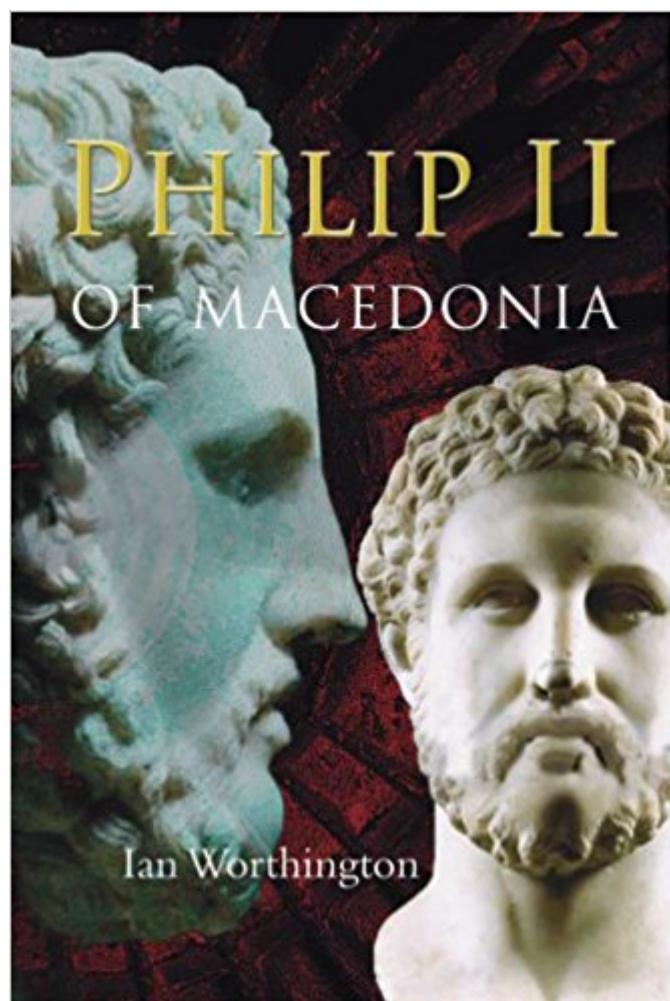


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Philip II Of Macedonia



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

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.

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