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Another striking illustration of the new popularity of the god is the bizarre success of Alexander of Abonuteichus, the false prophet. The essay by Lucian on this strange figure of the second-century East is anything but sympathetic, but it is possible to recover a few facts about Alexander's career.¹ He founded an oracle of an invented snake-god named Glycon, which had an enormous vogue in the Graeco-Roman world.² Lucian alleges that the general Severianus credulously consulted the oracle before the disaster at Elegeia in 161, and we are told how Marcus Aurelius threw two live lions into the Danube at the bidding of Glycon.³ Alexander's daughter married the ageing consular P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus (*consul suffectus* in 146),⁴ and he was allowed to change the name of Abonuteichus to Ionopolis and to coin money with Glycon depicted on it.⁵ Specimens of the Glycon coinage are in existence today.⁶ The story of the popularity of Glycon belongs to the history of the Asclepius cult, because, as Lucian's essay makes quite clear, Alexander's serpent-god was simply a new version of the old serpent-god Asclepius. Glycon's genealogy is identical to that of Asclepius, and his very name suggests the sweetness and gentleness that were celebrated attributes of ἡπιος Ἀσκληπιός.⁷ The existence of Glycon's oracle and his influence in high circles complement Aristides' account of the consulars at Pergamum.

The age of the Second Sophistic exhibited another characteristic that must have developed all too easily with the popularity of medicine and Asclepius. That is hypochondria, possibly the most disquieting aspect of Antonine society and inducing a sense of foreboding. It might seem odd enough that Galen's disquisitions on anatomy were attended by many of the most

¹ Lucian, *Alexander*: A. Stein, 'Zu Lukians Alexandros', *Strena Buliciana* (1924), pp. 257-65; A. D. Nock, 'Alexander of Abonuteichos', *CQ* 22 (1928), 160-2; M. Caster, *Études sur Alexandre ou le Faux-Prophète de Lucien* (1938).

² Lucian, *Alex.* 30.

³ Ibid. 27 (Severianus), 48 (lions in the Danube).

⁴ Ibid. 35.

⁵ Ibid. 58. The modern name is still essentially Ionopolis: Inebolu (L. Robert, *Hellenica* 11/12 [1960], 62).

⁶ See E. Babelon, 'Le Faux-Prophète, Alexandre d'Abonuteichos', *Rev. Num.* 4 (1900), 1-30. Lucian, *Alex.* 58, alludes to coins depicting Alexander himself on one side, but coins with his image are not known.

⁷ On Glycon as a new Asclepius, cf. M. Caster, *op. cit.* (n. 1 above) pp. 35-6.

