

Contents

Abbreviations of Classical Sources Cited *xiii*

Introduction 3

The Hellenistic Age

The Hellenistic World

Religion in the Hellenistic World

Syncretism or System

Piety, Mystery, Gnosis

1. The Golden Ass in a Labyrinthian World 16

The Fictive World of Apuleius

The Cosmic World of Apuleius

The Mythic World of Apuleius

Fortune

Wandering

Salvation

The Social World of Apuleius

Home

Magic

The World of Apuleius

2. Hellenistic Piety 35
- Traditional Piety
 - Hellenistic Philosophy and the Rational Order of Things
 - Philosophy in the Hellenistic World*
 - The Epicureans*
 - The Stoics*
 - Philosophy and Piety*
 - Divination and the Cosmic Order of Things
 - Artificial Divination
 - Astrology*
 - Alchemy*
 - Natural Divination
 - The Delphic Oracle*
 - Dreaming*
 - Asclepius and Healing
 - Specialization and Senility
3. The Mysteries and the Sovereignty of the Feminine 58
- Mystery Deities
 - The Mysteries
 - The Eleusinian Mysteries
 - The Myth of Demeter*
 - The Rites of Demeter*
 - The Mystery Initiation*
 - Eleusis and Athens*
 - The Mysteries of Isis
 - The Myth of Isis and Osiris*
 - The Rites of Isis*
 - The Mysteries of Isis*
 - The Universal Goddess
 - The Syrian Goddess*
 - The Great Mother of the Gods*
4. Reformations and Innovations 90
- REFORMATIONS
 - Dionysus
 - The Myth of Dionysus*
 - The Mysteries of Dionysus*
 - The Orgies of the Roman Bacchanalia*
 - Orpheus
 - The Orphic Myth of Dionysus*
 - Orphic Mysteries*

Judaism

*Hellenistic Judaism**Yahweh and the Feminine*

INNOVATIONS

Alexander of Abonoteichus

Mithraism

*The Origin of Mithraism**The Myth of Mithras**Mithraic Initiation*

Christianity

*The Christ Myth**Appeal and Reaction*

5. Late Hellenistic Gnosis 134

Cosmic Revaluation

Gnosticism

*Christian and Non-Christian Gnosis**Gnostic Seeking**Gnostic Cult*

Manichaeism

The Hermetic Tradition

The Patriarchal Challenge

Conclusion: Hellenistic Religion as System 155

Index 165