

The CONDOMA, or STRIPED
ANTILOPE*.

THE Marquis de Marigny, who never loses an opportunity of encouraging arts and sciences, showed me in his cabinet the head of an animal, which, at first sight, I took to be that of a large bubalus. It resembles the head of our largest stags. But, instead of solid horns,

* The striped antelope has smooth horns twisted spirally, compressed sidewise, with a ridge on one side following the wreaths; they consist of three bends, are three feet nine inches long, and of a pale brown colour; they are close at the base, and two feet seven inches and a half distant at the points, which are round and sharp. In the upper jaw, there is a hard, horny substance disposed in ridges. The length of the animal is nine feet, and the height four. The body is long and slender; the legs are slender; the face is brown, and marked with two white lines proceeding from the corner of each eye, and uniting above the nose. The colour in general is of a reddish cast, mixed with gray. From the tail, along the top of the back, to the shoulders, there is a white stripe; from this are seven others, four pointing towards the thighs, and three towards the belly. On the upper part of the neck is a short mane. Beneath the neck, from the throat to the breast, are some long hairs hanging down. The breast and belly are gray. The tail is two feet long, brown above, white beneath, and black at the end; Pennant's *Synops. of Quad.* p. 31.

Strepsicerus; Cuius Opusc. p. 56. Gesner. *Quad.* p. 309. Icon. 31.

Antelope strepsicerus; Pallas *Mysic.* ix. *Spicil.* 17.
Cerf du Cap, de Bonne-espérance; *Hist.* et *Com. Acad. Palatin.*
tom. i. p. 487.

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like those of the stag, it had two large hollow horns, with a ridge like those of the he-goat, and a double flexion, like those of the antilopes. In searching the Royal Cabinet, I found two horns which belonged to this animal. The first had been brought from the King's wardrobe, without any title or name. The second I had from M. Baurhis, commissary of the navy, under the name of the *Condoma* of the Cape of Good Hope; which name we have adopted, because the animal has not hitherto been described or denominated.

From the length, thickness, and especially the double flexion of the horns, the condoma makes a near approach to the *Strepsicerus** of Caius.

* Strepsicerotis cornua tam graphice descriptis Plinius, atque lyris tam apposite comparavit, ut longiore verborum ambitu opus non sit. Ergo hoc tantum addam: Ea esse intus cava, sed longa pedes Romanos duos palmos tres, si recto ducta metiaris: Si flexo, pro natura cornuum, pedes tres integros. Crassa sunt, ubi capiti committuntur, digitos Romanos tres cum semisse. Describuntur in ambitu palmis Romanis duobus et dimidio, eo ipso in loco. In summo, livore quodam nigrescunt, cum in imo fusca magis et rugosa sint. Jam inde a primo ortu sentim gracilescent, et tandem in acutum exeant. Pendunt, una cum facie sicca per longitudinem dimidiata, libras septem uncias tres et semissem. Facies, quæ adhuc superest junctis coribus, et frontis cervicisque pilis, loquuntur *Strepsicerotem* animal esse magnitudine fere cervina, et pilo rufo adinstar cervini. Sed an nare et figura corporis cervina sit, ex facie nihil habeo certi dicere, cum nares diuturni temporis usu detritæ sint, et facies eadem de causa hinc inde labra sit; conjicere tamen ex eo quod saperet cum propius accederet ad cervum aut platycerotem; Caius, apud Gesnerum, de *Quad.* p. 295.

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The figure, and even all the dimensions of the horns, are almost perfectly the same. From this correspondence in the size and figure of the head and horns, we may presume that the condoma and *strepsiceros* of Caius are the same animal, especially when the following reflections are attended to: 1. Caius, it is obvious, was deceived, when he made this animal the *strepsiceros* of the ancients; for the *strepsiceros* of the ancients is unquestionably the *antelope*, whose head is very different from that of the stag. Now Caius tells us, that the head of the *strepsiceros* resembled that of the stag; and, therefore, it could not be the *strepsiceros* of the ancients. 2. Caius's animal, like the condoma, had thick horns, above three feet long, covered with rugosities, instead of rings or tubercles; but the horns of the *strepsiceros* of the ancients, or *antelope*, are much thinner and shorter, having both rings and tubercles. 3. Though the horns of the condoma in the cabinet of the Marquis de Marigny, as well as those which were brought from the King's wardrobe, had been polished by friction, it is easy to perceive that they never had rings. This fact is farther demonstrated by the horn sent to me by M. Baurhis, which had never been touched, and yet it had only rugosities like the he-goat, and no rings like the *antelope*. Now, Caius himself tells us, that the horns of his *strepsiceros* had rugosities only. Hence this *strepsiceros* is

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not that of the ancients, but the animal we are here treating of, which possesses all the characters which Caius attributes to his.

In examining the writings of travellers, we have found nothing that approaches so near to the genuine idea of this animal, which is so remarkable for its size, and particularly the largeness of its horns, as the quadruped mentioned by Kolbe under the denomination of the *wild-goat* of the Cape of Good Hope. 'This goat,' says he, 'which has received no name from the Hottentots, and which I have called the *wild-goat*, is remarkable in many respects. It is of the size of a large stag; its head is very beautiful, and adorned with two smooth horns, which are bended and pointed. They are three feet in length, and their extremities are two feet asunder.' These characters seem to correspond exactly with the animal under consideration: But, having seen the head only, we cannot be equally certain that the rest of Kolbe's description* will apply to it with equal precision. Future observations alone can determine the truth of what now appears to be extremely probable.

* From the front and along the whole back, as far as the tail, there is a white stripe; another, of the same colour surrounds the lower part of the neck; other two of the same kind surround the body, the one behind the fore-legs, and the other before the hind-legs. The hair on the rest of the body is gray, with some reddish spots, except that on the belly, which is white. The beard is gray and very long. The limbs, though long, are well proportioned; *Descript. du Cap de Bonne-esperance, par Kolbe, tom. iii. p. 42.*