

ANSON (E.M.) **Philip II, the Father of Alexander the Great: Themes and Issues**. London: Bloomsbury, 2020, Pp. 234, illus. \$31.45. 9781350103962.  
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This book validates Edward Anson's place among the leading historians of ancient Macedonia. Like his *Alexander the Great: Themes and Studies* (London 2013), it is not a biography, but an examination of major aspects of Philip's II reign. Overall, Anson agrees with Theopompus' famous assessment that 'Europe had never produced such a man as Philip' (preserved in Polybius 8.9.1), but utterly rejects Theopompus' subsequent character assassination of the king. He provides a faithful presentation of the evidence and its major modern interpretations, including their merits and weaknesses.

The introduction presents the leading theme: Philip turned lower and upper Macedonia into a Macedonian nation, fundamentally changed its economy and military, and gained recognition for the Macedonians as Greeks. Much of the first chapter deals with the Macedonian institutions and monarchy before Philip transformed them. The king inherited from his Argead ancestors a personal, charismatic kingship of unstable nature. He changed the balance of power between the crown and the nobility in his favour with the help of traditional institutions such as the *hetairoi* (companions) and *sumposia*, and with the creation of new ones such as the pages and royal guards. Anson correctly sticks to his well-known position that the monarchy was autocratic. Popular and army assemblies met irregularly and lacked real power, while a thorough investigation of court cases involving the Assembly shows that the king controlled the judicial process, too. Chapter 2 deals with the Macedonian army, which Philip reformed in reaction to threats from Illyria and elsewhere. He supplemented an already-superior cavalry force with heavy infantry such as hoplites (date disputed), guard units and a *sarrissa* pike-carrying phalanx. He used the cavalry in battle like a hammer to crush the enemy against the anvil of the infantry. Anson argues that the reforms did not involve a lengthy process, but, following Diod. 16.3.1, dates them to the first year of Philip's reign (359/8 BC). A discussion of Philip's siege warfare is followed by descriptions of his campaigns in chronological order, culminating in a first-rate account of the battle of Chaeronea. Chapter 3 builds on Anson's earlier publications on Philip the nation builder (for example, 'Philip II and the Transformation of Macedonia: A Reappraisal', in T. Howe and J. Reames (eds), *Macedonian Legacies: Studies in Ancient Macedonian History and Culture in Honor of Eugene N. Borza* (Claremont 2009), 17–30; 'Philip II and the Creation of the Macedonian PEZHETAIROI', in P. Wheatley and R. Hanna (eds), *Alexander & His Successors: Essays from the Antipodes* (Claremont 2009), 88–98). In addition to making the elite depend on him and his resources, Philip gave land to the landless in return for military service, thereby strengthening their personal bonds to him. The result of his top-to-bottom economic and social restructuring was that 'he moulded what was a geographic region into a nation – a nation inexorably tied to the monarchy ... As far as he was concerned, *he was Macedonia*' (92). It is an enticing idea, even though the evidence for his granting land to the poor is more inferred than explicit. The sources on Philip's reign are also largely reticent about whether his Macedonians saw themselves as a national community and unclear about what Macedonian identity meant to them. Chapter 4 shows how Philip's relationships with small and great powers were shaped by his concern for Macedonia's security. He used traditional *xenia* and gift-giving (described as bribery by his foes) to make personal connections in Greek city states. He also exploited rivalry inside and between the cities to influence local policies. Most of his polygamous political marriages aimed at securing Macedonian borders. Finally, annexations such as those of Amphipolis and Methone safeguarded the Macedonian coast. Chapter 5 deals with Philip's creation of Macedonian hegemony, from the Third Sacred War to his post-Chaeronea settlements. For Anson, the wish to protect the kingdom

and expand in Thrace and the Hellespont explains Philip's interventions in Thessaly, central Greece and Chalcidice, as well as the Peace of Philocrates. According to Anson, the conflict in Chaeronea was not inevitable, and Philip's subsequent hegemony was built on personal authority and persuasion, not the strong-arm policy of earlier hegemonies. Philip also took seriously his self-created image as defender of Greek cults and as avenger of the Greeks against the Persians when planning his Asian expedition.

Three appendices conclude the book. The first discusses Philip's ambitions and includes one of the author's frequent unfavourable comparisons between father and son. Anson believes that Philip integrated his search for personal glory with Macedonian national interests, while Alexander cared only about his own fame. He even daringly suggests that Philip's Asian campaign would have stopped in western Asia Minor. Appendix 2 concerns Philip's divine aspirations and concludes that he sought not to be worshipped but to be considered the gods' favourite and agent. Appendix 3 deals with Philip's much-discussed assassination. Anson considers multiple suspects in turn, rejecting ancient and modern conspiracy theories in favour of Pausanias as the sole killer, and his motive as personal revenge.

Two missteps are highly untypical. In the first (139), Anson cites a decree from Demosthenes 18.77–78, which many believe to be spurious. Later (180), he erroneously says the carrier of a letter from Alexander, son of Aeropus, to Darius was the former's 'father' rather than Amyntas, son of Antiochus (Arr. 1.25.3). But these small errata detract little from an excellent monograph that is recommended to anyone interested in Philip, his country and his son.

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CARNEY (E.D.) **Eurydice and the Birth of Macedonian Power**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xix + 178, £41.99. 9780190280536.  
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Following her previous biographical works on Macedonian and Hellenistic royal women (*Olympias: Mother of Alexander the Great* (London 2006); *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life* (London 2013)), in the present work, Elizabeth Carney focusses on Eurydice I, the first royal Macedonian woman we know to have played a visible and crucial role in politics. She was the wife of Amyntas III, mother of Philip II and grandmother of Alexander III ('the Great'). Carney examines the public role of Eurydice, how it evolved in her lifetime, how it set a new precedent for subsequent royal women and how this female influence increased Macedonian power. Furthermore, this book is a synthesis of current evidence and research on Eurydice, as well as a revision of the negative image that is found both in the ancient sources and in the scholarship.

In the introduction, Carney discusses issues regarding the surviving ancient evidence about women in general, and about Eurydice in particular. The sources are inherently biased because of contemporary political discourses, partisan interests at the Macedonian court and prevalent gender stereotyping of royal women (in themes such as infidelity, treachery, murder, etc.). The history of Macedonian monarchy is likewise summarized in order to understand the role of the kings, whom Carney compares to an Odyssean prototype (5–6) due to their capacity to pull the strings of international and domestic forces in their favour.