has not favoured us with a draught of it. On one side it exhibits the head of a woman, goddess, or tutelary deity of the place where it was struck, with three fishes sporting round it; and on

(26) *Phil. Transf. Mem. de Litterat. &c.* Aldret. Laftanof. Peller. ubi sup.

(27) Johan. Buxtorf. *Theſaur. Grammat. Ling. Sanct. Hebr.* p. 385. Bafileæ, 1651.

(28) Sam. Bochart. *Chan.* lib. II. c. 1. *Philofoph. Transact.* Vol. LIII. p. 292. & Vol. LIV. p. 134.

(29) *Sicil. et objacent. infular. veter. infcript. nov. collect. &c.* claff. xx. p. 293. Panormi, 1769.

the reverse a horse's head, under which appears the inscription, that is one of the principal objects of my attention, in this paper. It will be almost needless to remark, that the horse's head is one of the most usual symbols on the reverses of the antient Carthaginian coins.

With regard to the third character here, taken by me for *He*, I would beg leave to remark, that it is the crescent, or lunated form of the Greek *Epsilon*; which was a figure of that element of a pretty high antiquity, though not the (30) first used by the Greeks. That it was as early in Sicily as Julius Cæsar's days, has been proved from (31) the coins of Entella, coeval with that emperor. And that it was known in Italy many years, perhaps several generations, before (32) the finishing stroke was given to the Roman republic, is clearly evinced by a most curious minute Greek sepulchral inscription, published by P. D. Gianfrancesco Baldini, of which a particular account will be found in the very valuable work referred to here. Nay, in Greece it seems to have a long time preceded this monument (33), as may be inferred from two minute inscriptions preserved on two antient Greek statues of Speusippus and Xenocrates, mentioned by a very learned modern author. It may therefore, with sufficient

(30) Sig. Haverc. *De Lit. Græc. Dissert.* p. 248, 249. in *Sylloge Scriptor. qui de ling. Græc. ver. et rect. pronun. &c.* Lugdun. Batavorum, 1736.

(31) Fil. Parut. *La Sicil. num.* Tab. cxiv. n. 2, 3. Sig. Hav. ubi sup.

(32) *Sag. di Dissertaz. Accademich. di Corton.* Tom. II. p. 157. In Roma, 1738.

(33) Sig. Haverc. ubi sup. p. 248.

propriety, be supposed as ancient as at least the later ages of the Carthaginian empire in Sicily, if not much older. That the most ancient form of the Greek *Epsilon* was also sometimes impressed upon the Punic medals of Menæ, is rendered incontestable by a most valuable tetradrachm of that city, published (34) by M. Pellerin. The first letter of the legend, on the reverse of that tetradrachm, is the Punic *Ain*, not very accurately taken; and the third is undoubtedly the oldest Phœnician, Samaritan, and Greek figure of *He* or *Epsilon*, brought by Cadmus out of Phœnicia, and representing, according (35) to Euri-

(34) Peller. *Recueil de Medaill. &c.* Tom. Trois. p. 22. pl. 88. n. 8. A Paris, 1763. The city of Menæ, the *Mynai* of Ptolemy, was built by Deucetius, king of the Siculi, but subject to the Carthaginians, from the days of Dionysius the elder, king of Syracuse, to the time of Timoleon, the Corinthian, according to Diodorus Siculus; in some part of which interval, the piece I have been considering, as well as all others similar to it, was probably struck. From Menæ's being a town of the Siculi, and inhabited by them and the Greeks, M. Barthelemy infers, that it never was subject to the Carthaginians, and that therefore the piece in question could not possibly have made its first appearance there. But the former of these assertions is expressly contradicted by Diodorus Siculus, and therefore the latter of them must necessarily fall to the ground. Of this the learned antiquary above-mentioned seems to have been sufficiently aware, when he declares, that he does not give us for demonstration what he has advanced on this head. I must beg leave here farther to remark, that the word *מַנַּי* cannot well be translated *Castra* here, as the proper names of cities are generally, if not always, pointed out to us, by the legends on the reverses of such coins. Diod. Sic. lib. xi. c. 78. Vid. etiam lib. xii. xiii. xiv. See the *Univ. Hist.* Vol. VII. p. 535. Lond. 1747.

(35) Euripid. et Agath. Tragic. apud Athen. *Deipnosoph.* lb. x. c. 20.

pides, and Agathon, in Athenæus, an obliquated trident. That inscription is formed of the very same letters with those that constitute the legend I am considering, and consequently will admit of the same interpretation. Nor can this be matter of surprize to those who consider, not only that the first figure of the Greek *Epsilon* was (36) borrowed from the earlier Phœnicians, but likewise that the later form of that element, which was also sufficiently ancient, as I have here incontestably proved, might likewise have been deduced from a later figure of the Phœnician, or Punic, *He*, in a country chiefly occupied by the Greeks (37), Phœnicians, and Carthaginians, for a very considerable period. And that this was really the case, from the legend on the reverse of the coin of which I am now attempting an interpretation, seems abundantly clear. The Prince di Torremuzza has likewise (38) rendered the antiquity of this form of the Phœnician, or Punic, *He* incontestable. All which considerations being maturely weighed, and due attention given to the medals here described; the power of the third element of the legend, or inscription, before me, will appear, I would flatter myself, to be sufficiently ascertained.

(36) Edm. Chiffaul. *Inscript. Sig.* Sig. Haverc. ubi sup.

(37) Herodot. Thucyd. Polyb. Diod. Sic. Liv. Strab. Oros. Zonar. &c.

(38) *Prolegom.* p. 39, 40. From the Siculo-Punic medals mentioned in this paper, as well as many others, it seems clearly to appear, that the prefix Γ was never annexed to the word ΔY , AM, POPVLVS, on the Siculo-Punic coins, as M. Barthelemy has been pleased to assert, but to the proper name of the place immediately following it. This, if allowed, must be decisive in favour of what I have formerly advanced, relative to the power of the character taken by that learned antiquary for *He*, but by me for *Mem. Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. LIV. p. 397.

If what has been just advanced should be admitted by the learned, they will readily allow the oldest forms of *He* on the antient Siculo-Punic coins, to have greatly resembled, or rather to have been almost perfectly the same with, those of that letter exhibited by the earliest Phœnician, Samaritan, Greek, and Etruscan, coins. Nor can any thing be more consonant to the faith of history than such a notion. We cannot therefore suppose *He* to have resembled any of the forms of *Mem*, or rather to have been represented by one of those forms, as M. Barthelemy (39), without any just grounds for his opinion, has actually supposed, as nothing seems more remote from truth than such a supposition. Antient history, antient coins, and the reason of the thing itself, notwithstanding his exalted merit, and the great figure he so justly makes in the republic of letters, decide the point in question most clearly and evidently against him.

Nor will it avail him to (40) assert, that the Greek coins of Menæ differ in several respects from those considered by me in this paper; and that the (41) workmanship of the latter is better than that of the pieces which are the acknowledged productions of that city. For that the workmanship of several of the Punic and Phœnician coins is highly finished and elegant, and that the taste and genius of those coins differ considerably from the manner of those struck by the Greeks and the Romans, will not admit of a doubt.

(39) Barthel. in *Memoir. de Litterat. &c. de l'Academ. des Inscrip. & Bell. Lettr. &c.* Tom. XXX. p. 409, 410, 411, 417.

(40) Barthel. *Lettre a Monf. le Marquis Olivieri, &c.* p. 28, 29. A Paris, 1766.

(41) Id. *ibid.* p. 28.

The former have not their reverses diversified by such a variety of symbols as have the latter. The Carthaginians, in particular, seem to have adorned their medals with very few symbols, or types; and those such as were, for the most part, common to all the cities and towns subject to their republic. As the legend therefore, on the reverse of the medal I have been endeavouring to explain, is clear and express in favour of my explication, and plainly points out to us the place where it was struck; the above-mentioned (42) objections, hinted at by M. l'Abbé, after what has been just observed, will fall to the ground of course, and not be allowed, by the best and most competent judges of the point in question, to have the least tendency to invalidate what has been advanced in favour of my opinion.

Several curious particulars, not hitherto touched upon, are deducible from the coin, or rather my explication of the coin, I have been considering. But as I have already exceeded the limits proposed to myself, when I began this paper, it is time to conclude; which I shall beg leave to do, with assuring you, that I am,

Good Sir,

Your much obliged,

and most obedient, humble servant,

Christ-Church, Oxon.
October 2, 1770.

John Swinton.

(42) *Lettre à Mess. le Marquis Olivieri, &c.* p. 27, 28, 29.