

# Hellenistic Diffusion



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- I. Alexander and the Great Crusade
    - A. Alexander defeated the Persian Empire.
      - 1. Alexander proclaimed the invasion of Persia a great crusade.
      - 2. Alexander won three major battles at the Granicus River, Issus, and Gaugamela.
    - B. He led his forces as far east as the Indus River.
      - 1. After hard fighting at the Hyphasis River, his troops refused to go further.
      - 2. Alexander died in Babylon in 323 B.C.
  - II. Alexander's Legacy
    - A. The Political Legacy
      - 1. Hellenistic cities became links in a great communications network.
    - B. The Cultural Legacy
      - 1. Greek culture spread throughout Asia Minor and even into India.
      - 2. Greek theaters, temples, and libraries sprang up throughout the Mediterranean world.
    - C. Production of goods increased and international commerce was facilitated by new communications networks.
    - D. Eastern mystery cults found favor with Greek citizens during this period.
    - E. Alexander's successors could not hold the empire together after his death.
      - 1. By 275 B.C., three of Alexander's officers had divided the empire into large monarchies.
      - 2. Monarchy's resurgence came as a result of the division of Alexander's empire.
  - III. The Spread of Hellenism
    - A. The Hellenistic city differed from the old Greek polis.
      - 1. It was not self-governing.
      - 2. It was not as culturally homogenous as the old polis.
    - B. The Greeks and the Opening of the East

1. Hellenistic kingdoms offered Greeks many employment opportunities as soldiers and officials.
2. Women began to participate more in political and economic life.
3. Greek culture spread among Eastern elites, but not the masses.
4. Hellenized Jews retained their native culture.

#### IV. The Economic Scope of the Hellenistic World

- A. The East was brought into the Greek sphere of economics.
  1. Alexander's conquests developed trade routes with India and Italy.
  2. The Greeks sent their oil, wine, and fish to the north shore of the Black Sea in return for grain.
  3. The slave trade flourished.
- B. Hellenistic agriculture and industry underwent significant changes.
  1. There were few industrial innovations in the Hellenistic Age.
    - a. The inventions of mathematicians and other thinkers failed to produce corresponding technological innovations.
    - b. Cheap labor left little motivation for innovation.
  2. Hellenistic kings paid special attention to agriculture.
    - a. Much of their revenue was derived from the produce of royal lands.
    - b. Some kings sought out and supported agricultural experts.

#### V. Hellenistic Intellectual Advances

- A. Religion in the Hellenistic World
  1. Greek cults and Near Eastern religions did not mix much.
  2. The only significant syncretisms were the "mystery religions" that spread rapidly.
- B. Philosophy and the People
  1. Two schools of philosophy gained wide popularity in the Hellenistic world.
    - a. Epicureanism endorsed moderation, self-discipline, and a quietistic life.
    - b. Stoicism endorsed civic virtue, devotion to duty, and acceptance of one's lot in life.
  2. The Hellenistic period saw many advances in science.
  3. Aristarchus of Samos propounded the heliocentric theory.
  4. Euclid created a system of geometry still in use today.
  5. Medicine also made significant advances through the work of Herophilus and Erasistratus.
  6. The Empiric school emphasized the prescription of medicine and drugs.
- C. Hellenistic Medicine
  1. Dogmatists invented new surgical instruments and dissected corpses.
  2. Doctors of the Empiric school challenged the Dogmatic emphasis on anatomy and physiology, focusing on drugs and medicines, including painkillers such as opium.
  3. Much of Hellenistic medicine was quackery.