TIGRANES THE GREAT AND HALLEY'S COMET

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Category: Did You Know?

Tigranes the Great (140—55 BC) wears a tiara on coins bearing his profile. The headpiece has an eight-pointed starburst between two eagles. On some coins, the starburst has a long tail. Modern astronomers calculate that Halley's Comet made its closest approach to the sun on Aug. 6m 87 BC. By placing this image on his coinage, the Armenian king was declaring to his subjects that he was far from fearing the omen in the sky, that he embraced it, and made it a symbol of his era.

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