

Zeus and the Solar Disk

291

iii. Zeus and the Solar Disk.

Closely akin to the wheel is its genetic precursor¹ the disk. 'The Paiones,' says Maximus Tyrius, 'worship Helios, and the Paeonian image of Helios is a small disk on the top of a long pole².' With this ritual object I have elsewhere³ compared the sceptre surmounted by a circle held by Aphrodite *Ourania* on coins of Ouranopolis in Makedonia⁴ (fig. 210) and the *kopó* or olive-wood staff topped by a bronze ball representing the sun in the Boeotian *Daphnephoria*⁵. But indeed the same conception could be traced much further afield: it accounts satisfactorily, as I shall hope to show on another occasion, for the various forms taken by May-poles and 'Celtic' crosses throughout Europe.

Confining our attention to Greece, we note that a revolving disk of bronze, originally mounted on a long columnar handle, was

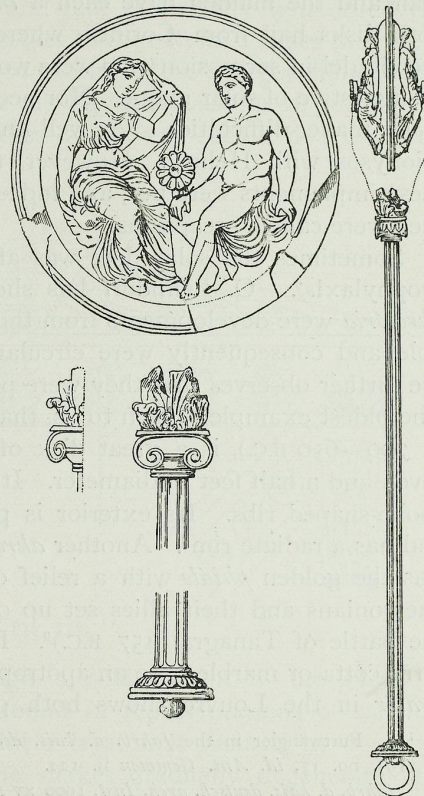


Fig. 211.

¹ On the evolution of the wheel from the disk see A. C. Haddon *The Study of Man* London 1898 p. 168 ff., cp. Schrader *Reallex.* p. 929 ff., H. Hirt *Die Indo-germanen* Strassburg 1905 i. 354 f., M. Hoernes *Natur- und Urgeschichte des Menschen* Vienna and Leipzig 1909 ii. 475 ff. N. Gordon Munro in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 1911 xxxviii. 3. 37 f. rightly assumes the sequence $\bigcirc \odot \oplus$ i.e. the pictograph of the sun, the solar disk, the solar wheel.

² Max. Tyr. *diss.* 8. 8 Dübner *Παιονες σέβουσι μὲν Ἥλιον, ἄγαλμα δὲ Ἥλιου Παιονικὸν δίσκος βραχὺς ὑπὲρ μακροῦ ξύλου.*

³ *Folk-Lore* 1904 xv. 410 n. 221.

⁴ Anson *Num. Gr.* vi pl. 1, 102, pl. 2, 122 f., 126, *Brit. Mus. Cat. Coins Macedonia* etc. p. 133 f., Head *Hist. num.*² p. 206. I figure a fine specimen in the McClean collection at Cambridge.

⁵ Prokl. *chrestomath.* 25 p. 352 f. Gaisford *ap. Phot. bibl.* p. 321 a 34 ff., schol. Clem. Al. *protr.* p. 298, 29 ff. Stählin, *Folk-Lore* 1904 xv. 409 ff.