

There is as little foundation for considering such a system as this to be Egyptian,\* as there is for confounding it with the Ptolemaic epicycles or the system of Tycho.

The names by which the *star-like* planets of the ancients were represented are of two kinds: names of *deities*, and *significantly* descriptive names derived from physical characters. Which part of them originally belonged to the Chaldeans, and which to the Egyptians, is so much the more difficult to determine from the sources which have hitherto been made use of, as the Greek writers present us, not with the original names employed by other nations, but only translations of these into Greek equivalents, which were more or less modified by the individuality of those writers' opinions. What knowledge the Egyptians possessed anterior to the Chaldeans, whether these latter are to be considered merely as gifted disciples of the former,† is a question which infringes upon the important but obscure problem of primitive civilization of the human race, and the commencement of the develop-

\* Henry Martin, in his *Commentary to the Timæus (Etudes sur le Timée de Platon, tom. ii., p. 129-133)*, appears to me to have explained very happily the passage in Macrobius respecting the *ratio Chaldæorum*, which led the praiseworthy Ideler into error (in Wolff's and Buttmann's *Museum der Alterthums-Wissenschaft*, bd. ii., s. 443, and in his *Treatise upon Eudoxus*, p. 48). Macrobius (in *Somn. Scipionis*, lib. i., cap. 19; lib. ii., cap. 3, ed. 1634, p. 64 and 90) says nothing of the system mentioned by Vitruvius and Martianus Capella, according to which Mercury and Venus are satellites of the Sun, which, however, itself revolves with the other planets round the Earth, which is fixed in the center. He enumerates only the differences in the succession of the orbits of the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon, according to the views of Cicero. He says, "Ciceroni, Archimedes et Chaldæorum ratio consentit; Plato Ægyptios secutus est." "Archimedes and the system of the Chaldæans agree; Plato followed that of the Egyptians." When Cicero exclaims, in the eloquent description of the whole planetary system (*Somn. Scip.*, cap. 4, Edmond's translation, ed. Bohn, p. 294), "Hunc (Solem) ut comites consequuntur Veneris alter, alter Mercurii cursus;" "The motions of Venus and Mercury follow it (the Sun) as companions," he refers only to the proximity of the Sun's orbit and those of the two inferior planets, after he had previously enumerated the three *cursus* of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, all revolving round the immovable Earth. The orbit of a secondary planet can not surround that of a principal planet, and yet Macrobius says distinctly, "Ægyptiorum ratio talis est: circulus, per quem Sol discurrit, a Mercurii circulo ut inferior ambitur, illum quoque superior circulus Veneris includit" "The following is the system of the Egyptians: the circle in which the Sun moves is encompassed by the circle of Mercury, which in its turn is encircled by the larger one of Venus." The orbits are all permanently parallel to each other mutually surrounding.

† Lepsius, *Chronologie der Ægypter*, th. i., p. 207.