

**Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean  
in Ancient History and Prehistory**



# Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory

Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr  
on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday

Edited by  
K. H. Kinzl



1977

Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung des  
Bundesministeriums für Wissenschaft und Forschung,  
Wien

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Greece and the eastern Mediterranean in ancient history and prehistory.

CONTENTS: Alföldi, A. From the Aion Plutonios of the Ptolemies to the Saeculum Frugiferum of the Roman emperors. – Ålin, P. Mycenaean decline, some problems and thoughts. – Badian, E. A document of Artaxerxes IV? [etc.]

1. Civilization, Greek – Addresses, essays, lectures. 2. Civilization, Mycenaean – Addresses, essays, lectures. 3. Schachermeyr, Fritz, 1895– I. Schachermeyr, Fritz, 1895– II. Kinzl, Konrad H. DF13.G75 938 77-849  
ISBN 3-11-006637-8

*CIP-Kurztitelaufnahme der Deutschen Bibliothek*

**Greece and the eastern Mediterranean in ancient history and prehistory:** studies presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the occasion of his 80th birthday/ed. by K. H. Kinzl. – Berlin, New York : de Gruyter, 1977.

ISBN 3-11-006637-8

NE: Kinzl, Konrad H.[Hrsg.] ; Schachermeyr, Fritz : Festschrift



1977 by Walter de Gruyter & Co.,  
vormals G. J. Göschen'sche Verlagshandlung · J. Guttentag, Verlagsbuchhandlung  
Georg Reimer · Karl J. Trübner · Veit & Comp., Berlin 30 · Alle Rechte, insbesondere das der Übersetzung in fremde Sprachen, vorbehalten. Ohne ausdrückliche  
Genehmigung des Verlages ist es auch nicht gestattet, dieses Buch oder Teile daraus  
auf photomechanischem Wege (Photokopie, Mikrokopie) zu vervielfältigen.

Printed in Germany  
Satz und Druck: Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin  
Einband: Lüderitz & Bauer, Berlin

## Preface

The editor wishes to express his gratitude to the contributors to this volume; to Walter de Gruyter & Co. and to Professor Dr. H. Wenzel for undertaking to publish it and for seeing it through the press; to E. Badian for encouragement and advice; to A. E. Raubitschek for valuable suggestions; and last, but not least, Dr. Per Ålin's assistance, by soliciting and collecting the papers on prehistoric subjects, is gratefully recorded.

K. H. K.



## Contents

Preface .....	v
A. Alföldi, From the <i>Aion Plutonium</i> of the Ptolemies to the <i>Saeculum Frugiferum</i> of the Roman Emperors .....	1
P. Ålin, Mycenaean Decline – Some Problems and Thoughts .....	31
E. Badian, A Document of Artaxerxes IV? .....	40
A. B. Bosworth, Alexander and Ammon .....	51
T. S. Brown, Alexander and Greek Athletics, in Fact and in Fiction .....	76
A. R. Burn, Thermopylai Revisited and some Topographical Notes on Marathon and Plataiai .....	89
J. Chadwick, The Ionian Name .....	106
J. W. Graham, Bathrooms and Lustral Chambers .....	110
J. R. Hamilton, Cleitarchus and Diodorus 17 .....	126
N. G. L. Hammond, The Meaning and Significance of the Reported Speech of Phrynichus in Thucydides 8,48 .....	147
S. Hood, Minoan Town-Shrines? .....	158
S. A. Immerwahr, Mycenaean at Thera: Some Reflections on the Paintings from the West House .....	173
V. Karageorghis, A Cypro-Mycenaean III C:1 Amphora from Kition .....	192
K. H. Kinzl, Athens: Between Tyranny and Democracy .....	199
A. Lesky, Tragödien bei Herodot? .....	224
H. B. Mattingly, Poets and Politicians in Fifth-Century Greece .....	231
A. J. Podlecki, Herodotus in Athens? .....	246
A. E. Raubitschek, Corinth and Athens before the Peloponnesian War .....	266
List of Illustrations .....	270
Illustrations .....	275





ANDREW ALFÖLDI

## From the *Aion Plutonios* of the Ptolemies to the *Saeculum Frugiferum* of the Roman Emperors

(*Redeunt Saturnia regna VI*)\*

The longing for a savior who would bring back the happiness of paradise, which animated the suffering masses in the subjugated Hellenistic states and in Italy alike from the Punic Wars onwards, engendered all sorts of Messianic doctrines. These doctrines were not conceived in the Eternal City. As is well known, they invaded the West from the Orient. The mythical patterns to which they owed their success took their final shape in large part in Ptolemaic Alexandria, based on Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Persian, Jewish and Greek elements. The Ptolemies exploited these religious expectations and the theological concepts in which they were expressed for the exaltation of their rule, becoming in this respect the teachers of Roman leaders.

The outstanding figure in the theological speculations and doctrines in question was Aion, ruler of the Universe, god of limitless time, who was thought to bring the return of the Golden Age. The extremely complicated character of Aion has been elucidated by modern philological research. The meaning of the word αἰών and its evolution to a divine concept in the philosophical speculation of the Greeks has been thoroughly investigated<sup>1</sup>.

\* The previously published studies of this series are: I. "Le triumvirat de Q. Fabius Maximus, C. Servilius et M. Caecilius Metellus," *RN* 13, 1971, 76–89; II. "An Iconographical Pattern Heraldizing the Return of the Golden Age in or about 139 B. C.," *Chiron* 3, 1973, 131–142; III. "Jupiter-Apollo und Veiovis," *Chiron* 2, 1972, 215–230; IV. "Apollo und die Sibylle in der Zeit der Bürgerkriege," *Chiron* 5, 1975, 165–192; VI. "Zum Gottesgnadentum des Sulla," *Chiron* 6, 1976, 143–158; Pl. 7–10.

<sup>1</sup> C. Lackeit, *Aion; Zeit und Ewigkeit in Sprache und Religion der Griechen*, Diss. Königsberg 1916, 1. Sprache; O. Weinreich, *ARW*, 19, 1916/19, 174ff.; C. Lackeit, *RE Suppl.* 3, 64ff.; A.-J. Festugière, *PP* 11, 1949, 172ff.; *idem*, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* 4<sup>2</sup>, 1954, 141ff.; 146 n. 4; 182 n. 1; 187 n. 5; 189; 193; *idem*, *La revue des arts* 7, 1957, 195ff.; E. Degani, *Αἰών da Omero ad Aristotele*, Padova 1961; W. Theiler, *JHS* 77, 1957, 127ff.

The perplexing variability of the concept has been made comprehensible by the discovery of its roots in the sacred theories of Egyptian priesthoods and in Persian cosmogonic teachings on Eternal Time. The infiltration of the everchanging hypostases of Aion into the latest stratum of the Old Testament and into the New Testament has been discerned, as well as the adaptation of the same theological definitions to the mystical twilight zone of the Gnosis<sup>2</sup>. Historians of ancient art have not failed to recognize the representations of Aion and the pictorial setting in which he was placed<sup>3</sup>.

Some crucially important renderings of Aion in art, however, have gone unrecognized, while some others have not yet been correctly interpreted. These hitherto unexploited data throw new light on the role of Alexandria, the main spiritual center of Hellenism, in the final fashioning of this composite theological figure and in the transmission of the same ideas to imperial Rome. Before we turn our attention to the Hellenistic background of Aion, however, it may be useful to recall that the influence of the Near East upon the thinkers of Greece began long before the conquests of Alexander. The evidence put at our disposal by A.-J. Festugière has shown that Empedocles (31 B 16) already used *aiôn* in the meaning of "eternity". Aion appears personified as early as Euripides, *Heraclid*. 897. And for Aristotle the immeasurable principle of time is a divine being<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra* 1, 1899, 74ff.; R. Reitzenstein, *Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium*, Göttingen 1921, 151ff.; 188ff.; M. Zepf, *ARW* 25, 1927, 225ff.; J. Kroll, *Die Lehren des Hermes Trismegistos*, 1928, 67ff.; A. D. Nock, *HThR* 27, 1934, 53ff. = *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* 1, 1972, 357ff.; esp. 377ff.; M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* 2, 1950, 478; E. Kantorowicz, *Selected Essays*, Locust Valley (N. Y.) 1965, 30f.; J. Beaucou, *La religion romaine à l'apogée de l'Empire* 1, 1955, 155ff.; cf. 141ff.; H. Sasse, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* 1, 1933, 197ff.; *idem*, *RAC* 1, 1950, 193ff. (lit.); H. Schwabl, *RE Suppl.* 9, 1561ff.; D. Mannsperger, *Aufstieg und Niedergang* 2, 1, 1974, 963ff.

<sup>3</sup> L. Deubner, *MDAI(R)* 27, 1912, 1ff.; P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius*, 1912, 177f.; D. Levi, *Hesperia* 13, 1944, 269ff.; *idem*, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 1947, 195ff.; 263ff.; G. M. A. Hanfmann, *The Seasons Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks* 1, 1951, 104ff.; 163ff. (cf. Horn, *Gnomon* 27, 1955, 352ff.); J. Charbonneau, *MEFR* 1960, 253ff.; A. Blanco Freijeiro, "El mosaico de Merida con la alegoría del Saeculum aureum," *Estudios sobre el mundo helenístico. Ciclo de conferencias en el curso académico 1969-1970*, Sevilla 1971, 153ff.; G. Ch. Picard, in: *La mosaïque gréco-romaine* 2, Paris 1971 (1975), 119f. Also: C. Albizzati, *Athenaeum* N. S. 15, 1937, 187ff.; M. Eliade, *Le mythe de l'éternel retour*, 1949; E. Peterson, *ΕΙς Θεός*, 1926, 241ff.; 260ff.

<sup>4</sup> Arist. *De caelo* 1,9,279f.: κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον καὶ τὸ τοῦ παντὸς οὐρανοῦ τέλος καὶ τὸ τὸν πάντα χρόνον καὶ τὴν ἀπειρίαν περιέχον τέλος Αἰὼν ἐστίν, ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰεὶ εἶναι εἰληφώς τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν, ἀθάνατος καὶ θεῖος.

*Aion in Alexandria.* – In the romance of Alexander the hero is proceeding to the foundation of Alexandria guided by Ammon, in the region of Egypt where *Aion Plutonium* has his domain<sup>5</sup>:

ὦ βασιλεῦ, σοὶ Φοῖβος <ὁ> μηλόκερως ἀγορεύει·  
εἶγε θέλεις αἰῶσιν ἀκησάτοισ(ι) νεάζειν,  
κτίζε πόλιν περίφημον ὑπὲρ Πρωτηίδα νῆσον,  
ἧς προκάθητ' Αἰὼν Πλουτώνιος αὐτὸς ἀνάσσων  
πενταλόφοις κορυφαῖσι ἀτέρμονα κόσμον ἐλίσσων.

We do not need here to scrutinize once more the Alexander-Romance and try again to separate the scattered historical facts in it from the surrounding web of fictitious elements<sup>6</sup>. It is enough for our discussion to stress the authenticity of the name of *Aion Plutonium*, a *terminus technicus* reaching back to the early Ptolemies.

One of the great experts in the field of Greek religion, Martin P. Nilsson, thought<sup>7</sup> that the epithet *Plutonium* indicated the assimilation of the god Aion to Sarapis, but to Sarapis not as the lord of the nether world, but as the “giver of riches”. This interpretation correctly derives *Plutonium* from Pluton, but then wrongly identifies Pluton with Sarapis; the well-known amalgamation of Sarapis with Hades occurred later than Aion was remodelled in Alexandria. I must repeat: Sarapis has nothing to do with the original formulation of the theology of Aion, as conceived at the court of the Ptolemies. *Plutonium*, a derivative of Pluton, refers indeed to the divine source of the earth’s abundance of natural products. Plato, *Crat.* 403A, rightly derives the very name Πλούτων from πλούτος, and ancient

<sup>5</sup> *Vita Alexandri Magni* (ed. H. van Thiel, 1974), 1,30,7 and 1,33,2.

<sup>6</sup> All the literary data and extensive modern literature on the subject are to be found in the following studies: C. B. Welles, *Historia* 11, 1962, 271ff.; J. E. Stambaugh, Sarapis under the Early Ptolemies, *Études prélimin. aux religions orient. dans l’empire romaine*, 25, 1972. P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* 1, 1972, 247f.; F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Große: Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*, 21973, 239ff.; 537; 564; 691ff. (general literature).

C. B. Welles, *op. cit.*, thought that this nomenclature could have been in use even before the foundation of Alexandria and that it could have been employed in an oracle of Ammon in 331 B. C. But it is a Greek definition of the divinity, conceived by the Ptolemies. I follow R. Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 188: “Der Name ist die griechische Beigabe zur Schöpfung des neuen Gottes.”

<sup>7</sup> M. P. Nilsson, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 482. O. Weinreich, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 189, expressed a similar opinion. The preponderance of Sarapis, however, is a later development, as our documentation shows.

writers along with modern etymologists<sup>8</sup> follow him. And Hesychios (s. εὐπλοῦτος) gives the original meaning of *ploutos* as “wealth in corn”. Thus the meaning of the adjective *ploutonios* is “the bringer of rich crops”, without, however, involving a connection with the myth, ritual and iconography of Hades, the ruler of the nether world. The reason for this must be that the complex theology of Aion was influenced by the cults of two solar divinities who also were promoters of the fertility of the soil, namely the Phoenician Baal, called *Kronos* in Greek and *Saturnus* in Latin, and the Egyptian Osiris. The correctness of this interpretation will become evident once more from the fact that the Alexandrian divinity *Aion Plutonios* survived in Punic North Africa as the god called *Saeculum Frugiferum*, as we will see below. The Latin translation of “Aion” was “*Saeculum*” (σέκουλον γὰρ τὸν αἰῶνα Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσιν, says Zosimus 2,1,1); and that “*Frugiferum*” is the translation of “*Plutonios*” needs no further clarification.

It is another matter that Alexandrian theologians attributed the quality of a *frugifer deus* to Sarapis as well as to Aion. The best illustration of this fact is provided by a votive terracotta statuette showing the *kosmokrator* Sarapis lying in a corn-field<sup>9</sup>. This secondary equation of Aion and Sarapis, however, has nothing to do with the original concept of the Alexandrian Aion, though this erroneous notion continues to be repeated in recent studies on our subject<sup>10</sup>.

The correct solution of this intricate problem was pinned down by R. Reitzenstein in 1921<sup>11</sup>: “At a time when the cult of Sarapis overshadowed all others, a new interpretation of the oracle (of Ammon in the Alexander-Romance) emerged, according to which *Aion Plutonios* is merely an oracular circumlocution for a specific god, namely Sarapis himself”.

The original independence of Aion and Sarapis is clearly reflected by the fundamental differences between their respective iconographies. We shall review some types of the representations of Aion in this study and

<sup>8</sup> Hofer, in Roscher's *Lexikon der griech. und röm. Mythologie* 3,2569. Cf. also M. Leglay, *Saturne africain: Histoire*, Paris 1966, 121 ff.; 235.

<sup>9</sup> W. Hornbostel, *Sarapis, Ét. prélim. aux rel. or. dans l'empire rom.*, 32, 1973, 350 f.; Fig. 270. It seems to me that the counterpart of this Sarapis is missing, namely the figure of Isis.

<sup>10</sup> E. g. Welles, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 283. Stambaugh, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 4; 28; 41 f.; 84 f.; Hornbostel, *op. cit.*, 272 n. 2, etc.

<sup>11</sup> Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 196.

others in subsequent ones; the early iconographical types of Sarapis have recently been illuminated for us in an article by H. Jucker<sup>12</sup>, a valuable survey by J. E. Stambaugh<sup>13</sup>, and the thorough catalogue of each and every statuary type in the book by Hornbostel that we have already cited.

The cult of Sarapis (Osiris-Apis) existed in Egypt at the time of the conquest of Alexander the Great. The prominent feature of this Egyptian divinity must have been his rule over the nether world, for when the early Ptolemies adopted him in a Hellenized form as their patron, they chose as his representation a statue of Pluton with the *kalathos* on his head and with Kerberos at his feet. In all artistic representations Sarapis is a bearded older man assimilated to the paternal image of almighty Zeus, but characterized by the *kalathos* as a chthonic divinity. The case of Aion is fundamentally different. One category of the complex repertory of his appearances in sculpture and painting, in mosaics and minor arts, features him too as an aged man; but in this case the basic prototype is never Zeus, but always Kronos-Saturn along with Poseidon.

The original independence of the Alexandrian Aion from Sarapis is manifested also in the separation of their respective cults. The festival of the birth of Aion<sup>14</sup> on the day of Epiphany was celebrated in Alexandria not in the *Serapeum*, but in the *Koreion*. It seems to be no mere coincidence that Aion was also worshipped in the most venerable *Koreion* of the Greek world, in Eleusis<sup>15</sup>, where another *Frugifer*, Triptolemos, also had his home. Important new evidence for the connection between the *Koreion* at Eleusis and that in the city of Alexander is offered by Alexandrian game-counters of the Julio-Claudian period, to be surveyed by Elizabeth Alföldi in *Chiron* 6, 1976, which demonstrate that the Alexandrian *Koreion* was situated in the suburb Eleusis (pl. C, 3) and was regularly called the *Eleusinion* (pl. C, 1; 2).

<sup>12</sup> H. Jucker, *Schweizer Munzblätter* 19, 1969, 78ff.

<sup>13</sup> Stambaugh, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 10ff.; 17f.; 21; 27ff.

<sup>14</sup> Reitzenstein, *GGN* 1904, 317ff.; K. Holl, *SPAW* 1917, 402ff.; O. Weinreich, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 188ff.; E. Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes*, 1924, 24ff.; 33ff.; Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 188ff.; 196ff.; M. Zepf, *ARW* 25, 1927, 241; Fr. Cumont, *CRAI* 1928, 278; Nilsson, *ARW* 30, 1933, 152ff.; Nock, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 92 = 1, 389 (who was the first to suspect the reference of the bone-game-counters to the Alexandrian sanctuary [pl. C, 1-3]); Nilsson, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 482; Fraser, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 336ff.; with n. 79; W. Fauth, *Der Kleine Pauly* 1, 186 (further lit.).

<sup>15</sup> *SiG*<sup>3</sup> 1125; R. Wünsch, *ARW* 12, 1909, 36; O. Kern, *ARW* 22, 1925, 199ff.; Weinreich, *op. cit.* (n. 1) 174ff.; Nilsson, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 331 n. 11.

Triptolemos appears with Aion on the mosaic-floor of Chehba-Philippopolis, cf. Charbonneaux, *op. cit.* (n. 3).

On the other hand, the continuation of the cult of the Alexandrian Aion in North Africa in the religion of *Saturnus Frugifer*, to be discussed below, shows us that even under his Roman name the Aion of the Ptolemies preserved his identity and remained distinct from Pluton. Among the very large number of votive inscriptions dedicated to that *Frugifer*, now conveniently assembled and carefully analyzed in the volumes of M. Leglay's *Saturne africain*<sup>16</sup>, there is only one which names the god *Pluto Augustus Frugifer* (ILS 4453), and this exception probably arose from a mistaken identification of *Plutonium* with *Pluton*, – easily to be understood. One other inscription (ILS 4457) is also dedicated to *Pluto*, but mentions along with him a number of other divinities including *Dispater*. Here *Pluto* clearly stands for *Frugifer*, for the presence of *Dispater* demonstrates the conscious differentiation from the god of the nether world.

It has been overlooked that we possess impeccable contemporary evidence for the iconographical characterization of *Aion Plutonium* from as early as the third century B. C. This is revealed by the correct interpretation of the representation of Ptolemy III as a divinity on the golden octadrachms struck by his son and successor<sup>17</sup> (pl. A, 1; 3). On these heavy pieces of gold the departed king is shown with a youthful face, equipped with the *aegis* of Zeus, the rays of Helios emerging from the royal ribbon on his head, the trident of Poseidon on his shoulder. The cornucopiae of the reverse displays once more the royal diadem, resplendent with the rays of the sun around it: this is another pictorial reference to the *Euergetes*, the divinized benefactor of the world, whose rule brought care-free happiness, plenty, and blessings to humanity.

The same bust of Ptolemy III was also placed on the seals of high officials and priests, as the impression of such a seal in unbaked clay in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto (pl. A, 2)<sup>18</sup> attests. H. Kyrieleis<sup>19</sup> ob-

<sup>16</sup> Leglay, *op. cit.* (n. 8), 121 ff.; 235.

<sup>17</sup> I wrongly attributed these octadrachms to Philopator in *Chiron* 2, 1972, 224; I follow here the generally assumed interpretation.

The scepter of the Ptolemies, which constitutes the central prong of the trident on the obverse of these coins, is the same as that which appears, e. g., with the bust of Arsinoë; cf. J. N. Svoronos, *Τὰ νομίσματα τοῦ κράτους τῶν Πτολεμαίων* 3, 1904, pl. 42,1.

<sup>18</sup> J. G. Milne, *JHS* 36, 1916, 87ff.; pl. 4,101. D. Burr Thompson, *Ptolemaic Omochoai*, 1973, pl. 74b.

<sup>19</sup> H. Kyrieleis, *JDAI* 88, 1973, 220. It is no mere chance that these didrachms were struck exactly 100 years after the appearance of the phoenix was announced in 238 B. C.

served that the same sort of complex divinization was extended to another ruler of Hellenized Egypt. “Ptolemy VIII”, he writes, “the second king of the dynasty styled ‘Euergetes’, the *deuteros euergetes* of the inscriptions, appears on silver didrachms of the year 138/37 B. C. in the same dress, with *aegis* and the rays above the diadem. That the first Euergetes, Ptolemy III, had here been the model emerges both from the royal epithet and from the adaptation of what must have been a well-known coin portrait”.

The divine attributes of Euergetes have hitherto been interpreted as a cumulation of unrelated elements not based upon a single theological concept. We quote some recent statements illustrating this. Kyrieleis, in his relevant contribution on Ptolemaic portraiture<sup>20</sup>, writes that “this seemingly hybrid accumulation of the heterogeneous attributes of several different gods and their substitution for the ordinary Hellenistic royal attire can only be understood, I think, as a symbolic combination of the different characteristics of the divine essence of the king”.

In another fine study of the portrait sculpture of the Ptolemies, Ines Jucker<sup>21</sup> expresses a similar view and adds to it a general conclusion: “The combination of a number of attributes of the highest Greek gods on the coins that Philopator struck for his deceased father serves to illustrate the splendor of the Ptolemaic house . . . Thus, inspired by ancient Egyptian ideas, the practice of expressing through symbols the divinity and might of the ruler and the abundant prosperity of his reign seems to have originated and to have reached its highest development at the court of Alexandria under the rule of the *diadochoi*.”

Quite differently, N. Davis and C. M. Kraay try to explain this phenomenon as an attempt to express the extent and superiority of the king’s rule by giving him the distinguishing features of three great divinities. They write<sup>22</sup>: “Is this simply a casual assemblage of cults with which Ptolemy was associated or is there a definite political message? The cooperation between the Ptolemies (Zeus, cf. Fig. 9) and Rhodes (Helios) secures control of the sea (Poseidon). Ptolemaic maritime power was at its greatest extent during the third century. On the reverse the cornucopiae bound with the royal diadem is surmounted by the rays of the sun. The

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>21</sup> Ines Jucker, *AK* 18, 1975, 17ff.

<sup>22</sup> N. Davis & C. M. Kraay, *The Hellenistic Kingdoms: Portrait Coins and History*, 1973, fig. 23f.; 27.

meaning is that the king, identified with the sun-god, assures the fertility of the earth."

Such a rationalistic use of symbols could be the directing idea of a modern medallist planning an allegorical composition. We would admit too that such decorative bragging with the symbols of divine majesty and power could have fit the exhibitionism of the worthless emperor Commodus<sup>23</sup>, four hundred years after Euergetes, when the grandeur of the gods of classical Greece had become diluted in the flood of syncretism, and the paraphernalia of their presentation in art had faded to empty clichés. In the early phase of the Hellenistic ruler-cult, however, when the institution was still based on true religious veneration of the sovereign by his subjects, such a frivolous approach cannot be admitted.

For the highly influential priestly caste of Egypt in the third century B. C. such a combination of divine potencies as indicated by the attributes of Euergetes on the octadrachms of his son meant their union under the aspect of one supreme power. Their way of thinking and their high aspirations could not be better illustrated than by the simple quotation of a famous religious document, deeply rooted in the atmosphere just indicated.

This document is the truly majestic revelation of Isis<sup>24</sup> in the novel of Apuleius (*Met.* 11,5):

*En adsum tuis commota, Luci, precibus, rerum naturae parens,  
elementorum omnium domina, saeculorum progenies initialis,  
summa numinum, regina manium, prima caelitum, deorum dea-  
rumque facies uniformis, quae caeli luminosa culmina, maris salu-  
bria flamina, inferum deplorata silentia nutibus meis dispenso:  
cuius numen unicum multiformi specie, ritu vario, nomine*

<sup>23</sup> A lampoon (so called by E. Schwartz, *Hermes* 35, 1900, 127) quoted by Athenaeus (12,537 E = *FGrHist* 126 F 5), disguised under the name of Ephippos of Olynthus, alleges that Alexander the Great liked to parade in various divine costumes. Jacoby (*FGrHist* 2 B Komm., p. 439 [at 126 F 5]) pays too much attention to this product of the anti-monarchic invective of the cynical and stoic popular philosophy, which liked to portray the Hellenistic kingship as a tyranny of Persian coloring. For the origins of this pattern, cf. my remarks in: *Late Classical and Early Medieval Studies in Honor of A. M. Friend*, 1955, 15ff.

<sup>24</sup> For the origins of this doctrine, cf. R. Harder, *Karpokrates und die memphitische Propaganda*, 1943, *passim* (cf. Nock, *Gnomon* 21, 1949, 221ff.); W. Peek, *Der Isis-hymnus von Andros und verwandte Texte*, Berlin 1930. More in Nilsson, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 600ff.; D. Müller, *Ägypten und die griechischen Isis-Arealogien*, 1961.



*multiuugo totus veneratur orbis. Inde primigenii Phryges Pessinuntiam Deum Matrem, hinc autochthones Attici Cecropeiam Mineruam, illinc fluctuantes Cyprii Paphiam Venerem, Cretes sagittiferi Dictynnam Dianam, Siculi trilingues Stygiam Proserpinam, Eleusinii vetustam deam Cererem, Iunonem alii, Bellonam alii, Hecatam isti, Rhamnusiam illi, et qui nascentis dei Solis inchoantibus inlustrantur radiis Aethiopes utrique priscaque doctrina pollentes Aegyptii, caerimoniis me propriis percolentes, appellant vero nomine reginam Isidem.*

Reitzenstein once remarked that if in this solemn theological announcement we retain the definition of the almighty divinity, ruler of the Kosmos, but replace the female names with corresponding male ones, we are approaching very near to the concept of Aion. Indeed, it will be shown below that Euergetes, as a divine being combining the powers of Zeus, Helios, and Poseidon, is Aion, the *poikilomorphos* god, ruler of the universe, who introduces the rebirth of the world.

This is also the reason that Ptolemaios Euergetes, who died at an age over sixty, appears with such rejuvenated features on the octadrachms. Aion was represented in cult and in art as both very old and very young, but court propaganda (a topic to which we will return below) preferred to show him as a boy. On the magnificent gold piece in Boston (pl. A, 1) Euergetes appears as a very young boy, whereas other die cutters portrayed him as a resplendent youth<sup>25</sup> (pl. A, 3).

The cornucopiae with the royal diadem on the reverse, illuminated by the luster of the rays of Helios, also refers to the royal benefactor of the world as *Aion Plutonium*: on an Attic vase of the fourth century B. C. Plutos is shown sitting on the horn of plenty<sup>26</sup>, and in the art of imperial Rome the putto sitting on the cornucopiae or just emerging from it continued this symbolism, heralding the advent of the Golden Age.

<sup>25</sup> The same rejuvenation of the divinized king (in place of realistic portraiture) must be taken into account in the case of the Ptolemaic bronze statuettes of a pair of wrestlers, excellently interpreted by Kyrieleis, *Ant. Plastik* 12, 1973, 133 ff. He has shown that the victorious athlete, who combines the young Horus and Hermes-Thot in the same person, is a Ptolemaic king. I suspect that the theological background of the royal Horus-Thot influenced the syncretistic divinity appearing on *denari* of the Roman civil wars, analyzed in *Chiron* 2, 1972, 215 ff.

<sup>26</sup> K. Schefold, *Kertscher Vasen*, Berlin 1930, pl. 6b. E. La Rocca, *JDAI* 89, 1974, 112 ff.; esp. 125, Fig. 23. We wish to discuss the Roman imitations of this art motif in a later contribution.

Once the identification of the divinized Euergetes, "Benefactor of the human race", with Aion is established, it is not difficult to find out when and how this apotheosis came about. This was not mere poetic imagery of court flatterers: it was a political consecration, worked out by experts. Aion, god of Eternity, was supposed to govern the periodical regeneration of the Kosmos and to introduce after the completion of a cycle of world-years the revival of the Golden Age, the utopia of Paradise on Earth.

The equation of the accession of a new king to the throne with the happy rebirth of the world was an old Egyptian concept well suited to the Hellenistic mentality and the political propaganda of the age. R. van den Broek suggests that this concept was invented in the court of the Seleucids and applied first with respect to the accession of Antiochos I<sup>27</sup>. The theoretical basis, however, was not new. We know that the end of a sequence of cosmic periods and the rebirth of the universe was proclaimed in Egypt precisely under Euergetes. The theory of the sacred science of Egypt connected this greatest event on earth with the appearance of the miraculous bird phoenix<sup>28</sup>, messenger of the heavens for this single occasion. The great synod of Egyptian priests that met in 239/38 B. C. to discuss the stabilization and expansion of the ruler-cult<sup>29</sup> used the opportunity of a new Sothis period, as Van den Broek has shown, to assert that this god-sent herald of the returning Golden Age had just reappeared. Van den Broek writes<sup>30</sup>:

"Because of the parallelism between the Greek and Egyptian conceptions on this point, it was virtually inevitable that the phoenix would become a symbol of the Sothic period and that this bird would be identified with its beginning. Like other purely astronomical cycles, that of Sothis was regarded as a Great Year, although actually in a derivative sense. The original mythic conception of the Great Year, with the return to the beginning of the world and the renewal of all things, was also

<sup>27</sup> R. van den Broek, *The Myth of the Phoenix, Ét. prélim. aux rel. or. dans l'empire rom.*, 24, 1972, 104. Cf. for the half scientific, half mythical theories behind this announcement F. Boll, C. Bezold & W. Gundel, *Sternglaube und Sterndeutung*, 1966, 200ff.; B. L. van der Waerden, *Hermes* 80, 1952, 135 ff.; W. Burkert, *Weisheit und Wissenschaft*, 1962, 293 ff. Cf. also H. Castritius, *JNG* 14, 1964, 89 ff.; M. Walla-Schuster, *Der Vogel Phönix in der antiken Literatur und der Dichtung des Laktanz, Diss. der Univ. Wien*, 29, 1969, 33 f.; 42.

<sup>28</sup> Van den Broek, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 233 ff.; Walla-Schuster, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 53 ff.

<sup>29</sup> H. Volkmann, *RE* 23, 1674 ff.; 1688 f.; R. Böker, *RE* 2A, 2417 f.

<sup>30</sup> Van den Broek, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 106 f.; Walla-Schuster, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 33 f.; 42.

transferred to this astronomical Great Year. In the way just indicated, the phoenix became a symbol of the Great Year, the inaugurator of a new era. It would indeed have been remarkable if in Hellenistic Egypt, on the basis of all this, its appearance had not been connected with the beginning of the Sothic period.

“This connection was perhaps first made under Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221 B. C.), in the sixth year of whose reign (238) the well-known decree of Canopus was issued at a large gathering of Egyptian priests. In this document the salutary rule of Ptolemy III was praised to the skies and a number of measures intended to extend the divine worship of this ruler and his spouse were announced. At the same time, however, it represented an attempt to reform the calendar . . . It was therefore decided that every four years a sixth day would be added to the five intercalated days, as a leap-day, and to have New Year’s day henceforth coincide with the ascension of Sirius on the first of the month of Payni.

“The decree of Canopus was clearly meant to inaugurate a new era . . . It is in this light that we must read the so far unexplained report of Tacitus that the phoenix appeared in the time of Ptolemy III<sup>31</sup>. Evidently, an attempt was made to add authority to the new calendar by invoking an appearance of the phoenix, the herald of a new era. It is not impossible that in this case the example of the appearance of the phoenix at the beginning of the Seleucid era served as inspiration.”

The golden octadrachms do not stand alone with the representation of a Ptolemaic ruler as Aion. The same sort of divinization is also attested, first of all, by the well-known relief of Archelaos from Priene with the apotheosis of Homer (pl. B)<sup>32</sup>. C. Watzinger demonstrated long ago<sup>33</sup> that the divine couple placed behind the seated poet as an allegorical indication of his perpetual glory exhibit the features of one of the Ptolemies and the idealized visage of his wife. Their divine function has been indicated by labeling them as *XPONOS* and *OIKOYMENH*, and by providing the man with large and powerful wings and placing the *polos* of Demeter on the head of the woman. Numerous scholars have tried to refute the interpretation of Watzinger, but without success. On the contrary: the

<sup>31</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 6,28: *prioresque alites Sesoside primum, post Amaside dominantibus, dein Ptoletheo qui ex Macedonibus tertius regnavit, in civitatem cui Heliopolis nomen, advolavisse.*

<sup>32</sup> D. Pinkwart, *Das Relief des Archelaos von Priene und die Musen des Philiskos*, 1965, 311 ff., does not discuss the identification of Chronos-Aion with a Ptolemaic ruler; she provides excellent illustrations and an up-to-date bibliography in: *Ant. Plastik* IV 7, 1973, pl. 29.

<sup>33</sup> C. Watzinger, *Berl. Winckelmannsprogramm*. 63, 1903, 17f.

clay impression of a seal from Egypt (pl. D, 5) with the portrait of Ptolemy Philometor, recently recognized by D. Burr Thompson<sup>34</sup>, shows the same powerful wings. It goes without saying that the ΧΡΟΝΟΣ of the Archelaos-relief does not mean the measured time familiar to us, but Aion as immeasurable time, in reference to the everlasting fame of Homer, which illuminates the whole civilized world, the ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΗ. The wings are part of the iconography of the boundless time of eternity, Aion.

*Aion Plutonium and Osiris Frugifer.* – The heavy pieces of gold with the likeness of Euergetes as Aion were produced for the pay and reward of the Graeco-Macedonian staff and officers of Ptolemy IV. It is obvious that the divine king was represented in a Hellenized manner as Zeus-Helios-Poseidon with a view towards these recipients. But it is equally evident that behind this Greek presentation an Egyptian version of Aion must have existed.

The passage of Tacitus quoted above<sup>35</sup> includes the important fact that it was in Heliopolis that the phoenix (cf. pl. F, 6; H, 1–4) allegedly appeared under Euergetes. This is another connection of Aion with the sun-god, attested already by the sun-rays around the diadem of Euergetes, and another proof that not Pluton, but Helios, constitutes one of the main components in the composite concept of our god of Eternal Time.

A closer interpretation of well-known texts leads us a step closer to the Egyptian definition and form of Aion. In an invocation of Sol-Apollo in the *Thebais* of Statius one finds<sup>36</sup>: *adsis . . . / . . . seu te roseum Titana vocari / gentis Achemeniae ritu, seu praestant Osirim / frugiferum*, etc. Philo of Byblos, in the same epoch as Statius, offers a paraphrase of the divine epithet *Frugifer*, connected this time not with Osiris, but with Aion<sup>37</sup>: he describes Aion as the *inventor* of nourishment from plants

<sup>34</sup> Burr Thompson, *op. cit.* (n. 18) 90 and 114 with pl. 74 K. The lion-skin covering the head of the king indicates his alleged descent from Heracles.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. above n. 31; and Walla-Schuster, *op. cit.* (n. 27), 53 ff.; 81 ff.; Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 200.

<sup>36</sup> Stat. *Theb.* 1,696 ff., esp. 716 ff. Osiris-Frugifer was also known by Tibullus, but this poet transformed him into the *inventor* of agriculture (1,7,29 ff.): *Primus aratra manu sollerti fecit Osiris / Et teneram ferro sollicitavit humum, / Primus in expertae commisit semina terrae / Pomaque non notis legit ab arboribus; / Hic docuit teneram palis adiungere vitem, / Hic viridem dura caedere falce comam.* Cf. for the philosophical background of this changed attitude F. Bomer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Die Fasten*, 1958, 241 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Philo of Byblos, in Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 1,10,7: εἰτά φησιν γεγενῆσθαι ἐκ τοῦ Κολπία ἀνέμου καὶ γυναικὸς Βάαυ (τοῦτο δὲ νύκτα ἐρμηνεύει) Αἰῶνα καὶ Πρωτόγονον . . . εὐρεῖν δὲ τὸν Αἰῶνα τὴν ἀπὸ δένδρων τροφήν.

and trees. In Alexandria, however, Osiris was identified with Aion. Damascius, a late pagan philosopher from Alexandria, confirms this explicitly<sup>38</sup>. These texts prove once more that the *Aion Plutonium* of Alexandria was a *plutodotes-Frugifer*, and not a hypostasis or descendant of Pluto.

The identification of Aion Plutonium with Osiris-*Frugifer* is directly attested by a stele from Koptos, published long ago by W. M. Flinders Petrie<sup>39</sup>, but only recently put in the right perspective by L. Kákosy<sup>40</sup>. Osiris is seen on this relief (pl. E, 1) standing in the circle of the *ouroboros*, the snake biting its own tail – the Egyptian symbol of Eternity<sup>41</sup>. Surrounded by six stars, Osiris must here represent the sun, and the relief symbolizes the return of the seven planets to their original positions in the sky, when a new world year begins with the Golden Age under the guidance of Aion.

*The Phoenician-African Version of the Aion Cult of Alexandria.* – As mentioned above, the Latin rendering of the Aion was *Saeculum*<sup>42</sup>, and the translation of *Aion Plutonium* must therefore be *Saeculum Frugiferum*. And in fact we find in a cult of Roman North Africa not only this translation, but also the same iconographical pattern of Zeus-Helios-Poseidon that had been applied to Euergetes as Aion, with the sole difference that the supreme god of the Syrians here replaces the supreme god of the Greeks. The principal evidence for this is provided by coins

<sup>38</sup> Damascius, in *Suda* Δ 521 Διαγνώμων (2,52,23ff. Adler): . . . ὁ μὲν δὴ Ἑραΐσκος . . . διέγνω τὸ ἄρρητον ἀγαλμα τοῦ Αἰῶνος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κατεχόμενον, ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὶς ἐτίμησεν, Ὁσίριν ὄντα καὶ Ἀδωνιν ὁμοῦ κατὰ μυστικὴν θεοκρασίαν. Κτλ. E 2744 Ἐπιφάνιος (2,391,29ff. Adler): Ε. καὶ Εὐπρέπιος ἐγενέσθην Ἀλεξανδρεῖς τὸ γένος ἀμφοτέροι καὶ παρὰ Ἀλεξανδρεῦσι τελετῶν νομιζομένων δαμονέσταιοι, τῶν μὲν Περσικῶν καλουμένων ὁ Εὐπρέπιος ἐξάρχων, τῶν δὲ ἀμφὶ τὸν Ὁσίριν ὁ Ἐπιφάνιος. οὐ μόνον δὲ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν τοῦ Αἰῶνος ὑμνουμένου θεοῦ· κτλ. Δαμάσκιος. The first statement is repeated H 450 Ἑραΐσκος (2,579,12ff.).

<sup>39</sup> W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Koptos*, 1896, pl. 5; 12.

<sup>40</sup> L. Kákosy, *OA* 3, 1964, 15ff. with pl. 41. Cf. also P. Gauckler, *Le sanctuaire syrien du Janicule*, 1912, 210ff.

<sup>41</sup> Nonn. *Dionys.* 41,178ff.; Macrobi. *Saturn.* 1,9,12. A.-J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* 4, 1954, 182ff.; 190f. with 191 n. 13; H. G. Gundel, *Weltbild und Astrologie in den griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 1968, 8; 24; 89. More literature in J. G. Griffith, *Plutarch: De Iside et Osiride*, 1970, 255.

<sup>42</sup> Zosim. 2,1,1. Zosimus had good sources for this paragraph; cf. F. Paschoud, *Zosime: Histoire nouvelle* 1, 1971, 180ff.; cf. also J. Cousin, *RPh* 17,1943,162ff.

struck in Rome by Septimius Severus blandishing at the beginning of his reign his Caesar and future competitor Clodius Albinus by expressing the customary promises of coming bliss in several reverse types of *Saeculum Frugiferum*, i. e. Aion, as he was worshipped in Hadrumetum (Sousse), Albinus' home town<sup>43</sup>.

There is, however, an apparent difficulty. Aion appears on these coins not only as the youthful *kosmokrator* (pl. F, 1; 3–5; G, 1; 3–4; 6–7), with sun-rays at his head, a trident in one hand, and a *caduceus* joined with corn-ears in the other, but also as a bearded Phoenician Baal (pl. F, 2; G, 2; 5). But this puzzle can easily be solved by examining more closely the local cult of Hadrumetum.

This cult was not restricted to that city, but left its traces over wide stretches of North Africa. The inscriptions of this god give him the names of *deus sanctus Frugifer Augustus* (ILS 4452), *deus frugum patrius Frugifer Augustus* (ILS 4451), *Frugifer Saturnus Augustus* (ILS 4449), etc. The great quantity of votive monuments found in his sanctuaries are now conveniently accessible in the excellent survey of M. Leglay<sup>44</sup>. The double iconography of the god is expressed more clearly, however, in the types of the autonomous bronze coinage of Hadrumetum<sup>45</sup> than in these stone sculptures and inscriptions. The following issues of the city offer the evidence:

a) An emission before the Roman colonization:

1) Pl. C, 4; D, 1. HADR. Bust of a bearded male divinity r.; before him a trident. – Rev. Veiled head of goddess to l., wearing a laurel wreath, with scepter behind her<sup>46</sup>.

b) Two annual issues after the foundation of the first Roman colony (under Caesar and Lepidus)<sup>47</sup>:

2) Pl. D, 3. C. FABIVS CATVLVS II VIR. Head of a bearded male divinity r., with trident behind. – Rev. D. SEXTILIVS CORNVTVS II

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Géza Alföldy in: *Bonner Historia Augusta Colloquium 1966–67*, 1968, 19ff.

<sup>44</sup> Leglay, *op. cit.* (n. 8), 120ff.

<sup>45</sup> The latest catalogue of the coinage of Hadrumetum is that of L. Foucher, Hadrumetum, *Publ. de l'Univ. de Tunis*, 1<sup>re</sup> sér., 10, 1964, 33–57; 113f. His reproductions are unfortunately not satisfactory. Still indispensable is L. Müller, *Numismatique de l'ancienne Afrique* 2, Copenhagen 1861, 51ff., and Suppl., 1874, 41ff. Essential also G. K. Jenkins, *Syll. Numm. Graec.*, fasc. 42 (Copenhagen), 1969, under Hadrumetum.

<sup>46</sup> Müller, *op. cit.* 2, 51 n. 21. Jenkins, *op. cit.*, pl. 3, no. 58.

<sup>47</sup> The usual view that the first colonization of the city was carried out either by Caesar after Thapsus, or by Lepidus in the early years of the second triumvirate, has not been invalidated by L. Teutsch, *Das Städtewesen in Nordafrika in der Zeit von C. Gracchus bis zum Tode des Kaisers Augustus*, 1962, 145ff. (with good bibliography).

VIR. Bust of a youthful sun-god in frontal view with three circular haloes, from each of which sun-rays are radiating<sup>48</sup>.

3) Pl. C, 5; D, 2; E, 3. The same type, but the youthful head on the rev. has only one nimbus, and the sun-rays form only two circles, one around the head and one around the nimbus.

4) Pl. C, 6–7; D, 4; E, 2. L. FLAIVN. CAPIT. The same bearded head r. with trident; in style and fabric closely related to the obv. of no. 3. – Rev. ..LEIV. PERI. Youthful head with sun-rays around it to r.<sup>49</sup>. The laurel wreath under the sun-rays characterizes the god as Apollo.

5) Pl. C, 8; E, 4. Similar, but the youthful head with sun-rays on the rev. is shown to the l. No specimen with readable legends has yet been found<sup>50</sup>.

c) Coins of Hadrumetum honoring three governors under Augustus<sup>51</sup>, along with Caesar and Augustus with C. and L. Caesares:

6) Pl. C, 9. P. QVINTILI. VARVS. Head of the governor to r. – Rev. HADRVME. The head of the youthful god to the l., surrounded by the rays of the sun and with trident behind<sup>52</sup>.

7) Pl. C, 10. L. VOLVS. SATVR(N). Head of the governor to l. – Rev. The head of the same youthful god to the r., with trident behind<sup>53</sup>.

8) Pl. C, 11–12; G, 9. AFRIC. FABIVS MAX. COS. PROCOS. VII. EPVL. Head of the proconsul to r. – Rev. HADRVN. Bust of *Saturnus-Frugifer* to r. in the guise of a Punic Baal, with r. hand raised in benediction, the left holding corn-ears, the symbols of *Plutonium-Frugifer*<sup>54</sup>.

First a word on the identity of the goddess accompanying the bearded god (pl. C, 4; D, 1) on 1). She is called Astarte in the modern literature. But in a description of a gathering of the gods by the African writer Martianus Capella (to which we shall return below) Saturn enters<sup>55</sup> in the

<sup>48</sup> M. Grant, *From Imperium to Auctoritas*, 1946, 226 no. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Grant, *op. cit.* 227 no. 2; Jenkins, *op. cit.* (n. 45), no. 61–62. These coins are often illegible, and it is therefore not clear whether or not the title II. VIR. followed the names. The obverse shows that the type was the immediate successor of no. 3. E. Groag, *PIR*<sup>2</sup> 3, 1933, 130 no. 173, misled by an erroneous reading, confused this Flaminus with Flaminus Cilo.

<sup>50</sup> Müller, *op. cit.* (n. 45), no. 22. Jenkins, *op. cit.* (n. 45), pl. 3 no. 59.

<sup>51</sup> Müller, *op. cit.* (n. 45), no. 26–29 and Suppl., 42; Grant, *op. cit.* (n. 48), 228f.; B. E. Thomasson, *Die Statthalter der römischen Provinz Nordafrika* 1, 1960, 22; 26; 38; 49; 2, 1969, 13; 15.

<sup>52</sup> Müller, no. 26 (from the collection of the Comte de Palin). For the date cf., besides Thomasson, *op. cit.*, A. Lippold, *RE* 24, 901f.

<sup>53</sup> Müller, no. 27–28; Jenkins, no. 63. For the date cf. R. Hanslik, *RE* Suppl. 9, 1858.

<sup>54</sup> Müller, no. 29; Jenkins, no. 64–65.

<sup>55</sup> Mart. Cap. 1, 72.

company of Vesta, *nutrix Iovis*. Similarly a number of African inscriptions are dedicated to *Saturnus* and *Nutrix* together<sup>56</sup>. Other names of this attendant divinity of the African Saturn were *Cyria*, the “Queen”, which fits well with the scepter on the coin, and the African *Ceres*<sup>57</sup>, the mother goddess, who is indicated by the veiled head.

An explanation must also be given for the triple nimbus of the youthful solar god, pl. D, 3. This cannot be anything other than an indication of the three main stages of the sun’s orbit, as conceived in the astrological imagery of Syro-Phoenician mythology. These three stages were also expressed in art by embodying the sun in three separate mythical figures. Cumont illuminated this in his masterful study on the altar of Malakbel in the Capitoline Museum<sup>58</sup>. The three representations of this altar, the rising Helios in his carriage of griffins, the Helios resting on the back of the eagle of Heaven, and the image of Saturn mean “le soleil levant, le soleil de midi et le soleil de la nuit”<sup>59</sup>. We begin to understand why the youthful sun-god of our coins is constantly accompanied by the bearded one.

If other variants of the same coin type (pl. C, 5; D, 2; E, 3) illustrate only one nimbus of the youthful sun-god with several circles of rays, this is only the same sort of abbreviation that has been found by H. G. Gundel in the magic papyri<sup>60</sup>. He writes:

“Bei diesen beiden übereinander angeordneten Sonnenbildern wird man fragen dürfen, ob es sich um eine Teildarstellung des Gedankens der ‚drei Sonnen‘ handelt, um eine Version des Gottes also, der ‚morgens jung ist und abends ein Greis‘, und zwar in der Weise, daß das mittlere Bild die Jugend, das obere aber den Gott in seiner ganzen ätherischen Majestät aufweist, wenn er mitten am Himmel steht”<sup>61</sup>.

The image of our bearded god is in most cases accompanied by a trident on the coins of Hadrumetum (pl. C, 4–8; D, 1–4; E, 2–4), and he has therefore always been identified as Neptune. But the same trident also

<sup>56</sup> ILS 4473; 4475; 4476; 4477; 4477a. The nurse of Jupiter could well belong to the *Jupiter crescens* of the Golden Age; we know by now that *Frugifer* is Aion.

<sup>57</sup> ILS 4456; 4457; 4459ff.

<sup>58</sup> Fr. Cumont, *Syria* 9, 1928, 101 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Cumont, *op. cit.* 103f.

<sup>60</sup> Gundel, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 89.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. P. XII 217; I 33f. (cf. III 154 XXXVI 220); IV 173 (quotations of Gundel, *op. cit.* [n. 41]).



accompanies the concomitant representations of the solar divinity. (pl. C, 9–10; F, 1; 3–5; G, 1; 3–4; 6–7), who in spite of this attribute has been taken to be Sol, – a serious inconsequence. We can now see the real reasons for this duplication. First, Aion in Alexandrian iconography is not only the supreme god and Helios, but Poseidon too: the *kosmokrator* is also the master of the seas. Second, the young and the old god both carry the trident for the simple reason that they are both the same god. We can prove it.

Servius (*Aen.* 1,729) provides the following comment: *QVAM BELVS primus rex Assyriorum . . . quos constat Saturnum, quem et Solem dicunt . . . coluisse, quae numina etiam apud Afros culta sunt. Unde et lingua Punica Bal deus dicitur. Apud Assyrios autem Bel dicitur quadam sacrorum ratione et Saturnus et Sol.*

We have mentioned already the surprisingly good information of Martianus Capella, a late Roman writer from Africa, on the cult of *Saturnus-Frugifer-Aion*. His description of our divinity arriving at a gathering of the gods (1,70) runs as follows: *Verum sator eorum gressibus tardus ac remorator incedit glaucoque amictu tectus caput. Praetendebat dextra flammivororum quondam draconem caudae ultimum suae devorantem, quem credebant anni numerum nomine perdocere. Ipsius autem canities pruinosis nivibus candicabat, licet ille etiam puer posse fieri crederetur.*

The blue veil of the god, which like the trident signifies rule over the seas, the *Ouroboros*, symbol<sup>62</sup> of Eternity (cf. pl. E, 1), and the fact that the god appears as an old man but can also be seen as a young boy, all indicate that this is our *Saturnus-Sol*. He was a *Frugifer* in his Syrian homeland too, as Philo of Byblos<sup>63</sup> attests.

As already mentioned, important new evidence for the twofold iconography of Aion is offered to us by the coinage of Septimius Severus for Clodius Albinus, whose home town was Hadrumetum. Merlin, Poinssot and Gag  <sup>64</sup> recognized long ago that the *Saeculum Frugiferum* of these coin types is our *Aion Plutonium*.

<sup>62</sup> For the interpretation of the mystical juggling with the nine letters of the name of the *Ouroboros* cf. Reitzenstein, *Poemandres*, 1904, 272 ff. (on the analogous play with the seven letters of the name of Aion, and similar cases).

<sup>63</sup> Philo of Bybl. in Euseb. *Praep. evang.* 1,10,7 = *FGrHist* 790 F 2 (cf. above n. 37): (φησι) εὐρεῖν δὲ τὸν Αἰῶνα τὴν ἀπὸ δένδρων τροφήν.

<sup>64</sup> A. Merlin, *Le sanctuaire de Ba'al et de Tanit pr  s de Siagu*, 1910, 39 ff.; M. L. Poinssot, *Nouvelle arch. miss.* 18/4, 98; J. Gag  , *MEFR* 51, 1934, 65 ff.

Aion appears on these coins<sup>65</sup> in two different guises, as follows:

a) As a youthful divinity in heroic garb:

1) *Aureus* (pl. F, 1). D. CL. SEPT. ALBIN. CAES. Bare head to r. – Rev. SAECVLO FRVGIFERO COS II. The young solar god standing to l., naked to the waist. He holds in his r. hand the *caduceus* with corn-ears, in his l. the trident<sup>66</sup>.

2) *Sestertius* (pl. G, 1). Same legend. Bust of Albinus with *paludamentum*, seen from the back. – Rev. Same as above with S – C<sup>67</sup>.

3) *Sestertius* (pl. G, 3). IMP. CAES. L. SEPT. SEV. PERT. AVG. Head r. with laurel wreath. – Rev. As 2)<sup>68</sup>.

4) *Sestertius* (pl. G, 4). As 1). – Rev. As 2)<sup>69</sup>.

5) *As* (pl. G, 7). As 4)<sup>70</sup>.

6) *Dupondius* (pl. G, 6). IMP. CAES. L. SEP. SEV. PERT. AVG. Head r. with radiate crown. – Rev. As 3)<sup>71</sup>.

7) *Aureus* (pl. F, 3). Same legend. Head with laurel wreath r. – Rev. SAEC. FRVGIF. COS. Aion as on 1)<sup>72</sup>.

8) *Denarius* (pl. F, 4). As 7)<sup>73</sup>.

9) *Denarius* (pl. F, 5). As 1). – Rev. As 7)<sup>74</sup>.

b) As an old Phoenician Baal with his high fez-like crown, long robe to ankles with long sleeves and a *paludamentum*-like drapery, sitting on a high throne, flanked by two sphinxes with "Phrygian" caps; the god raises his r. hand in benediction and holds two corn-ears in his l.:  
10) *Aureus* (pl. F, 2). D. CL. SEPT. ALBIN. CAES. Bare head r. – Rev. SAECVLO FRVGIFERO COS II. Baal as described<sup>75</sup>.

11) *Sestertius* (pl. G, 2). D. [CL.] SEPT. ALBIN. CAES. Bare head r. – Rev. SAECVLO FRVGIFERO COS. II S – C. Baal as described<sup>76</sup>.

12) Bronze medallion (pl. G, 5). D. CLODIVS. SEPTIMIVS. ALBINVS. CAES. Bare-headed bust of Albinus with *paludamentum* seen from the back. – Rev. As 10)<sup>77</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> Curtis Clay, who is preparing a corpus of the gold and bronze coinage of Septimius Severus, kindly put at my disposal a survey of the types in question and also the photographs (taken by Miss O. M. Godwin of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) which are reproduced on the plates.

<sup>66</sup> H. Mattingly, *BMC Emp.* 5, 1950, 38 n.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 134, no. 541.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 119, no. 475.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 134, no. 539.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 135 f., no. 548–549.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 126, no. 4, after Coh. 638, Herpin coll.: Probably this specimen, on which the numeral "II" has been lightly tooled in after "COS" on the reverse.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, no. 4.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, no. 4 n.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 37 mentioned.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 38, no. 103.

<sup>76</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>77</sup> Fr. Gnechci, *I medaglioni romani* 2, 1912, 73, no. 4.

We have already quoted the statements of archaeologists and historians who realized that the *Saeculum Frugiferum* of the home-town of Clodius Albinus is none other than Aion. The numismatists, beginning with Ch. Lenormant in 1842, realized this even earlier<sup>78</sup>. Yet the duplication of the iconography – or rather triplication, because the *Saturnus* in classical guise of the autonomous types is still another identity of Aion – has remained unexplained.

Two of the best connoisseurs of the religions of North Africa in antiquity<sup>79</sup> tried to get around the apparent inconsequence of having three different representations for one designation by assuming that *Saeculum Frugiferum* was only a conventional allusion to the Golden Age promised by the new emperor to his subjects.

This assumption could possibly be valid in the case of the *denarius* of Pertinax (pl. G, 8), which shows the *caduceus*, the sign of happy tidings, flanked by three corn-ears on each side, with the same legend SAECVLVM FRVGIFERVM. But not in our instance. In the time of Albinus there existed an elaborate inventory of compositions reflecting the promised return of divine happiness, all of which had been repeated again and again in poetry, sculpture, painting, stucco-decoration, and mosaics, and which were known to everybody at least in their simplified forms on coins and finger-rings. The four seasons, leaping through the belt of the zodiac, held by the youthful ruler of the universe; charming putti hopping around the attractive Mother Earth, who lies delightfully in a flowery meadow. Or: the picture of heavenly bliss reduced to such meager personifications as *Felicitas saeculi*, *Felicitas temporum*, *Fecunditas*, *Securitas*, *Abundantia*, *Hilaritas*, *Laetitia*. But in our case we find no trace of these theatrical accessories, no generalities at all: the Syro-Phoenician Baal or Saturn on the one hand, and on the other the youthful supreme god, bearing the attributes of both Sol and Neptunus and a *caduceus* announcing the coming bliss of the world, are specifically and precisely the local version of the theology of Aion, the god of Hadrumetum.

The alternation of the venerable old god – be it Baal in Syrian costume or Kronos-Saturnus in Greek or Roman attire – and the youthful sovereign of the continents and the seas had of course a much broader basis

<sup>78</sup> Ch. Lenormant, *RN* 1842, 90 ff. Cf. Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 179 f.; 181 ff.; 218; Nock, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 86 f.; Levi, *op. cit.* (n. 3), 297.

<sup>79</sup> G. Ch. Picard, *Les religions de l'Afrique antique*, 1954, 73 f.; Leglay, *op. cit.* (n. 8), 12 f.

than Hadrumetum alone. We have now grasped its roots, and D. Levi has perceived the same double character of Aion in the pictorial representations, tracing the religious background of this curious phenomenon in the footsteps of Cumont, Reitzenstein and others. We will try here to correct and somewhat deepen Levi's results.

Nock established<sup>80</sup> – without dwelling on the subject – that Mandoulis-Aion was worshipped in Talmis (Nubia) in two forms: as a full-grown man and as “Mandoulis the Child”. The double character of Saturnus-Aion is attested not only by Martianus Capella, as quoted above, but also by a mythographer of late antiquity<sup>81</sup>: *Saturnus secundum fabulam cum sit senex, posse fieri puer fingitur, quod commentum ab hac re ortum fertur, quod corpus singulis annis senescere in hieme et reviviscere in vere videtur*<sup>82</sup>.

It has not escaped notice that the mystical theology of Aion also influenced the poetry of Synesios, bishop of Cyrene<sup>83</sup>:

Οὐδ' ὁ Βαθύρροος χρόνος οἶδε γονὰς  
τὰς ἀρρητούς·  
Αἰῶν δ' ὁ γέρων  
τὸν ἀμήρυτον  
τόκον οὐκ ἔδᾳη.  
ἅμα πατρὶ φάνη  
αἰωνογόνος  
ὁ γενησόμενος.

And again:

ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἀγήραος  
Αἰῶν ὁ παλαιγενής  
νέος ὦν ἅμα καὶ  
γέρων, τὰς ἀενάω μονᾶς  
ταμίας πέλεται θεοῖς.

This divine figure who is named παλαιγενής, νέος ὦν ἅμα καὶ γέρων is of course none other than the παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in the book of

<sup>80</sup> Nock, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 54.

<sup>81</sup> Mythogr. Vatic., 3rd ed. by A. Mai, in: Fr. Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra* 2, 1896, 53 § 8.

<sup>82</sup> For all these aspects cf. Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 186f.; V. Stegemann, *Astrologie und Universalgeschichte, Stoicheia*, 9, 1930, 26.

<sup>83</sup> Synes., *Hymn.* 1, 245ff. and 8, 67ff.

Daniel<sup>84</sup>, the awe-inspiring old man, seen by the visionary with gleaming white hair, seated on his glaring golden throne with his majestic face shining like fire. The same god of Eternity appears in the Apocalypse of John<sup>85</sup>. His eyes radiate like the sun. In his hands he holds the seven planets – which were supposed to start their movements together, directed by Aion, at the beginning of time. He dies and rises again from the dead, he is the First and the Last and lives in the Eternity of Eternities.

This *Antiquus dierum*, who is at the same time a *puer exoriens*, occurs frequently in the liturgical texts of the Church from the late imperial epoch onwards, as Kantorowicz has demonstrated in a brilliant study<sup>86</sup> that is generally ignored by historians of religion.

As we have seen, the *Saeculum Frugiferum* of Hadrumentum (pl. F, 2; G, 5; 9) sits on a high-backed throne and wears a long-sleeved cloak of Persian style reaching to his ankles. The reader, I think, will immediately recognize that the visionary of Patmos describes the same divine apparition when he writes: εἶδον . . . ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσοῦν. ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιών.

As discussed above, the *Saeculum Frugiferum* of Hadrumentum is also portrayed as a young man in full vitality, just as the Ancient of Days of the Holy Scriptures is celebrated also as a babe. Kantorowicz has shown in another brilliant paper<sup>87</sup> that the same double personification occurs in the liturgy of the feast of Hypapante in the Eastern Church celebrating the meeting of the aged Simeon with the infant Christ: the Παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν, ὃ σήμερον βρέφος ὁρᾶται. Kantorowicz found in Ephraem the Syrian a previous use of this imagery for the same occasion: Simeon testifies that the divine Infant is in fact the Ancient of Days. Kantorowicz even perceived the pre-Christian origin of this concept and the Egyptian roots of the solar character of Aion as *puer exoriens*<sup>88</sup>.

The texts and monuments referring to Aion fall into two categories, which are in some cases closely interwoven, in others clearly distinct. One of these is of a truly religious character, connected with worship. We have

<sup>84</sup> *Septuag.*, Dan. 7, 9–10; 13; 22. Cf. H. Sasse, *Theol. Worterbuch* 1, 197ff.

<sup>85</sup> *Apoc. Joh.* 1, 13–18; 2, 1.

<sup>86</sup> Kantorowicz, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 28ff.

<sup>87</sup> Kantorowicz, “*Puer exoriens*”, in: *Perennitas*; R. Thomas Michels OSB zum 70. Geburtstag, 1963, 118ff.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Th. Hopfner, *Plutarch uber Isis und Osiris*, 1940–1941 (repr. Darmstadt 1967), 2, 95ff.; Griffiths, *op. cit.* (n. 41), 290; Fr. Boll, *ARW* 19, 1916/19, 342ff.

found documents of this nature in Egypt and in the Syro-Phoenician milieu; we know that with Mithraism the Iranian version of this world-ruling divinity (cf. pl. G, 5) invaded the Roman Empire. We will not pursue this aspect of Aion any further, but instead turn to the second.

This is Aion introducing the returning Golden Age. The expectation of such a divine benefactor and savior by suffering mankind revealed itself as one of the many avenues for the approaching monarchy under the late Republic, and therefore the politicians of that epoch used the happy image of that unique cosmic event as a propaganda trick for their own ascent.

On the other hand, the decorative arts which embellished the life of the private citizen also took advantage of the symbolism of Aion in order to create a happy atmosphere in living quarters or to conjure up the blessings of Elysium in tombs, without the slightest connection to political reality. For both these purposes Aion was of course suitable and desirable not as the austere old man, but only as the miraculous child, the *nascens puer* of the *aurea aetas*, or as the almighty young *kosmokrator*.

The iconography of this latter was based, as we have seen, on the iconography of Helios, and quite naturally so, since Helios played such a fundamental role in the Hellenistic concept of Aion<sup>89</sup>. The heroization of Alexander the Great in the court art of the *diadochoi* left its imprint on the new type of the sun-god as master of the world. The shining young god of Eternity who carries Antoninus Pius and Faustina to heaven on his mighty wings in the famous relief from the base of the column of Antoninus gives us a good idea of this concept<sup>90</sup>. Different is the Aion who conjures up the perfect bliss of Paradise in the decorative art of private houses: a tender

<sup>89</sup> Cf. the texts quoted and the conclusions reached by Delatte, *MB* 17, 1913, 138f.; Cumont, *CRAI* 1928, 279; Zepf, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 234; 240; K. Holl, *SPAW* 1917, 426ff.; Kroll, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 67ff.; Norden, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 24ff.; 41; K. Horna, *SAWW* 207, 1928, 7ff.; Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 36; *idem*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 201; Nock, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 53ff.; esp. 63; 85; 96 = 1, 383; 394f.; Fauth, *Kl. Pauly* 1, 185ff. (bibl.).

<sup>90</sup> Deubner, *op. cit.* (n. 3), 14ff. (The Aion-Helios of Mithraism with the lion's head is to be separated from this statuary type. The snake climbing upwards in the sky represents the sun's orbit: cf. Cumont, *Textes et monum. figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra* 1, 79f.); O. Brendel, *Studies in Honor of F. W. Shipley*, St. Louis, Mo., 1942, 73ff.; H.-P. L'Orange, *Apotheosis in Ancient Portraiture*, Oslo 1947, 25ff.; Fr. Brommer, *Marburger Winckelmannsprogramm*, 1967 (1968), 1ff., would identify this Aion with Zephyrus. But he is surely the ruler of the Kosmos, for he holds in his hand the globe of the heavens, which is characterized by the zodiac, the planets, and the snake of the ecliptic. The globe cannot be a mere accessory to the apotheosis. The industrious survey of Lise Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, 1973, 32ff., brought few new results.

youth surrounded by charming putti and beautiful female figures in an enchanting spring landscape<sup>91</sup>.

*Aion Pantheus.* – Ptolemaios Euergetes as Aion is at the same time Zeus, Helios and Poseidon, as we have seen. But under the prevailing influence of the concept of Helios in the Near East and in Egypt, Aion came to encompass in his nature even more divinities than these three. We have already mentioned that in those regions the sun-god was imagined to change his shape three times in the course of each day. He was also supposed to assume a different form for each of the twelve different signs of the zodiac through which he passed<sup>92</sup>. In the wake of such conceptions of Helios Aion too became *poikilomorphos*, a sort of Proteus who could change his appearance and assume the identity of any other divinity whether male or female<sup>93</sup>.

“The essence of this notion”, wrote Reitzenstein<sup>94</sup>, “is that the sun-god or moon-god is on the one hand the god who creates, on the other hand the heavenly ether, and yet also the god of time: his various forms of appearance and subordinate deities, as they constantly recur, continually make up afresh the One, the Unchanging, and accordingly the Creation and the World in their perpetual renewal. It would be interesting to know whether the mysticism of the Hellenistic age ever formed a specific and to some extent technical designation for this curious being, who was of course able to adapt himself to various national divinities. In any case we can even now take notice that in Hellenistic prayers (the Egyptian god) Thot, who can assume any form, is referred to as ὁ μεταμορφούμενος εἰς πάντας ἐν ταῖς ὁράσεσιν Αἰὼν Αἰῶνος. Moreover, in the very prayer that gives his names at the different hours of the day, *agathos daimon* is called *plutodotes Aion*. Finally the same moon-goddess who is invoked through the twelve names and the twelve angels that she has for the different hours is praised in another prayer as follows: ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος εἰ, πάντων δὲ σύ μούνη ἀνάσσεις· ἐκ σέο γὰρ πάντ' ἔστι καὶ εἰς Αἰῶνα τελευτᾷ. She is *Aion*. Isis is of course the goddess of creation, the goddess of the moon and *Sophia*, and *Sophia* is equated with *Aion* in the papyri. It seems possible that this concept of the simultaneous multiplicity and unity of the godhead can give us some insight into the puzzling usage of the word *Aion*”.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. the last survey of this theme by J. W. Salomonson, *La mosaïque aux chevaux de l'antiquarium de Carthage*, 1965, with bibl. 127ff., and pl. 45.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. the texts quoted by Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 168 n. 4.

<sup>93</sup> The literary evidence is collected by Lackeit, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 87ff.

<sup>94</sup> Reitzenstein, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 269f.; *idem*, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 172 n. 2.