CHAPTER V

Dissemination

PHILIP'S assassination in 336 brought Macedon to the verge of collapse. Her subjects in the south and east were ready to revolt, her enemies in the north and west to attack; Persia had been alienated by the preparations for invasion; and at home the royal family was split by the rivalry of Philip’s wives. But Philip’s son Alexander had already shown outstanding ability. Important generals now gave him their support, the other likely claimants to the throne were liquidated, and the young King (just turned twenty) was able to act promptly against the revolt in Greece.

From then on he continued acting with amazing promptitude against one enemy after another, until his death in 323. In these thirteen years he conquered Greece, Illyria, Thrace, the west coast and center of Asia Minor, the Phoenician coast, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Persia, the eastern reaches of the Persian empire, and beyond. At his death his rule extended from the first cataract of the Nile to the upper reaches of the Jaxartes in central Asia, and from the eastern affluents of the Indus to the Adriatic. In the course of his career he had overthrown the Persian empire and put its vast treasure back into circulation; he
had destroyed Thebes, Tyre, and a number of minor cities and had founded eighteen or twenty Alexandrias. In these and other settlements and garrisons he had established tens of thousands of Macedonians and Greeks in military control of the areas conquered. Along with them he had maintained many of the native civil administrators. He had created an army in which Macedonian, Greek, and oriental forces were combined; he was moving toward the creation of a kingdom in which they would be combined. This kingdom would have as its center not a people, but a man. Loyalty to the King already bound together the Macedonians; he hoped it would transcend both the loyalties of the Greeks to their declining city-states and the tribal and local loyalties of his eastern subjects. To make himself such an object of loyalty he had become in Persia the Great King, in Egypt the divine Pharaoh, son of the god Amon, and in Greece, by official action of the Greek cities, on his own demand, a god.

The deity's untimely demise in 323 defeated his plans, but did not destroy their influence. The men around him had caught something of his complex thought and appropriated different aspects of it. Some were loyal to his memory and tried to keep his empire intact for his posthumous son; others tried to keep the empire intact, but to usurp control of it; yet others set up local kingdoms of their own in the territories they were appointed to govern. In the ensuing wars the would-be usurpers and local dynasts combined to defeat the loyalists, and Alexander's family was exterminated by about 310. Next the local dynasts combined against the would-be usurpers and defeated them. Matters were complicated by a barbarian invasion. In 279 the Galatians (Celts) overran Macedonia,
raided Greece as far as Delphi, and returned to ravage Thrace, whence some of them crossed into Asia Minor and eventually settled in the center of the peninsula. Their withdrawal from Greece and Macedonia was followed by local wars for the control of those countries, and it was not until 276, almost half a century after Alexander's death, that the main outlines of the division of his empire were finally settled. By that time: (1) India had been lost to a native dynasty. (2) In Egypt a general named Ptolemy had established himself on Alexander's model as King and Pharaoh; as King he had ruled (besides Egypt) Libya, Palestine, Cyprus, and cities along the coasts of Phoenicia and Asia Minor and in the Aegean islands. He had died in 283 and had been succeeded by his son, Ptolemy II. (3) In Macedonia, Antigonus II, the grandson of a general of the same name, now succeeded to Alexander's original position as King of the Macedonians. He and his dynasty were to continue the attempt to subject the cities of Greece and the Aegean to Macedonian control. (4) The bulk of the former Persian empire—most of Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Persia, and points east to the mountains bordering the Indus and the upper reaches of the Jaxartes—had been acquired by a general named Seleucus, who had thus succeeded to Alexander’s claims as Great King. Northeastern Asia Minor had never been conquered, and after Seleucus' death in 280 his son Antiochus had lost the center of the country to the Galatians and consequently had difficulty in holding the western coast.

Besides the three large kingdoms which had arisen from Alexander’s empire, the life of the Greek cities in Greece and the hellenization of the Black Sea region and the western Mediterranean went on as before.
Within the Greek cities the social conflict continued to produce factions and revolutions, while externally the cities went on fighting with each other and at the same time tried to fight off Macedon. Since the Macedonians concentrated on the major cities, especially Corinth and Athens, the minor ones now formed leagues which carried on the resistance. Most important were the Aetolian League in central Greece just north of the Gulf of Corinth and the Achaean League along the north shore of the Peloponnes. These leagues contained no cities large enough to dominate them as Athens and Thebes had dominated the Delian and Boeotian leagues; therefore they afforded more successful examples of federal government, but the development was fortuitous, indicated no real change in Greek loyalties, and came too late. (The same must be said of the increased resort to arbitration in disputes between cities and of the attempt to palliate civil conflicts by submitting law suits to judges imported from other towns.)

In the basin of the Black Sea, Panticapaeum continued its pre-eminence on the northern coast; on the southern coast the native but hellenized kingdoms of Bithynia and Pontus became important as inland rivals to the Greek cities of the shore. They had protected themselves from the Seleucids by inviting the Galatians to invade Asia Minor, and the Galatian country now lay between them and the Seleucid power.

In Sicily renewed civil wars had led to the development of a new Syracusan tyranny under an adventurer named Agathocles, who at one time had invaded North Africa, at another time, controlled southern Italy and reached across the Adriatic to seize Corcyra. His power had collapsed with his death in 289, after which the pressure of
the Italians on the Greek cities had led them to call for help from Greece. The latest leader to answer the call had been Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, and by 276 Pyrrhus had defeated the Romans in a series of battles which cost him so many men that the term “Pyrrhic victory” became proverbial. He had also defeated the Carthaginians in Sicily, and his victories had so frightened his Greek allies that they were already intriguing against him. This withdrawal of Greek support, the dwindling of his own forces, and the chance of taking Macedon from its new possessor, Antigonus II, determined him in 275 to return to Greece, where he achieved nothing decisive and was killed in a street fight in 272. By 270 Rome had taken all the Greek cities of Italy and was being further hellenized by its conquests. In 264 it moved on to Sicily, fought the Carthaginians there, and acquired most of the island in 241, though an adroit Greek ruler managed to keep Syracuse independent almost to the end of the century.

These events in the West were the ones decisive for the history of the world. If the Greeks of Sicily had been loyal to Pyrrhus an Epirote empire might have been created, strong enough to stop at least temporarily the advance of Rome. At the time, however, Macedon seemed much more important, not only to Pyrrhus but to all the world. The centers of civilization and luxury and (apparent) wealth and power were the capitals of the three kingdoms which had arisen from Alexander’s empire. Beside these, the old Greek cities still enjoyed considerable prestige. Athens, in particular, was teacher of philosophy to the world. But it was recognized that as military powers they no longer mattered, and the latent power of the West was not yet realized. The history of the third century, there-
fore, as the Greeks of the third century saw it, was above all the history of the three kingdoms.

Like the earlier history of Greece, it is a story of self-destruction in futile border wars produced by the three kingdoms’ conflicting interests. The Antigonid kings of Macedon inherited the Macedonian attempt to dominate Greece. Also they had timber, tar, and agricultural products to sell to the Mediterranean cities and were therefore concerned to keep the Aegean open to friendly traders. The Seleucids inherited from the Persians and from Alexander a claim to control Asia Minor; they particularly wanted the cities along its coast and along the Phoenician coast, because these were the ports for the trade routes to the east which ran across their territory. Finally, they also inherited a claim to Palestine and if they had Palestine they could hope to close off the northwestern end of some of the competing trade routes across Arabia. The Ptolemies of Egypt profited from those trade routes and were therefore determined to hold Palestine. Naval predominance had given them the major ports of the Phoenician coast, Cyprus and many Aegean islands, and coastal cities, from which they got a considerable income. They hoped eventually to control the trade of the Aegean. Therefore they were concerned to prevent both Macedonian domination of the Greek cities and Seleucid control of Asia Minor.

From these conflicts of interest resulted the three “Syrian Wars,” fought off and on from 274 to 241. The principal areas of fighting were northern Palestine, the Aegean, and the coastal cities of Phoenicia and Asia Minor, but collateral conflicts went on in mainland Greece and Cyrene. In northern Palestine the Seleucid-Ptolemaic border was pushed back and forth by raids and counteraffs. The ter-
ritorial change was negligible; the most important consequence was a Ptolemaic program of city building and military settlement to strengthen Palestine. This greatly accelerated the hellenization of the country, with incalculable consequences for the development of Judaism and, later, of Christianity. Outside Palestine the principal instrument of war was the Egyptian navy: besides direct sea battles it was constantly active in seizing or defending places along the coast, stirring up cities or local rulers to revolt from or attack the Antigonids or Seleucids, and bringing help to those who did so. The most important of its many protégés turned out to be Eumenes I of Pergamum, who made his city a center of power capable of standing against both the Seleucids and the Galatians. The Antigonids and Seleucids countered the Ptolemaic tactics by supporting revolts against the Ptolemies in Cyrene and inciting Arab attacks on the eastern border of the Delta.

The wars resulted in the discomfiture of all three kingdoms. A domestic upheaval in the Seleucid dynasty toward the end of the 240's enabled Ptolemy III to march up the Phoenician coast and inland perhaps as far as Mesopotamia and to receive the nominal submission of the eastern territories. But he could not hold these conquests. The government of Egypt had become a bureaucracy so elaborate, centralized, and insecure that it required his presence, and so oppressive that the Greeks outside Egypt wanted none of it. Ptolemy therefore returned to Egypt (with all the loot he could carry). He left the Seleucid empire impoverished and divided by dynastic quarrels; for a long time it could not threaten his Mediterranean possessions; on this basis he made peace with it in 241. Just at that time, however, the two Egyptian fleets in the Aegean were de-
stroyed by the Macedonians and their allies, the Rhodians. (The shift of Greek civilization to the East had made of Rhodes a shipping and banking center; as such it shared Macedon's concern to prevent Ptolemaic control of the Aegean.) Destruction of the Egyptian fleets made Macedonian domination of Greece a real possibility, but this possibility—and other circumstances—decided the Achaean and Aetolian leagues to co-operate in self-defense, and Macedon was presently worse off than before.

During the next twenty years (241–221) the three kingdoms were chiefly concerned with domestic problems. Ptolemy III neglected his army and navy for his magnificent court and for attempts to win over by patronage the native temples, which had long been centers of potential resistance to the government. Meanwhile his bureaucracy grew more cumbersome, as shown by the increasingly frequent records of misconduct of officers, peasants exhausted by the demands made on them and fleeing their lands, villages become desert because so many of the inhabitants have been imprisoned for nonpayment of taxes. By the time of the king's death in 221 the country was ready for revolt. Meanwhile the Seleucids were occupied by dynastic wars. This enabled their outlying territories to break away. Pergamum appropriated most of western and southern Asia Minor; the Galatians maintained themselves in the center; beyond the Caspian the Parthians overran Seleucid territory and cut off communications with the provinces farther to the east, which now became independent. Meanwhile in Macedonia the Antigonids had been harassed by attacks from barbarians to the north and would have been expelled from central and southern Greece had not the Greeks quarreled among themselves so bitterly that toward the
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end of the 220's the losers in the quarrel persuaded the Macedonians to come back and save them from their fellow Greeks.

By 221 it seemed that the kingdoms had passed their crises and were entering on a second period of power. A young and energetic ruler, Antiochus III, had come to the Seleucid throne in 223. In 221 Philip V of Macedon and Ptolemy IV of Egypt began their reigns. Antiochus set about reuniting the Seleucid territories. He tried to conquer Palestine, but was beaten off by Ptolemy IV. However, he later conquered Armenia and conducted a campaign to the east, as far as India, whence he brought back the nominal submissions of the former Seleucid territories and considerable booty. Philip V meanwhile confirmed his hold on Greece, defeated his enemies to the northwest, and then attempted to drive the Romans out of Illyria, where they had established themselves some years before to put down piracy and control the Adriatic. Rome was at this time in the throes of her second great war with Carthage; the Carthaginian general Hannibal had invaded Italy and was threatening the city. Philip reached an agreement with Hannibal. Rome allied with Philip's enemies in Greece and also with Pergamum, which saw itself threatened by the increase of Macedonian power in the Aegean. So long as Rome was busy with Carthage, Philip held his own, but he was persuaded to make a separate peace in 205 and Carthage was forced to surrender in 201. This left Rome free to deal with Philip, and an occasion was at hand.

The attack of Antiochus III on Egypt, fifteen years before, had forced Ptolemy IV to train and arm native Egyptians to supplement his Greek forces. Thereafter
Egyptian resentment of the Greeks and lower-class resentment of the government had expressed themselves in revolts which tore the country to pieces. Ptolemy had died in 205, leaving a child heir to the throne, and Philip and Antiochus thereupon had agreed to partition the Egyptian territories. Antiochus now (202-198) seized Palestine, while Philip attacked the Egyptian possessions around the Hellespont. This frightened Rhodes, Pergamum, and Athens. They appealed to Rome and Rome was happy to defend them. Philip was defeated in 197 and confined to Macedonia. Antiochus took this opportunity to subjugate much of Asia Minor and advance into Thrace. This again frightened Pergamum, which again appealed to Rome. Meanwhile the Roman policy of supporting oligarchies, and Roman arrogance and severity, had alienated many Greeks, while others had been angered at failing to get what they wanted in the settlement with Philip. The Greek tradition of looking for some ally against a powerful ally now led many Greeks to appeal to Antiochus. The resultant war practically ended with the defeat of Antiochus at Magnesia in 190. Thereafter no power nor combination of powers in the Mediterranean basin could stand against Rome with any hope of success. The Greek cities and kingdoms alike had effectively become subjects of the Roman republic. More than a century and a half of extortion, rebellion, resubjugation, renewed extortion, renewed rebellion and so on, were to intervene before the last of the great hellenistic kingdoms, Egypt, was appropriated by Augustus in 30 B.C. But all that belongs to the history of Rome. In 190 the Greek states became elements of the Roman world.

The year 190 B.C. was almost a hundred and fifty years after the Macedonian conquest of Greece in 338. During
those hundred and fifty years Greek civilization had been transformed from the culture of a network of cities and small states bordering the Mediterranean, to the culture of the ruling classes controlling not only the Mediterranean basin but also southwestern Asia as far as the Indus valley and the approaches of Tibet. The Parthians rapidly appropriated Greek achievements; the Greeks in the eastern provinces of the Seleucid empire retained control there until the latter half of the second century B.C., then reconquered northwestern India and ruled there for another century. It is true that even in these newly conquered countries the culture did not remain exclusively upper class, and in Greece itself and in the old Greek colonies the lower classes remained predominantly Greek, although with a large admixture of slaves and resident aliens. But it is typical of the hellenistic age, as this period is called, that even when the lower class remains Greek, its importance to the culture declines. In politics, the world is dominated by the kings and their generals; in war, the citizen army and navy are hopelessly outclassed by professionals; professional actors, singers, dancers and athletes dominate the festivals; in all fields of endeavor it is the upper class which sets the style and the professional who turns out the product; the poor, whether Greek, Italian or Syrian, follow along as best they can.

This transformation of Greek culture from a civic phenomenon to an international upper-class characteristic was not effected everywhere at the same time nor in the same fashion.

In Greece matters moved slowly. Alexander’s establishment of Greeks as a ruling class in Egypt and southwestern Asia had created a vast and wealthy market for the skills
and wares of Greece. The Greeks abroad were not at first satisfied with local imitations of products they had known; they wanted the real things and were able to pay for them. So they were followed by Greek merchants, artisans, artists, entertainers, and professional men, who further swelled the market for native Greek products. Conquest and business drained from Greece the homeless men who had burdened the cities and helped produce wars and revolutions. So long as Alexander lived peace was maintained, the routes were open for trade and trade was encouraged by Alexander's abundant and uniform currency. All these causes produced in Greece, particularly at Athens, a period of prosperity which lasted into the beginning of the third century. This brief prosperity, saw the final flowering of Athenian culture—new pottery types appeared; sculpture turned to new fields, especially portraits of philosophers and literary men, with notable success; in nearby Tanagra the manufacture of terra-cotta statuettes was raised to a fine art; the "new comedy" turned from burlesque and politics to the intrigues of private life in well-to-do families and created the pattern to be followed by comedies throughout western literature; philosophy developed new creeds which could appeal especially to the well-to-do layman. By 275, however, not only Athens, but all Greece, had entered on a long decline. The men, the money, and the military power had gone elsewhere; the trade was about to follow them. Prosperity was undermined by the chronic local wars and the long struggle against the Macedonians. Cultural importance declined along with prosperity. Philosophy, as represented by endowed institutions, continued at Athens, but the arts and the sciences went with the trade to the capitals of the hellenistic kingdoms.
The kingdoms differed greatly.

Macedonia was a feudal monarchy with a wild northern frontier and an aristocracy more concerned about boar-hunting than belles-lettres. Its wealth came from its gold and silver mines, forests (material for shipbuilding), and fields. A few big cities were scattered along the coast. The kings patronized a circle of artists and scholars. But except as a political and military force the country was the least significant of the three major kingdoms.

The Seleucid kingdom was a chaos of territories of different types—Greek cities new and old, Near Eastern cities more or less remodeled on Greek lines, states controlled by oriental temples or hereditary nobles, or granted by the kings to their ministers or favorites, tribal territories, and so on. The task of the Seleucid rulers was to hold this chaos together. To unite their subjects to themselves they followed Alexander's example and had themselves deified. But for practical purposes they relied on three things: territorial governors with military support, the royal standing army, and the network of Greek cities which they had inherited from Alexander and had themselves greatly increased by founding new cities along the trade routes which crossed their kingdom and were, after agriculture, the principal source of its wealth. These Greek cities depended for protection from the surrounding barbarians first on themselves, then on the territorial governors and their forces, and in the last resort on the royal army. Therefore they were expected to be centers of royalist influence in their districts and to serve as bases for military operations in case of need. Some of them prospered, survived the fall of the Seleucids, and remained centers of Greek culture in the Parthian empire for another five hundred years. In
them, but even more in the old, Near Eastern cities where the Greeks settled, went on the mutual modification of Greek and Near Eastern cultural traditions. This was to have important consequences in Roman times, especially in the field of religion. Meanwhile the Greek cities of the kingdom and the royal court provided an important market for writers, philosophers, and artists from Greece, and sent back to Greece a number of students who distinguished themselves in the philosophical schools.

Ptolemaic Egypt was a masterpiece of royal absolutism. Apart from the capital, Alexandria, and the southern capital, Ptolemais, there was no Greek city of importance. The native towns were governed as part of the countryside. The Greeks and Macedonians were settled in villages as farmers and were directly governed by royal officials. The King was worshiped as a god by the Greeks; so, often, was his consort. As Pharaoh he was worshiped as a god by the Egyptians, and the immense Egyptian temples, with their teeming priesthoods and vast landholdings, were directly subject to him. For Greeks and Egyptians alike the government was the King’s household and the country his estate. All aspects of economic life were regulated by his steward. What land was to be planted, what it was to be planted with, where and for how much the crops were to be sold, transportation, processing and manufacture, wholesale and retail trade, import and export, banking—nothing escaped supervision and taxation, and many trades were royal monopolies. The system required an immense bureaucracy which became ruinously expensive and oppressive, with political consequences already described.

The center of the system, where all the wealth it could squeeze from the country was concentrated, was the royal
court in Alexandria. Here hellenistic culture reached its acme. Not only were the Ptolemies lavish patrons of the arts, but they turned their genius for organization to the patronage of science and scholarship. A royal institute was founded on the model of the Platonic academy, as an association for the worship of the Muses, whence its name, the Museum; royal funds provided for the support of teachers and for gardens, dining halls, lecture halls, and the collection of an immense library. Throughout most of the third century, therefore, Alexandria was the center of artistic and intellectual life in every field except philosophy, where Athens remained pre-eminent. But this brilliance was paid for by the denial of Greek city life to the rest of the country, with the consequence that the civic tradition of Greece was never communicated to the natives of Egypt as it was to those of Syria. At most the Greek alphabet was gradually modified to replace the old Egyptian script. Greek plastic and graphic arts eventually altered the native tradition somewhat more than it did them, and something of Greek philosophic and religious thought eventually penetrated, chiefly in the form of Christianity.

Besides the major kingdoms, further variations of the hellenistic pattern were provided by the minor states.

The rulers of Pergamum imitated their allies, the Ptolemies, and built up a centralized monarchy with a brilliant court supported by a suppressed countryside. They too were patrons of learning and of the arts. In sculpture the Pergamene school did the most heroic and dramatic work which the hellenistic period produced—a great frieze of gods battling giants, to commemorate the defeat of the savage Galatians. In practical matters the city was no less eminent. The technique developed for the preparation of
the leather on which the books of its great library were written has given us the word "parchment" (pergamena), and material so prepared was what preserved through the middle ages almost all such ancient literature as did survive.

By contrast to Pergamum, Rhodes carried on the tradition of the Greek city-state, maintained a moderate democracy and an efficient fleet supported by overseas trade, beat off the Antigonids with help from the Ptolemies and the Ptolemies with help from the Antigonids, erected its famous colossus, and was the residence of a number of artists, writers, and philosophers. In Syracuse the traditions of Greek tyranny were revived, but besides tyrants the city produced a number of eminent scientists. Even more diverse, and more important, was the hellenization of the ruling classes of Rome and Parthia, which lies outside the limits of this account.

Through all these different hellenistic states runs the uniformity of hellenistic culture. Already in the age of colonization men from various parts of Greece had begun to feel they were all Greeks together, by contrast with Italians or Egyptians or Persians. The feeling grew stronger now they found themselves in the middle of Egypt or Persia; the common elements of their Greek tradition were preserved, the local peculiarities disappeared. At the same time, closer acquaintance with the natives of the country they now ruled made them more clearly aware of the similarity of all men. Not only personal ties, but also the mere awareness of common humanity bound together, on occasion, most diverse elements of the population of the hellenistic kingdoms. This began to break down the ethnic limits of the Greek community. The philosophers of the age developed the doctrine of the brotherhood of man; the term
"Greek" came to be used of anyone who possessed the common culture.

One of the more convenient manifestations of the new community of culture was the gradual introduction of common points of reference for dating. Hitherto documents had been dated by reference to the chief officer of the state in which they were written; if he held office for several years in succession the reference was made precise by specification of the year. Thus Athenian documents were dated by specifying that so-and-so was Archon; Persian, by giving the name of the Great King and the year of his reign ("Year three of Artaxerxes, the King," or the like). Given the multiplicity of tiny states and the frequent change of officers, the result was chaos. Under the Seleucids it became common to date events from the year when the dynasty came to power (312), while in Alexandria it became a practice of scholars to date events from the first Olympic games of which the victors were recorded (supposedly those of 776). Both methods achieved wide success, were perpetuated for centuries, and served as models for the Christian and Jewish practices of reckoning from the supposed years of Jesus' birth and of the creation of the world.

Among the most important of the local peculiarities which now disappear outside Greece are those of speech. Ancient Greek had been spoken in many dialects, and each dialect had been rich in special words and forms. Now Greeks from all parts of the world were thrown together and had to make themselves understood to each other and to the natives they ruled, while the natives had to learn Greek and often learned no more than they had to. The simplified Greek of native servants became the native tongue of the Greek children they cared for. Classical Greek became a
learned language, preserved and imitated in great and would-be-great literature. Between it and the language of the street ranged the everyday speech of cultivated men, with its subspecies, the jargons of the various professions. This was the language of the cities and the courts, which were the centers of hellenistic culture, and it was not the least achievement of that culture to produce this simplified, international language, which facilitated communication throughout the whole civilized world.

As the language was partially a learned language, so the whole culture was, to an extent, something learned, not to say, affected. In Rome and Parthia this was obvious, but it was also true in the native kingdoms of Asia Minor and in the Macedonian courts of Egypt, the Seleucid kingdom, and Macedon itself. Even in Greece there was a deliberate adjustment to the new facts of the outside world, to the new Greek culture which was no longer the native culture of Greece: the Athenians learned to worship the international hellenistic deities sponsored by Pergamum and Alexandria; their children were taught to use the new engines of war developed by the engineers of the hellenistic kings; in their philosophic schools philosophers from the Near East taught them in a language still Greek, but hardly Attic.

The extent of the difference between this new culture and the culture of classical Greece—Greece of the fifth century—can be indicated by six contrasts: (1) In the classical world the principal form of land tenure was the relatively small holding of the ordinary citizen; in the hellenistic world it was the large estate of the king, the temple or the great official. (2) In the classical world the chief political form was the city-state, of small extent and homogeneous population, with some form of conciliar govern-
ment; in the hellenistic world—though the appearance of local autonomy was often preserved, and the fact occasionally survived—the chief political form was the absolute monarchy ruling various peoples and a vast territory. (3) In the classical world the structure of society was regulated chiefly by local custom and tradition; in the hellenistic world a much larger part than before was played by explicit, written laws enforced by alien rulers throughout wide domains. (4) In the classical world the traditional cult of the gods of the city was the center both of petition and of patriotism; in the hellenistic world patriotism found expression in the cult of the divine ruler, while petitions were more often directed to deities whose political affiliations, if any, were of minor importance. (5) In the classical world, because the economic and political units were so small, private individuals were of relatively great importance; this both encouraged their concern for the state and made their activities matters of public concern; consequently the artistic and philosophical life of the period was closely connected with politics and politics was a major concern of the average man. In the hellenistic world, because the units were so big, private persons were generally of no importance; accordingly they neglected the state and the state them; therefore the artistic and philosophical life of this period was generally nonpolitical (except when inspired by patronage or the hope of patronage), and the average man was less interested in politics, more in his private affairs. (6) In the classical world the civil administration and the army were largely run by amateurs (civilians ordinarily employed in private occupations); professionals were rarely used except as subordinates; therefore the internal histories of the states were full of struggles between
political factions. In the hellenistic world both the administration and the army were usually staffed by professionals and the internal history was therefore one of bureaucratic intrigues and palace revolutions.

Most of these contrasts resulted from developments which had already begun in the earlier years of the fourth century, when classical culture was disintegrating. This was particularly true of military professionalism. But in the hellenistic world the growth of professionalism and the consequences of the professional approach were obvious everywhere: increased technical proficiency, collection of previous knowledge, systemization and consequent discoveries, mostly minor; reduction of the system to a handbook and a set of rules, making basic discoveries more difficult; consequent standardization of products, with gain in average quality and loss of individuality.

The development of professionalism is part of a general turning of Greek thought toward practical questions, which resulted from the administrative necessities and opportunities confronting the Greeks as rulers of large countries. Governments wanted professionals who could assure them of specific results. For such men careers were open. The city building of the Seleucids, the economic organization of the Ptolemies, the agricultural and military programs of all the great powers, made possible undertakings and rewards on a scale undreamt of by the city-states. War, for example, was completely transformed by the increased use of cavalry, bowmen, and slingers, the introduction of elephants, the development of siege engines, and the great increase in the size of armies. Forces involved in single conflicts numbered up to about 75,000 on a side, and the total military force of the Seleucids must have been about
double this. Besides the increase in scale, the fact that the kings were absolute rulers enabled their ministers to carry through projects which the elected officials of a city-state would never have dared suggest, for example the development of the techniques of economic control in Ptolemaic Egypt.

With the extension of resources and power went an extension of knowledge which made possible the conception of new projects. Alexander not only conquered the Persian empire, but explored it. He took with him a staff of engineers, architects, and geographers and collected data on the plants and animals of the countries along his route. At the same time explorers pushed beyond the other frontiers of Greek settlement. In particular Pytheas of Massilia, a few years after Alexander’s death, circumnavigated Britain, discovered the Scandinavian peninsula and may have sighted Iceland. The information so gathered was codified and extended by later scholarship and put to practical use by the kings, especially the Ptolemies, who were concerned to introduce valuable plants and animals to their realms. Greek astronomy learned much from Babylonia, and Greek medicine something from Egypt. Royal patronage made possible further research in all fields and the results of research were at the service of the kings. The centralization of government was accompanied by a centralization of knowledge, and the growth of bureaucracy by a growth of information about the country governed, a detailed knowledge of the society and how it worked, which encouraged further attempts to manage it. (In Egypt, the Ptolemaic secret police were everywhere.)

This accumulation of knowledge necessitated attempts to systematize it, including scientific speculation. In mathe-
matics (Euclid), physics (Archimedes), mathematical geography (Eratosthenes), and botany (Theophrastus), the theories, discoveries, and formulations of this age remained standard for the ancient world and became, either directly or through later reworkings, the points of departure for the Renaissance. In astronomy, Aristarchus at this time argued that the earth went round the sun, but he was refuted in the second century by Hipparchus.

Along with these scientific achievements came the application of scientific method to the study of the humanities: the collection, classification, and edition of texts, the production of histories of literature and philosophy, of critical theories based on literary history, and of poems written according to critical theories are all achievements of the hellenistic age and especially of the scholars in the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum. Their editorial work shaped the intellectual history of the western world, for the works preserved and explained by their editing became "the classics," the texts regularly used in education.

Given the recognition of a body of classics, the authors of the hellenistic age had to choose between deliberate imitation and deliberate originality. "Classicism" as an artistic manner now became possible. But even works in the classical manner must justify themselves by some novelty. The important literary achievement of the age was a new type of literature, belles-lettres, the polite literature of everyday life, which pleases by wit, verbal facility, some small originality or touch of sentiment, or the brief creation of an imaginary world, such as the country life for city people which is conjured into being by the idyls of Theocritus, a world of bucolic fantasy where the hardship and coarseness of the real countryside are forgotten. The
short poem and shorter epigram were the most successful forms of this literature of amusement and of something more, which concentrated in couplets the passion and pathos of men who knew themselves not to be heroes.

Thus in every field, thought and expression was shaped by awareness of the extent of history, the breadth of the world. It was the accumulation of knowledge that produced professionalism, directed governmental policy, stimulated the sciences, and weighed down the literature.

But the larger the world and the state became, the more alone men found themselves. The city-state had been home; the Seleucid or Ptolemaic kingdom was merely where you lived. The kings attempted to provide symbols for loyalty by self-deification and the establishment of royal cults, but the effort had little success. Many Greeks turned to the worship of Near Eastern deities, but this usually had nothing to do with the question of loyalty: you did not usually go to a god to love him, nor to be loved; you went for a specific favor—a cure for some ailment, for instance—but if the god happened to grant it this did not necessarily make him an object of your wholehearted devotion. You paid him what you had promised, you recommended him to your friends, but you did not henceforth live for him the way your great-great-great-grandfather had lived for Athens. You lived for yourself.

This individualism appeared everywhere in the history of the age. The political history bristled with individuals, not to say egomaniacs. The deification of rulers showed the importance attributed, at least officially, to the individuals deified. In the plastic arts, portraiture was the form most characteristic of the age. Both the plastic arts and literature appealed constantly to the private patron and
his (or, very often, her) taste for the sentimental, the pretty
and the cute. Even grotesque objects are of interest for
themselves; the schematized grotesques of classical times
are supplemented by accurate studies of old age, drunken-
ness, and disease. The isolation of individuals and their at-
tempt to overcome it appears in a great increase in the
number of clubs and other voluntary organizations, espe-
cially religious ones.

But it was in philosophy that individualism found its
fullest expression, notably in the teachings of Epicurus and
of the Stoics, beginning with Zeno, from whose practice
of teaching in a public portico, *stoа*, the school derived its
name.

Epicurus began by accepting Aristippus’ observations:
the goal of life is happiness and happiness is derived from
pleasure. This lead him to analyze pleasure and conclude
that its most important form is mere, contented, undis-
turbed existence. That there were more vivid pleasures he
did not deny, but he observed that they often were more
trouble to get, or to have had, than they were worth. The
wise man will do his best to live an untroubled life, he will
withdraw from public affairs to his house and his garden,
limit his desires, and live, by careful economy, on his in-
vestments. (He is evidently a middle-class Athenian citizen
in the period of prosperity following Alexander’s con-
quests). For pleasure and protection he will surround him-
self with a circle of friends, but will avoid love as a dis-
turbance. For security’s sake he will obey the laws and
get on well with his neighbors. Thus with good luck and
good management he will be secure against everything but
disease. Disease is usually bearable. If unbearable it can be
stopped by suicide. Death is not an evil, but merely the
cessation of individual existence, the dissipation of that arrangement of atoms which constitutes the soul. Therefore there is nothing to fear in death or after it. The common stories about the gods and a life after death are nonsense. It is not to be denied that the gods exist and are perfect, but because they are perfect they must be perfectly happy and to be perfectly happy they must be utterly indifferent to human affairs. They are to be worshiped as ideals.

These opinions were bolstered by a physics (which explained the world as the result of chance combinations of atoms), a consequent theory of knowledge, and other requisites for a system of philosophy, but the main concern was the way of life. In Epicurus' own garden was formed a new philosophic school, and the property was handed down from generation to generation of his followers. He was honored as a god who had revealed to men the way of salvation; his writings were preserved as sacred scripture. Their influence spread far beyond the limits of his school and shaped much of the thought and more of the life of the hellenistic and Roman worlds.

Zeno and the Stoics followed the line taken by Antisthenes and Diogenes, but with decent moderation. They accepted the notion that the goal of life is happiness and defined happiness as life according to virtue, or nature, or reason. To the ordinary Greek it might have seemed unlikely that acting virtuously, acting naturally, and acting reasonably should be identical, but the Stoics, like the Epicureans, defended their theory by a made-to-order physics: nature is essentially a rational fire which acts upon itself to make of itself the more stable elements and thus the world. The order of the world is the expression
of this reason (logos) which at once constitutes and creates and permeates and governs the world. To act in accordance with this directive reason, inherent in nature, is virtue. The argument is stronger than it seems at first sight, since reason is presumably a reflection of the apparent order of nature (as well as vice versa) and men's notions of virtue and happiness are unquestionably shaped by both nature and reason. But these approximations are so loose that the argument built on them cannot account for the strength of Stoicism, which became the leading missionary philosophy of antiquity, eventually converted a ruler of the Roman empire and was one of the major factors which gradually changed the temper of the ancient world.

The strength of Stoicism came from two things: the way of life practiced and the security offered. The way of life was the way of asceticism, of self-examination, self-control, daily training in neglect of the passions, and attention to the dictates of conscience. The security was contentment in the consciousness of virtue. This enabled the Stoic to participate in the world and yet be indifferent to it. Many teachers of the school held that a man was duty bound to take part in the political life of his state. But the wise man would do this as a duty. Therefore, whether his political efforts succeeded or failed, he would remain content in the consciousness that he had done his duty, the blissful awareness of his own virtue. The Stoics represented this as sufficient for happiness and undertook by training to make it so. For the man happy in his own virtue is free. He cannot be bribed, for he has all he wants. He cannot be threatened, for nothing can take from him the only thing about which he is concerned. He can be killed, but death is not an evil: that virtue which was embodied in him
will persist in the order of the world and must ultimately triumph. By this confidence he knows himself truly a citizen, not of a city or kingdom, but of the world; he finds all men his brothers; he is at one with nature and with himself.

The differences of Stoicism and Epicureanism, especially of the systems of physics with which they were buttressed, made them bitter enemies. But beneath the differences of terminology, the two systems were surprisingly similar. Both were ultimately concerned with the individual, not the city nor the state. Both took for granted that the individual's goal in life should be happiness, and both equated happiness with tranquillity (for Epicurus, undisturbedness, for the Stoics, self-sufficiency). Both thought a man could attain happiness by his own efforts, in particular, by the use of reason and the practice of self-discipline—ascetic limitation of desires, and thus of fears and griefs, and deliberate concentration on the pleasure to be derived from self-satisfaction. Both were individual adjustments to the insecurity and indifference of the hellenistic world. What could be done? One could withdraw from the world, practice frugality, live content in the enjoyment of one's wisdom, and face death without fear. Or one could by practice achieve indifference to misfortune, follow unhesitatingly the moral teaching of the sect, live content in the enjoyment of one's virtue, and face death with assurance.