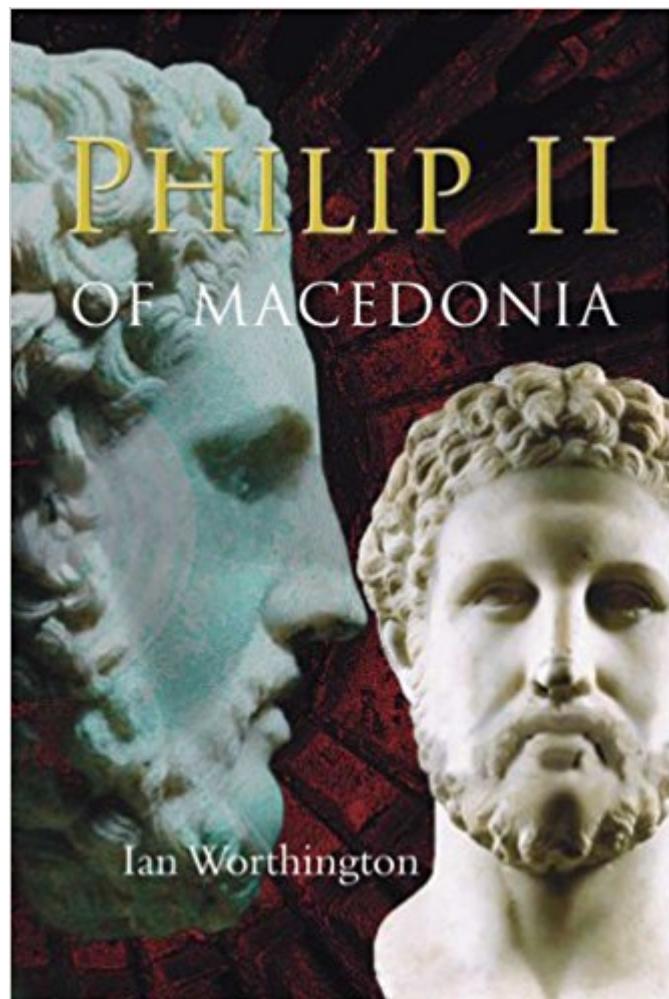


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# Philip II Of Macedonia



## Synopsis

Alexander the Great is probably the most famous ruler of antiquity, and his spectacular conquests are recounted often in books and films. But what of his father, Philip II, who united Macedonia, created the best army in the world at the time, and conquered and annexed Greece? This landmark biography is the first to bring Philip to life, exploring the details of his life and legacy and demonstrating that his achievements were so remarkable that it can be argued they outshone those of his more famous son. Without Philip, Greek history would have been entirely different. Taking into account recent archaeological discoveries and reinterpreting ancient literary records, Ian Worthington brings to light Philip's political, economic, military, social, and cultural accomplishments. He reveals the full repertoire of the king's tactics, including several polygamous diplomatic marriages, deceit, bribery, military force, and a knack for playing off enemies against one another. The author also inquires into the king's influences, motives, and aims, and in particular his turbulent, unraveling relationship with Alexander, which may have ended in murder. Philip became in many ways the first modern regent of the ancient world, and this book places him where he properly belongs: firmly at the center stage of Greek history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Worthington skilfully uses information from the rich documentation of Alexander the Great's early life to speculate about and suggest that of his father, and does so with a great deal of style.' The Daily Telegraph 'A clear, detailed, and balanced account that judiciously separates the threads of often complex political and military situations' Literary Review 'An admirable overview.' The

Ian Worthington is Frederick A. Middlebush Professor of History, University of Missouri&#150;Columbia. He lives in Columbia, MO.

Father of the great Alexander & laid the groundwork for Alexander who may have been the greatest leader & warrior ever. These were days of war-like peoples & if you couldn't take care of yourself, you were done for. Phillip II was an extremley important man in his own right with or without Alexander. Good book but there has been so much written on this subject, you have to read a lot & be careful. You know how strange academics can be. Of the many writers on this era, one of the most important men with a vast knowledge of the greek times is Victor Davis Hanson. A must person to study & his many works.

Ian Worthington has added a much appreciated update to the still all too slim bibliography on Philip II, founder of the Macedonian Empire and father of Alexander the Great. This volume is exceedingly well researched and written, far surpassing R. Malcom Errington[ASIN:1566195195 History of Macedonia] as a general source, at least for Philip's era. I must note, though, that for military fans (such as myself), there's much less focus here on Philip's battlefield accomplishments than can be found in either Nicholas Hammond[ASIN:0715628291 Philip of Macedon] or James R. Ashley[ASIN:0786419180 Macedonian Empire: The Era of Warfare Under Philip II and Alexander the Great, 359-323 B.C.]. All the same, I strongly recommend this title for anyone who is at all interested in the subject of ancient Macedonia.

This is the premier book on Philip available in English. It includes a detailed look at his career and the history of the Macedonian state up to the time of Alexander. Dr. Worthington's understanding of Macedonian society is exceptional. This is a period that is almost never covered in history books. Greek history books and lectures generally cover the years from the beginning of the Persian Wars to the end of the Peloponnesian War (the Athenian Supremacy) and then the life of Alexander the Great (the Macedonian Supremacy). The bit in between those two events and the events before and after it are sparsely covered. The Spartan dominance, the freeing of Ionia, the Theban ascendancy, the Sacred Wars, and the rise of the Macedonians is all skipped over. While this book doesn't pretend to cover all that it does cover the rise of Macedonia, the military reformations of Thebes and the Sacred Wars inasmuch as they concerned the Macedonians. Philip was in Thebes

as a hostage during many of the events in that city which makes it easy to cover that crucial bit of history. Philip is often portrayed as a drunken, lecherous lout in contrast to his more famous son. Worthington points out how that image was developed largely from Demosthenes who viewed him as the greatest threat that Athens had ever faced and felt no qualms about telling outrageous lies about the barbarian from the north. His vision of Philip is of a brilliant statesman and innovator who made Macedonia a more powerful state than any in southern Greece. While he may go too far in this (Philip probably was fairly emotional) it is a useful corrective to the barbaric image that is often contrasted with both his son and the Greeks he conquered. Dr. Worthington's problems come when he writes about Philip's son Alexander the Great. He hates him. Passionately. To the extent where it blinds him utterly to the merits and successes of the man and distorts the achievements of his father. While his book on Philip is a panegyric his book on Alexander is merely the angry rant of a man who is convinced the world is blind. There are a lot of historians out there who don't like Alexander but I've never seen any who loathe him as strongly as Worthington. What does this mean for his book on Philip? It means that Philip gets marginally more credit than he deserves for creating the Macedonian war machine. Philip gets full credit for turning Macedonia into the superpower that it was to become. Honestly, just because he makes Philip sound great doesn't mean that Alexander has to be pathetic. That's the trap that Worthington falls into. Alexander could never have achieved what he did if Philip hadn't created his army, yet Philip could never have achieved what Alexander did had he survived. But if you ignore his angry and spiteful comments about Alexander, which only show up near the end after all, then you have what is the most detailed and accurate book on Philip that I know of. Ignore the earlier poster whining about ignoring the Slavic nature of Macedonia. All of the Slavic nations bordering on Greece (Albania, Macedonia, and parts of Turkey) have a massive inferiority complex about their history which is only made worse by the Greek sense of superiority about theirs. Suffice to say the Slavs were not in the region until hundreds of years later.

A well written, well researched biography of a pivotal historic figure who is too often obscured by the flashier achievements of his son, Alexander the Great. Worthington makes a convincing case that Alexander built on the considerable accomplishments of his father - i.e., "no Phillip, no Alexander." He actually goes farther, arguing that Phillip's achievements were even greater than his famous son's, because he started from almost nothing to make himself the most powerful monarch in Europe, and built the mighty army that Alexander led to glory. Regardless of whether you end up agreeing with Worthington's more controversial conclusions, his spritely prose and his deep knowledge of the subject make this volume a thought-provoking and enjoyable addition to the library.

of any ancient history buff.

I haven't actually finished reading this book as I write this review but its a very easy read and is a great coverage of histories most unappreciated figures. Without Phillip's genius and energy, Alexander would not have inherited the best army of the day and who knows how history may have turned out? I tend to feel that Phillip's achievements are actually more outstanding than his son's. But that's not a review of the book, if you have an interest in this period then this is a solid exploration of a poorly examined 'great' of history and I think an essential companion to other works of Alexander or Greek warfare history.

This is a history book that is a pleasure to read like a great piece of literature. Philip II's life and ascent is being followed step by step, year by year, one military and diplomatic success after another, one accomplishment followed by a reversal and then once again more struggling by this legendary king that united Greece. Philip is the Bismark and the Garibaldi of Ancient Greece, the man who prepared the way for Alexander the Great's mythical accomplishments. I appreciated the sections where professor Worthington did not mince words in blasting the modern Balkan revisionists of ancient Macedonian History, explaining the Greek nature and ethnicity of the Macedonians.

I was interested greatly in Phillip II and found this work brought everything I needed together. The scope and content gives the entire story of this much forgotten monarch and the read is surprisingly smooth for the detail. By using views of many less obvious works the author has brought the perspectives that were missing to Alexander's father. Phillip's story is now richer, more detailed and clearer in my mind. This is a "Must Read" for Alexander enthusiasts.

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