As it had been the Athenians who met the Persians at Marathon, it was the Spartans who met the Persians at Thermopylae. Specifically, it was Sparta's King Leonidas I, the core of whose force included 300 men of his elite bodyguard.

The narrow pass at Thermopylae greatly benefited the defenders, and the Persian advance sputtered to a bloody halt. Only after a traitor showed the Persians a little-known path by which they could outflank the Spartans was Xerxes able to break the impasse. The Persian leader finally crushed Leonidas and his troops, but at immense cost.

Meanwhile, Greek naval forces successfully impeded the Persian fleet in the Straits of Artemisium, though it did not stop them.

In the wake of their defeat at Thermopylae, the Greek armies were unable to prevent the Persians from marching into Athens, though by the time they reached the city, most of the civilian population had been evacuated. It was rather like Napoleon's capture of Moscow in 1812. It was strong on symbolism, but an empty city is merely an empty city. In order to defeat the Greeks, Xerxes needed to destroy their military power, not merely capture symbolic targets. To consolidate Persian power in Greece, he needed to cross into the Peloponnesus, the peninsula south of the Gulf of Corinth that constitutes the southern part of modern Greece. He also needed to eliminate Athenian naval power. Fortunately for the Athenians and for Greece, however, Themistocles had realized after Marathon that an important prerequisite to Persian domination of Greece would be domination of the Aegean Sea. For this reason, he had built up the navy, even at the expense of Athenian land forces.

The milestone battle for the future of Greece was to occur at sea. It came in September 480, near the island of Salamis off the south coast of the Attic peninsula, not far from Athens. As had been the case at Thermopylae, the Straits of Salamis presented a very confined space, and one where the Persian numeric superiority would be less effective than it might have been in the open sea.

The Persian vessels fell into disarray as the Greeks maintained a disciplined battle line. Watching from a hilltop on the shore, Xerxes witnessed the decisive defeat of his fleet. Though the campaign continued into 479, Salamis marked the high-water point in the defeat of the Persian attempt to conquer Greece. Like Marathon, Salamis is seen as one of the turning-point battles of world history. Attempts by

Xerxes to recapture the initiative in the summer of 479 met with losses at Plataea and Mycale that marked the end of realistic Persian ambitions in Greece.

As the sun set on the great campaigns of 480–479, there was no adjournment of the cold war. Xerxes' son Artaxerxes I waged war indirectly against the Greeks, especially the Athenians, by financing proxy wars, or simply funneling cash and hardware to anti-Athenian elements among other Greek city-states.

As the direct Persian military threat abated, the rivalry between Athens and Sparta over political and military primacy within Greece came to the fore.

Sparta's political sphere of influence centered on the Peloponnesus, where it controlled a military alliance of regional city-states, known as the Peloponnesian League. Northeast of the Peloponnesus in Attica, a peninsula extending into the Aegean Sea, Athens had evolved into a maritime power whose sphere of influence was the Aegean rim.

Militarily, the respective strengths of Athens and Sparta were roughly analogous to those of the British Empire and the German Empire prior to World War I. While Britain was the world's leading sea power, Germany possessed the most powerful land army in Europe.

Meanwhile, as Sparta evolved into a military society, Athens became a great center of scholarship, literature and the arts that would influence Western European civilization for centuries. As Athenian political power was reaching its peak, the city's great philosophers, such as Socrates and Plato, created the foundation of Western philosophy. Pericles, who had commanded the Athenians at Mycale, became the leader of Athens by way of the democratic process that flourished in the city, and he presided over what historians regard as a golden age of Athenian civilization.

As Sparta dominated the Peloponnesian League, Athens formed its own bloc, the Delian League, named for the island of Delos, where Athens and its allied city-states met to formalize their association. A recent analogy would be the rival Cold War alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Athens and Sparta, along with their blocs, came to blows in a series of armed conflicts that reached their climax in the Peloponnesian

War, which began in 431 BC. As the two states battled, Persia backed Sparta with money and matériel, having deduced that more mileage was to be had on their road to keeping the Greeks off balance by taking the indirect approach than through a direct attack.

During the long conflict, both sides were able to thwart attempts by the other to invade their territory. However, the tide turned when Athens felt obliged to intervene in a conflict in Sicily between its allies and Sparta's allies. An unanticipated and disastrous defeat of the Athenian fleet in a series of naval battles marked the beginning of the end for Athens, which finally capitulated in 404.

Buoyed by their success in the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans undertook a somewhat successful campaign in Asia Minor aimed at liberating the Greek cities from their wartime allies, the Persians. With the Spartans thus overextended, a coalition including Athens, Corinth and Thebes attacked the Spartans in Greece in 395 BC. The Persians now switched sides, backing the anti-Sparta coalition in the ensuing Corinthian War. Sparta was unable to achieve a repeat of its triumphant campaigns of 406–404, and the war devolved into a stalemate. At sea, a revived Athenian navy was able to reassert Athenian dominance in many areas of the Aegean rim.

As Spartan luck waned, the pendulum swung back and the Persians closed their purse to the Athenians. It was Persia's King Artaxerxes II who engineered the truce that ended the Corinthian War. The Persian Empire had essentially won another Greek war by again tipping the balance between Athens and Sparta.

In this twilight of Athenian and Spartan power came the series of events that would set the stage onto which Alexander would step as he began his climb to greatness.

Alexander's doctrinal grandfather was the statesman and military leader Epaminondas of Thebes. As a young man, Alexander was greatly influenced militarily by his father, Philip II of Macedonia, whose tutor in such matters had been Epaminondas.

Persia had created a power vacuum by equalizing and neutralizing Athens and Sparta, and Thebes inserted itself into this space when Epaminondas achieved a shocking and unexpected victory over a Spartan-led force at Leuctra in 371 BC. It was traditional practice to

organize soldiers into rectangular blocks called phalanxes, with each man on the front backed by a dozen others who would press forward if he fell. Also standard procedure was to put the strongest troops on the right wing of the formation.

At Leuctra, Epaminondas outfoxed Sparta's King Cleombrotus by putting his strength on the left and packing his left-wing phalanx 50-men deep. On his right, he arrayed his troops in an echelon formation, which allowed him to outflank the weakest part of the Spartan line.

Military historians have argued for centuries about whether Epaminondas's asymmetrical line was intentional tactical brilliance or mere expediency in the face of a larger force. All agree that it worked. Cleombrotus himself died on the field and the Spartans were decisively routed.

Thebes emerged as the major player among Greek city-states, but only briefly. Nine years later, in 362, there was a rematch at Mantinea, with Thebes supported by Athens. Epaminondas repeated the same basic tactics that had favored him at Leuctra, and again they worked. Thebes prevailed on the battlefield, but Epaminondas himself was killed in action.

Had the great leader survived to relish the victory, Thebes might have remained as it had become after Leuctra, but it would not. Meanwhile, however, neither Sparta nor Athens was strong enough to reassert itself as the dominant power in Greece. The Greek city-states had essentially defeated one another.

Into this vacuum of power stepped a young man from the far north who had learned the art of war from Epaminondas. This man was Philip of Macedonia. Philip turned 20 in the year of Mantinea. He was born in 382 at Pella in Macedonia, the youngest son of King Amyntas III and Queen Eurydice. His bothers, Alexander and Perdiccas, would each precede him as king.

Until the fourth century BC, Macedonia, also called Macedon, had remained a political backwater. In Athens, Corinth, Sparta and Thebes, Macedonians were considered crude barbarians, or at best, untutored country cousins. The flowering of the arts and literature that took place in Athens in the fifth century BC was a far cry from the tribal, hunter-gatherer culture of the Macedonians living in the rugged mountains far to the north.

As the city-states had their ongoing rivalry, Macedonia was in frequent conflict with its neighbors, such as Thrace to the east and Thessaly to the south. To the west were Epirus and Illyria.

When King Amyntas died in 370 BC, and Philip's oldest brother assumed the throne as Alexander II, the Illyrians promptly tested the young king by invading Macedonia. Alexander was able to defeat the Illyrians, but only with Athenian help. Shortly thereafter, Alexander became embroiled in a conflict with Thessaly that brought Thebes into the fight. At the time, Thebes was at its peak as a military power, and Macedonia was forced out of Thessaly. Among their concessions, Alexander was forced cancel his alliance with the Athenians, but he refused to surrender the throne to Ptolemy of Aloros, his mother's lover.

Ptolemy killed Alexander in 368 and served as regent because the middle brother, Perdiccas, was still underage. Three years later, however, Perdiccas killed Ptolemy and assumed the throne as Perdiccas III. To placate the Thebans, Perdiccas was forced to surrender his younger brother, Philip, as a hostage.

In Thebes, Philip grew to manhood close to the center of Theban power. He learned much about both political and military affairs from Epaminondas, and he became acquainted with Plato. His time spent in Thebes can be compared to the eye-opening time that Russia's Peter the Great spent in Western Europe in the 1690s.

Philip returned to Macedonia in 364, two years after Mantinea and well aware of the power vacuum that existed in the Hellenic world after the downfall of Thebes. He saw it as Macedonia's destiny to fill it. When Perdiccas was killed battling the Illyrians in 359, Philip became king.

Philip drew upon large resources of manpower to create a disciplined standing army. Applying what he had learned from Epaminondas and from studying his mentor's victories, Philip allowed more room to maneuver within the phalanx, backing them with mobile cavalry and teams of archers. He also equipped the men in his phalanx with a longer spear known as a sarissa. About 18 feet in length, it proved to be a formidable weapon in the hands of an infantryman strong enough to wield one.

Philip, like Alexander later, utilized the Macedonian cavalry as a shock force, a hammer pushing the enemy against the anvil of the phalanx. While the central phalanx held the enemy center—and held

it well, given the length of the sarissa—rather than bashing at it, mobile forces, specifically cavalry, attacked the enemy flanks. The elite horsemen of the Macedonian army, the Companion Cavalry, were organized into eight squadrons averaging 250 men each.

The ultimate success of Philip's Macedonian legions was also attributable to his disciplined and astute subordinate commanders. Just as Napoleon had Louis-Nicolas Davout; just as Ulysses S. Grant had William Tecumseh Sherman; just as Dwight Eisenhower had George Patton, Philip's strategic vision benefitted from the tactical brilliance of a great battlefield commander. Parmenio, also known as Parmenion, helped perfect the tactics that Philip had learned from Epaminondas.

Philip then set about molding Macedonia into the dominant power in Greece, establishing a reputation for invincibility that had perhaps not been seen in Greece since the term had described Sparta at the end of the Peloponnesian War.

In 346 BC, Philip found an auspicious opportunity for his professional army in his successful intervention in the decade-long Third Sacred War, which began as a fight between Thebes and Phocis over who should control Delphi. With its great oracle and its Temple of Apollo, Delphi was a site sacred to all Greeks, so Philip was able to style himself as a defender of Apollo.

"Philip, as if he were the avenger of the sacrilege, not the defender of the Thebans, ordered all his soldiers to assume crowns of laurel, and proceeded to battle as if under the leadership of [Apollo]," writes Justinus (Marcus Junianius Justinus; second or third century AD). "This affair brought incredibly great glory to Philip in the opinion of all people," who, as Justinus phrased it, called him "the avenger of the god, and the defender of religion."

It was now clear throughout Greece that the Macedonians were the single, unquestioned superpower in the Hellenic world. In Athens, the great center of art and literature, the intelligentsia bemoaned the surrender of Hellenic civilization to the "barbarians." It was rather like the way that the fall of Rome to the Germanic barbarians six centuries later would be perceived by devotees of Roman civilization.

However, the reality is always more complex than the stereotype, as Athenian culture and learning came to influence the Macedonian

court when Philip later enlisted the great philosopher Aristotle as a tutor to his son, the young Alexander.

In addition to defeating his neighboring adversaries in tests of arms, Philip had sought to form more amicable relationships with rival kings in a manner that has often been practiced between monarchies through the years—by marrying their daughters. Philip married often. His first of seven wives was the Illyrian princess Audata. Philip's second and third wives were Phila of Elimiotis and Nicesipolis of Thessaly. According to Plutarch, both Audata and Phila were deceased by the time of Philip's fourth marriage, and none of his wives had yet borne a son.

His fourth wife, whom he married in 357, was Olympias, the daughter of the late King Neoptolemus of Epirus, and a woman of great beauty that was rivaled only by her mysterious charisma and by her wild abandon. Plutarch counted her among the women who were "addicted to the Orphic rites and the orgies of Dionysus from very ancient times." Plutarch adds that Olympias, "affected these divine possessions more zealously than other women, and carried out these divine inspirations in wilder fashion, used to provide the revelling companies with great tame serpents."

In Plutarch's words, "the night before that on which the marriage of Philip and Olympias was consummated, the bride dreamed that there was a peal of thunder and that a thunderbolt fell upon her womb, and that thereby much fire was kindled, which broke into flames that travelled all about, and then was extinguished."

Philip himself is said to have later dreamed that he had put a seal on his wife's womb, and on it was the figure of a lion. This was interpreted by Aristander, the court prognosticator, as meaning that her son would be bold, like a lion.

Plutarch reports the widely discussed alternate legend that the son born to Olympias had been fathered, not by Philip, but by Zeus in the form of a serpent. He tells that at the sight of a serpent lying by the side of Olympias as she slept, Philip "no longer came often to sleep by her side, either because he feared that some spells and enchantments might be practiced upon him by her, or because he shrank for her embraces in the conviction that she was the partner of a superior being."

A boy child was indeed coming, and soon the world would know what these omens meant.

CHAPTER 1

Auspicious Beginnings

In July 356 BC, a horse owned by Philip of Macedonia won its race at the Olympic Games. When the good news reached the monarch, it was just one element in a trifecta of glad tidings that arrived that day. Philip had also learned that his able commander Parmenio had triumphed in a great battle against the Illyrians, and that Olympias had finally borne him a son. This especially pleased him because his favorite soothsayer, Aristander of Telmessos, had earlier told him that the child within the womb of Olympias was a son who would be as bold as a lion.

Philip, who had just defeated the city of Potidaea, celebrated the good news that he had received, noting it was auspicious that there were three. "These things delighted him, of course," writes the Greek historian Plutarch in his *Lives of Noble Greeks and Romans.* "The seers raised his hopes still higher by declaring that the son whose birth coincided with three victories [including Potidaea] would be always victorious."

By the Athenian, or Attic, calendar, Philip's son, named Alexander, was born on the sixth day of the month Hekatombaion,

or Hecatombaeon, which corresponds to July 21 on the modern calendar.

As Plutarch writes, Alexander was born "on the day the temple of Ephesian Artemis was burned." This particular temple of Artemis, the goddess known to the Romans as Diana, was located at Ephesus—near Selçuk in modern Turkey—and was no obscure religious site. It was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The fire certainly got the attention of all present on that dark July 21. Plutarch writes that "all the Magi who were then at Ephesus, looking upon the temple's disaster as a sign of further disaster, ran about beating their faces and crying aloud that woe and great calamity for Asia had that day been born."

Writing with twenty-twenty hindsight, Plutarch certainly saw the boy child of Olympias as the future manifestation of "woe and great calamity" for the Persian Empire in Asia.

Hindsight colors much of what has been written about Alexander's youth. The stories that were handed down orally, and later penned by his biographers, tend to seem more like allegories that support the better-documented facts of his later life. They paint a portrait of a smart, skillful boy, the kind of person that we would expect to grow into the man that Alexander became. Conversely, one can conclude that many of the stories must have a basis in fact because Alexander did indeed become that sort of man.

Some stories show a boy so sure of himself that his confidence borders on arrogance. For instance, when invited to run in the Olympic Games as a teenager, he replied that he would do so only if the other runners on the track were kings.

To educate the young prince, Philip hired some of the best minds in Greece. The Macedonians had defeated Athens militarily, but remained in awe of Athenian arts and sciences. In 343, Philip brought Aristotle to Macedonia from Athens to educate Alexander. Philip was so pleased with the results of Aristotle's tutoring that, as part of his tuition payment, he restored the city of Stagira—Aristotle's hometown—which he had destroyed during one of his campaigns.

The distinguished philosopher instilled a love of learning and literature in the boy, instructing him in science and healing arts. He also gave Alexander a copy of Homer's *Iliad,* which he kept with him through his travels as an adult. Some claim that Alexander loved Aris-

totle more than he loved his father. Philip had given him life, but Aristotle "taught him a noble life."*

One of the best-known anecdotes of Alexander as a boy, and one that is considered to have a basis in fact, concerns the horse Bucephalas. This animal, who would be Alexander's favorite for most of his adult life, was brought to the court of King Philip when Alexander was about ten years old by a Thessalian named Philoneicus. Plutarch describes Bucephalas as "savage and altogether intractable, neither allowing any one to mount him, nor heeding the voice of any of Philip's attendants, but rearing up against all of them."

Considering the colt too wild to be of any use, Philip dismissed Philoneicus and told him to take Bucephalas away. According to Plutarch, at this point, Alexander piped up, observing "What a horse they are losing, because, for lack of skill and courage, they cannot manage him!"

Philip was naturally skeptical of the boy's impertinence, but Alexander proceeded to bet his father the sale price of the horse that he could ride him. Naturally, the story would not have been memorialized as part of the Alexander legend if Bucephalas had bucked him off. When Alexander dismounted after a successful ride, Plutarch tells that Philip told him "My son, seek thee out a kingdom equal to thyself; Macedonia has not room for thee."

As with the wails of the magi at Ephesus ten years earlier, it is a prophetic statement that may or may not have been spoken, but that illustrates the direction that young Alexander was headed.

Whatever notional kingdom Philip may have imagined for Alexander on that day in 346 BC, it is certainly true that Philip was still imagining a bigger kingdom for himself. It was in the same year that he successfully subdued the Phocians and that Athens finally succumbed to Philip. He was also consolidating his control over the regions to the north from Illyria to Thrace, planning attacks still farther afield

*George Willis Botsford and Charles Alexander Robinson, *Hellenic History.* 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1948), Chapter 18).

against the ancient Greek city of Byzantium, and dreaming of eventually attacking the Persian Empire.

Later the center of the great Byzantine Empire, Byzantium, now Istanbul, is located on the Bosporus, which, along with the Dardanelles (known as the Hellespont in the ancient world), is one of the crossing points between Europe and Asia Minor, and a gateway on the water route between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. As Justinus writes in his *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum,* or *Epitome of Philippic History,* this "noble city and seaport . . . would be a station for his forces by land and sea."

In the same paragraph, Justinus adds that the ambitious Philip "made an expedition, too, into Scythia, to get plunder, that, after the practice of traders, he might make up for the expenses of one war by the profits of another." Scythia was the umbrella term used by the Greeks to describe the lands across the vast region of steppes north and east of the Hellenic enclaves on the Black Sea that stretches into Central Asia.

Having failed in his initial forays against Byzantium, Philip tried again in 339. While the Macedonian army may have been invincible on the battlefield, besieging fixed targets, such as fortified cities, were still a challenge. Though this Byzantine venture disappointed Philip in 339, his son was taking note of the need for a functional siege strategy. Alexander would never fail in a siege.

While Philip was away, Alexander had an opportunity to prove himself. As Plutarch writes, "Alexander, though only sixteen years of age, was left behind as regent in Macedonia and keeper of the royal seal, and during this time he subdued the rebellious Maedi [in southwestern Thrace], and after taking their city, drove out the Barbarians, settled there a mixed population, and named the city Alexandropolis."

It was also during the absence of Philip that Alexander, as regent, entertained envoys from the Persian king Artaxerxes. Plutarch, always keen to cite incidents from Alexander's early life that predicted future greatness, relates that Alexander "won upon them by his friendliness, and by asking no childish or trivial questions, but by enquiring about the length of the roads and the character of the journey into the interior, about the king himself, what sort of a warrior he was, and what the prowess and might of the Persians. The envoys were therefore as-

tonished and regarded the much-talked-of ability of Philip as nothing compared with his son's eager disposition to do great things."

In any case, the highly regarded abilities of Philip had been successfully challenged at Byzantium, and this got the attention of the city-states, who began to conspire against him. They had submitted to the barbarian from Macedonia when he was powerful, but they saw his troubles in the north as an opportunity. It was a typical case of initially submitting to strength, but rebelling against the first perceived sign of weakness.

In August 338, the battle lines were drawn at Chaeronea in Boeotia, with Athens and Thebes joining forces against the Macedonian king and his Thessalian allies. Neither side wanted the other to be the power that defeated Philip, so they went in together. As Justinus writes, "The Thebans espoused their cause, fearing that if the Athenians were conquered, the war, like a fire in the neighborhood, would spread to them. An alliance being accordingly made between the two cities, which were just before at violent enmity with each other, they wearied Greece with embassies, stating that 'they thought the common enemy should be repelled by their common strength, for that Philip would not rest, if his first attempts succeeded, until he had subjugated all Greece.'"

If Chaeronea was make or break time for Philip and Macedonia, it was the coming of age moment for young Alexander, who had just turned 18 and was about to be tested in his first major battle.

Apparently impressed with his son's potential, Philip placed the teenager in command of the Companion Cavalry on the left flank of the Macedonian line, while Philip himself took charge of the right flank. As such, Philip faced the Athenians, while Alexander was opposite the more capable army of Thebes. Among the latter troops were the Sacred Band, the most recent incarnation of the elite force that had played a pivotal role in routing the Spartans at Leuctra in 371 BC.

Tactically, Philip lured the Athenians out of a defensive posture, making them more vulnerable and pulling them away from the Theban positions to their left. This in turn provided an opening for Alexander and the Companions to drive a wedge between the enemy contingents.

As Alexander attacked, the Theban forces collapsed into disarray—except for the Sacred Band, who held their ground. Nevertheless, the boy general attacked and pummeled them, killing more than three quarters of the Sacred Band before they were finally battered into submission. With this, Alexander and the Companions turned on the Athenian center, just as Philip finished off the Athenian cavalry.

Most ancient accounts agree that the Battle of Chaeronea was long and bloody, and that when it was over, any question regarding the primacy of the Macedonians was laid to rest. As for Philip's primacy, the only star that shone as bright over Greece that night was Alexander's.

Chaeronea confirmed what should have been understood throughout Greece at the end of the Third Sacred War eight years earlier. The old days were gone forever, and the new days were ruled by Macedonia.

With this, Philip began to make plans for a major campaign against the Persians in Asia Minor.

However, even as Philip was now Greece's unquestioned king, he was about to have his share of trouble within his own house. As Plutarch writes, "the disorders in [Philip's] household, due to the fact that his marriages and amours carried into the kingdom the infection, as it were, which reigned in the women's apartments, produced many grounds of offence and great quarrels between father and son, and these the bad temper of Olympias, who was a jealous and sullen woman, made still greater, since she spurred Alexander on. The most open quarrel was brought on by Attalus [a member of Philip's court and an officer in his army] at the marriage of Cleopatra [Attalus's niece], a maiden whom Philip was taking to wife, having fallen in love with the girl when he was past the age for it."

Olympias had known that Philip was a polygamist when she married him, and she probably would have acquiesced to his marrying Cleopatra as a second wife had Philip not had the audacity to repudiate Olympias at the same time. In so doing, Philip would also have to repudiate the legitimacy of Olympias's son, Alexander, as his heir.

As Justinus writes, an understandably spiteful Olympias taunted Philip with the well-known, albeit mythical, story of Zeus having

been Alexander's true father, but that she had actually conceived Alexander, not by Philip, but "by a serpent of extraordinary size."

Philip turned the taut back on Olympias, using it as an excuse to accuse her of adultery, which gave him grounds for the divorce that he sought. If they had ever been a happy family, those days were over. Philip's repudiation of Olympias had the presumably unintended consequence of his also repudiating Alexander.

"But what of me, base wretch?" Alexander asked Philip, according to Plutarch, during a drunken argument. "Dost thou take me for a bastard?"

At this point, Plutarch reports that Philip rose up against his son with drawn sword, but, fortunately for both, his anger and his wine made him trip and fall. Mocking him, Alexander said, "Look now, men! Here is one who was preparing to cross from Europe into Asia; and he is upset in trying to cross from couch to couch."

The most powerful leader in Greek history and the sovereign of the peninsula, Philip had lost the respect and allegiance of his son and protégé. After the angry exchange, Alexander took Olympias to Epirus, where her brother Alexander I was now ruling as a sort of vassal king under Philip. About a year later, Philip and Olympias apparently reconciled—up to a point—and she moved back to Pella, the capital city of Macedonia. Her relations with Philip remained strained, as she continued to insist that his famous son had actually been fathered by Zeus.

By the time of his marriage to Cleopatra and his repudiation of Olympias in 337 BC, Philip was preoccupied professionally with preparations for his ultimate military campaign against Persia. It is unclear whether he intended to conquer all of the Persian Empire or merely that part of it in Asia Minor, but having united Greece, Philip was ready to launch what was probably the biggest operation against the Persians in their longstanding state of war with the Greeks. Philip had even sent Parmenio with an advance contingent to cross the Hellespont and hold the crossing point from Europe into Asia Minor.

In October 336, Philip threw a party for the wedding of his daughter by Olympias, Alexander's sister Cleopatra. The bridegroom

in this marriage was her uncle—Alexander I of Epirus. It was at the wedding banquet that Philip was knifed by one of his own personal bodyguards, a youth named Pausanias of Orestis.

There are various theories as to motive. Although both had their motives, most historians agree that Alexander was not among the conspirators, and that Olympias was probably not involved in plotting the assassination either. Parenthetically, Olympias later did engineer the murders of Europa and Caranus, the infant children of Philip by his young wife Cleopatra—and thus potential rivals for Alexander's throne.

In a further search for motives, the first-century BC Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (Diodorus of Sicily) reports that Pausanias was one of Philip's former male lovers and killed him in a fit of jealousy. Aristotle, in a contemporary account, says that followers of Attalus, the uncle of Cleopatra, had offended Pausanias. Justinus agrees that Pausanias had "suffered gross violence at the hands of Attalus [and that Attalus had] rendered him the laughing-stock of those of his own age."

In any case, the assassin was caught and killed before he reached his horse. Alexander had the body of Philip's killer staked out on public display and later cremated along with that of his victim. Young Alexander also made quick work of any and all who were said to have aided or abetted Pausanias and his scheme.

As Justinus writes, "Philip died at the age of 47, after having reigned 25 years. . . . As a king, he was more inclined to display in war, than in entertainments; and his greatest riches were means for military operations."

With Philip's death, Alexander took the throne. The nineteenth-century historian John Clark Ridpath writes that Alexander addressed the nobility of Macedonia, telling them that "the king's name has changed, but the king you shall find remains the same."

The two kings were, of course, not the same. Justinus states that "To Philip succeeded his son Alexander, a prince greater than his father, both in his virtues and his vices. Each of the two had a different mode of conquering; the one prosecuted his wars with open force, the other with subtlety. . . . The father had more cunning, the son more hon-