[8] Alexander was literary by nature and fond of reading. As he regarded and spoke of the \textit{Iliad} as a manual of warfare, he traveled with Aristotle's edition\textsuperscript{10}—the so-called \textit{Iliad} "of the casket"\textsuperscript{11}—and kept it, with his dagger, under his pillow, as Onesicritus has recorded. And when other books were not easy to come by in upper Asia, Alexander ordered Harpalus to send him some. Harpalus sent him the books of Philistus, many works by the tragedians Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus, and the dithyrambs of Telestes and Philoxenus.\textsuperscript{12} Admiring Aristotle at first, and loving him no less than his own father, since (as he said) on his father's account he lived, but on account of Aristotle he lived nobly, Alexander viewed the philosopher with suspicion later on. Not that Alexander did Aristotle any harm, but his earlier deep affection for him, which had been implanted in Alexander and had developed from his soul, as the honor he accorded Anaxarchus, the fifty talents he sent Xenocrates, and his Court of Dandamis and Calanus sufficiently demonstrate.\textsuperscript{14}

10. It is doubtful that Aristotle did indeed edit the text of the \textit{Iliad}.

11. So called because it was stored in some sort of small box.

12. Philistus wrote a historical narrative centered on the tyranny of Dionysius I and his son, men whom Alexander might easily have considered political role models. The tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are well-known. The dithyrambic poetry of Telestes and Philoxenus have survived only in fragments.

13. In 327 Aristotle's nephew Callisthenes was arrested and, quite probably, executed by Alexander on a charge of treasonous conspiracy (see pages 109–10 below); this undoubtedly led to a breakdown in the king's relationship with Aristotle, whatever that consisted of at the time.

14. Dandamis and Calanus were Indian holy men supposedly offered inducements to join Alexander's retinue (see pages 152–3 below); Calanus in fact agreed to do so. Anaxarchus was a court philosopher who traveled with the expedition into Asia, like Callisthenes (whom Plutarch here leaves discreetly unmentioned). Xenocrates was head of the Platonic Academy in Athens; Alexander sent bequests to him and various other Athenian citizens after capturing the treasures of the Persian capitals. Whether Alexander maintained a substantial interest in philosophy or merely appeared to do so for public-relations purposes is hard to determine; Plutarch, though, was deeply attached to the former view, as can be seen from his two youthful essays extolling Alexander as a "philosopher in arms" (\textit{On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander}, parts 1 and 2, found in vol. 4 of the Loeb edition of Plutarch's \textit{Moralia}).

[9] While Philip was making war on Byzantium,\textsuperscript{15} Alexander, who was sixteen years old and had been left behind in Macedonia as regent and master of the seal-ring, subdued the rebelling Macedians and, after seizing their city, expelled the barbarians, settled a mixed population there, and named the city Alexandropolis. Present at Chaeronea, Alexander took part in the battle against the Greeks and is said to have been the first to assault the Theban Sacred Band.\textsuperscript{16} These exploits naturally endeared Alexander to Philip, who rejoiced to hear the Macedonians calling Alexander their king, but Philip their general.

\textbf{b. The battle of Chaeronea}

The story of Alexander's military career begins at Chaeronea, the first battle in which he played a leadership role. Though only eighteen years old at the time, he had so completely earned the confidence of his father, King Philip, as to be appointed to command one of the two wings of the Macedonian line, in effect the second most crucial position after that of the king himself. The only description we have of the battle is the frustratingly vague account of Diodorus Siculus, given below.

In the two years preceding the battle, the uneasy truce between Macedonia and the city of Athens had finally broken down, principally because Philip's moves in the Hellespont region threatened a trade route by which Athens got its food supplies. Philip finally precipitated a crisis by suddenly and without provocation seizing the Greek city of Elatea, a place he had no business occupying unless he had designs on Boeotia and Attica to the east. On learning of his advances there, Athenians were so terror-struck that, in a hastily convened assembly, no one spoke for a long time. Finally it was Demosthenes, the leader of the anti-Macedonian party and the most trusted statesman of the time, who put forward a proposal: to seek an alliance with Thebes, the other major power in the region, and to meet Philip head-on with all the force that could be mustered.

Demosthenes himself spoke to the Thebans in assembly and succeeded in winning the vote for an alliance, out-arguing the Macedonian speaker who had been sent by Philip to prevent this outcome. But the rhetorical brilliance Athenians such as himself had honed over the decades was not matched by the military talent of the city's leadership. Land warfare had been a rare event for Athens in recent years and was often conducted on its

15. In 340 B.C.E.

16. See the episode from Diodorus that follows for a fuller description of the battle and background on the Sacred Band.
behalf by hired mercenaries. So when its army took the field in 338, many citizens, including Demosthenes himself, found themselves in combat for the first time ever. Philip’s troops, by contrast, had seen almost constant action, many of them over the course of ten or twenty years.

The best hope of the Greeks rested on the Theban infantry, and in particular on the Sacred Band, a corps of three hundred shock troops who had been drilled and trained at state expense (unlike most warriors who fought as private citizens, paid but not trained by their cities). It is noteworthy, therefore, that Philip, in arranging his own forces for the battle, stationed Alexander opposite the Theban position, while he himself faced the Athenians. His strategy is hard to discern from the blurry account given by Diodorus below, but it seems likely that he intended Alexander to deliver the decisive blow that would break the Greek line—which is indeed exactly what transpired.

[Diodorus Siculus 16.85] By means of the Theban alliance, the Athenians had doubled their existing fighting force and regained confidence in their prospects. They immediately appointed Chares and Lysicles as generals and sent all their forces under arms to Boeotia. As all their young men were eager for the struggle, they marched in haste and reached Chaeronea in Boeotia. Amazed at how quickly the Athenians had reached their country, the Thebans showed themselves just as eager and went out with their weapons to meet them. Encamping together, the allies awaited the enemy’s approach.

Though Philip had lost the support of the Boeotians, he was nonetheless determined to take on both allies together. He waited for his own late-arriving allies and reached Boeotia with more than thirty thousand foot soldiers and no fewer than two thousand horsemen. Both sides, in their resolution and zeal, were ready for the battle, and in valor they were well matched; but in numbers and in generalship the king had the advantage. For as Philip had contended in a great variety of pitched battles, most of which he had won, he had gained a wide experience in military actions. On the Athenian side, their best generals had died—Iphecriates, Chabrias, and even Timotheus—and of those who remained, though Chares held first place, he did not surpass the average private soldier in martial energy and determination.

[16.86] At daybreak, when the forces were drawn up in battle array, the king posted his son Alexander—a mere boy, but notable for courage and quickness of action—at one of the wings, placing his most distinguished generals beside him, while he himself, keeping the picked troops with him, led the other division and deployed the other battalions as the occasion demanded. The Athenians, on the other side, had arrayed their forces tribe by tribe. Giving one division to the Boeotians, they themselves retained command of the other. The battle was strongly contested for a considerable time, and many fell on both sides, the struggle affording hopes of victory now to one side, now to the other.

Then Alexander, anxious to show his father his valor, and harboring a boundless ambition, was the first to break through the enemy line, though his many comrades-in-arms were equally brave. Striking down many, he subdued the troops arrayed opposite him. As the men stationed beside him did the same, gaps in the enemy’s line were constantly opened. While many corpses were piling up, the foremost men around Alexander pressed hard and routed the enemy divisions ranged against them. Thereupon the king himself, bearing the brunt of the battle and not yielding the credit of the victory even to Alexander,17 began by forcing back the troops stationed opposite him, and in helping put them to flight became responsible for the victory. More than a thousand Athenians fell in the battle, and no fewer than two thousand were captured. Likewise, many of the Thebans were killed, and no small number were taken prisoner. After the battle Philip set up a trophy; gathered the corpses for burial, offered sacrifices to the gods for the victory, and honored according to their deserts those who had fought bravely.

Though he could have now gone on to sack and destroy Athens, Philip chose instead to be magnanimous in victory. He sent Alexander as envoy to Athens at the head of an honorary procession bearing the ashes of the Athenian dead. The first, and only, visit of Alexander to the city that had become the “school of Hellas” has unfortunately not been recorded by any of our extant sources. We can only surmise what he thought of the Athenians; they, however, were quite eager to fawn on him and eagerly erected statues of the

17. Diodorus probably anticipates somewhat by implying that Philip was jealously seeking to outshine his son on the field of Chaeronea. The roles each man had played at the battle did indeed become a source of rivalry later on, but it seems clear that Philip and Alexander were operating in tandem according to a well-orchestrated plan. One theory of the battle holds that Philip feigned a retreat on the right wing in order to draw the Athenians out of position, creating a wide gap in the Greek line into which Alexander’s cavalry could charge.
young prince and his father in the market square. The fate of the Athenians, as they knew, was now dependent on the good favor of the Macedonians, and they made great show of courting that favor, while still keeping their eyes open for the opportunity to revolt.

Philip now solidified his Greek power base by inaugurating the Greek League at Corinth, as described in the Introduction (page xiii). His plans for an invasion of Asia were already in motion; an advance force under Parmenio was making ready to cross the Hellespont and secure a bridgehead into Persian territory. He needed to have some of the Greeks on his side, and the rest at least too complacent or too intimidated to act against him, before he could make the crossing himself with the bulk of his army. The League gave him a position of legitimate authority and forced a stable status quo on the Greek world under pro-Macedonian leadership.

c. The rift between Philip and Alexander

Though Philip had always given Alexander all the honors due to an heir apparent, including the leadership of his left wing at Chaeronea, the relationship between father and son mysteriously broke down in the months following the battle. An important cause, or perhaps a result, of the rift was Philip's decision to take yet another wife, Cleopatra, a member of a high-ranking Macedonian family. He had married several other women since Olympias but had as yet sired no other children who might rival Alexander as his successor. But his marriage to the young, highborn Cleopatra made this prospect more real and created new tensions at court, as seen in the following episodes from Plutarch's Life of Alexander.

[Plutarch 9] Philip's domestic troubles—his marriages and love affairs somehow infected the kingdom with the concerns of the women's quarters—occasioned many accusations and serious quarrels. These were aggravated by the harshness of Olympias, a jealous and sullen woman, who egged Alexander on. Attalus precipitated a notorious clash at the wedding of Cleopatra, a young girl Philip was taking to wife (he had fallen in love with her when well past his prime). Attalus was the bride's uncle. Having drunk deep at the carousel, he called on the Macedonians to ask the gods for a legitimate son to be born of Philip and Cleopatra, to be a successor to the throne. Provoked, Alexander cried, "Villain, do you consider me to be a bastard?" and threw a cup at Attalus. Philip then rose up, his sword drawn, to confront Alexander. But luckily for both, owing to his anger and the wine, Philip slipped and fell. Alexander now insulted him, saying, "This man, gentlemen, was preparing to cross from Europe to Asia, yet he is overturned merely crossing from couch to couch." After this drunken episode, Alexander took Olympias away and established her in Epirus. He himself took up temporary residence in Illyria.

Meanwhile, Demaratus the Corinthian, a plainspoken friend of the family, paid Philip a visit. After their affectionate greetings, Philip asked Demaratus how the Greeks were getting along with one another. Demaratus replied, "How appropriate, Philip, for you to concern yourself about Greece, now that you have filled your own house with such strife and misery." Pulling himself together, Philip sent for Alexander and brought him home, having persuaded him through Demaratus to return.

[10] When Pixodarus, the Carian satrap, sought to insinuate himself through kinship into Philip's military alliance, he planned to offer his eldest daughter in marriage to Philip's son Arrhidaeus, between Alexander and the bride's family, as illustrated in the episode that follows.

19. Her father seems to have died, leaving Attalus, her uncle, as her guardian. Attalus was son-in-law to Parmenio, Philip's most senior general, and went on to serve as co-commander with him in the advance expedition into Asia (see page 15).
20. This breach between father and son, just before the end of Philip's life, was evidently quite a serious matter. It is not clear why, or even whether, Philip sought to remove Alexander from his long-held position as presumptive heir to the throne, though his increasing estrangement from Olympias must have played a role.
21. As satrap of Caria (in western Turkey), Pixodarus was a high official of the Persian empire, but he evidently surmised that Philip's planned invasion of Asia would be successful and tried to switch sides before the war had truly begun.
22. Arrhidaeus was Philip's illegitimate son and Alexander's half-brother. He was a mental defective who, against all odds, eventually came to be proclaimed king of the vast Macedonian empire as Philip III (see page 170).
and to that end dispatched Aristocritus to Macedonia. Rumors and slanders again reached Alexander from his friends and his mother to the effect that Philip, by means of an illustrious marriage and important state affairs, was grooming Arrhidaeus for the throne. Perturbed by these hints, Alexander sent Thessalus, the tragic actor, to Caria to converse with Pixodarus and advise him to reject the bastard, who was not even sound of mind, and choose Alexander instead to be his connection by marriage (a prospect far more gratifying to Pixodarus than the other). When Philip learned of this, he visited Alexander's bedchamber. Taking along one of his son's closest friends, Philotas, son of Parmenio, he admonished Alexander severely and accused him of being ignoble and unworthy of his privileges if he was content to become the son-in-law of a Carian fellow, the slave of a barbarian king. Philip then wrote to the Corinthians, ordering them to send Thessalus back, bound in shackles. As for Alexander's other companions—Harpalus, Nearchus, Erigyius, and Ptolemy, whom at a later time Alexander brought back and held in the highest esteem—Philip banished them from Macedonia.

The relationship between Philip and Alexander, though damaged in the two episodes above, was at least superficially restored by the beginning of 336, though Alexander's mother, Olympias, remained in exile in her native Epirus, where she was reportedly agitating for war. As a diplomatic gesture

23. Alexander's behavior in this peculiar episode is interesting and somewhat obscure. By trying to supplant his half-brother as the bridegroom of Pixodarus' daughter, he was openly subverting his father's express wishes and risking another break with Philip, just after the first had been patched up. Perhaps he felt that his position as heir really was in jeopardy—Cleopatra, Philip's new wife, had already borne a daughter and may have been pregnant again by this time—and that he had better start building his own power base to prepare for a succession struggle.

24. It is curious to hear Philotas here described as a close friend of Alexander. Nowhere else do we see evidence of such a friendship. Eight years later Philotas would become the principal victim of one of Alexander's most notorious purges (see below, pages 94–6).

25. Philip seems to have suspected that Alexander's friends had conspired with him in the illicit communications with Pixodarus. Three of the four friends mentioned here would go on to play major roles in Alexander's Asian campaign, and Ptolemy went on after Alexander's death to found a dynasty in Egypt that endured for three centuries (see Glossary).

Philip offered the hand of his daughter by Olympias, Alexander's sister, to the king of Epirus, and this offer was accepted. Philip prepared a wedding celebration in his capital of Aegae that would demonstrate his power and greatness before the assembled notables of the Greek world. At the same time he wished to rally support among these wedding guests for his grand scheme, the invasion of Asia, which he had already begun by sending an advance force under Parmenio and Attalus across the Hellespont. But things were about to take an unexpected turn.

d. The assassination of Philip

The events surrounding Philip's assassination remain obscure today, and conspiracy theories continue to be debated among modern historians. Some of these theories regard Alexander, his mother Olympias, or both together as the originators of the plot that led to Philip's death, on the grounds that they had the most to gain from it now that Alexander's succession was in doubt. Such theories can be neither proven nor refuted given the available evidence, which, once again, comes largely from the account of Diodorus Siculus.

[Diodorus Siculus 16.91] Philip arranged the wedding of Cleopatra, his daughter by Olympias, having betrothed her to Olympias' legitimate brother Alexander, the king of Epirus. As he wanted as many Greeks as possible to take part in the festival, he organized magnificent contests in the arts and ordered the preparation of a lavish banquet for his friends and guests. He invited friends from all corners of Greece and urged them to extend his invitation to as many distinguished foreigners as possible. For he was exceedingly anxious to treat the Greeks affectionately and to express, by means of a proper entertainment, his appreciation for their having honored him with the supreme command.

[16.92] At last, throngs of celebrants streamed together from all directions to the festival, and the games and wedding were celebrated at Aegae in Macedonia. Not only did illustrious individuals, one after another, present Philip with golden crowns, but most of the noteworthy cities, including Athens, did so as well. And when the Athenians' crown was being announced, the herald ended by saying that anyone who plotted against King Philip and fled to Athens would be handed over to the authorities. By means of this offhand remark, the gods, with their divine foresight, were revealing the coming plot to Philip...
The procession formed at daybreak. Paraded among the other magnificent displays were statues of the twelve gods, wrought with outstanding artistry and adorned with all the brilliant and impressive trappings of wealth. Accompanying these was a thirteenth statue, suitable for a god—a likeness of Philip himself, the king having represented himself enthroned among the twelve gods.27

[16.93] The theater was filled when Philip himself appeared in a white cloak, having ordered his bodyguards to follow at a distance. For he was showing everyone that as he was protected by the goodwill of the Greeks, he had no need of his bodyguards. Then, though such an air of authority surrounded him, and everyone was praising and thinking him blessed, a deadly plot against the king, unexpected and utterly unforeseen, came to light. In order to present a clear account of these events, we will begin by mentioning the causes of the plot.

One of the king’s bodyguards, a Macedonian named Pausanias, from the district known as Orestis, had become a favorite of Philip’s on account of his beauty.28 When Pausanias saw that another man, also named Pausanias, was endearing himself to the king, he railed at the man, saying he was a hermaphrodite and would readily welcome the erotic overtures of any interested party. The other man, unable to bear such insolence, kept silent for the moment; but after consulting with Attalus, one of his friends, about what he intended to do, he ended his life willingly and unexpectedly: a few days later, when fighting alongside Philip against Pleurias, the king of the Illyrians, this Pausanias, standing in front of Philip, received all the blows aimed at his sovereign and died.

The incident was much talked of, whereupon Attalus, who belonged to the court and was influential with the king, invited Pausanias29 to dinner. Filling him with unmixed wine,30 Attalus gave his body to the mule drivers to abuse in their drunken revel. When Pausanias came to his senses, he was outraged at the violence he had suffered and accused Attalus in the king’s presence. Philip was vexed at the recklessness of the deed, but because of his relationship with Attalus and his present need of the man, he hesitated to condemn his misbehavior. For Attalus was the nephew of Philip’s new wife, Cleopatra.31 He had also been elected as a general of the advance force being sent to Asia32 and was a formidable warrior. Accordingly, as the king wished to soothe Pausanias’ righteous anger, he gave him noteworthy gifts and promoted him to a position of honor in the bodyguard.

[16.94] Pausanias, however, nursed an inexorable anger and was eager to take vengeance not only on the man who had offended him, but also on the one who had failed to avenge him. The sophist Hermocrates played a key role in the formation of Pausanias’ plan. For Pausanias attended his lectures, and when he inquired, in the course of his studies, how one might become very famous, the sophist replied, “by killing a very famous man,” for the famous man’s murderer would be forever associated with his memory. Connecting this saying with his own wrath, Pausanias had no intention of postponing his plan, but carried it out at the festival itself in the following manner:

Posting horses beside the gates, he approached the entrance to the theater, having concealed a Celtic dagger about his person. As Philip had ordered the friends who were accompanying him to enter the theater ahead of him, and the guards were at a distance, Pausanias noticed the king standing alone, ran up to him, delivered a home-thrust through the ribs, and laid him out a corpse, whereupon he ran toward the gates to the horses standing ready for his flight. Some of the bodyguards immediately rushed to the king’s body, while the rest, including Leonnatus, Perdiccas, and Attalus,33 poured out in pursuit of the murderer. Having got the start of his pursuers, Pausanias would have leaped onto his horse before they reached him had he not fallen, his shoe entangled in a vine. The men with Perdiccas caught up with Pausanias as he was getting to his feet and dispatched him with their daggers.34

27. Scholars are not sure what Philip intended by this unusually arrogant gesture, and some have doubted the credibility of the story. But others believe Philip may have been trying to institute the practice of worshiping the ruler as a god, something not previously seen in Europe, though after Alexander’s time it would become commonplace.

28. A sexual relationship is implied, as subsequent events make clear.

29. The first Pausanias is meant here, i.e., the man rejected by Philip in favor of the second.

30. Wine was normally drunk mixed with water, and unmixed wine was considered a powerful intoxicant.

31. Plutarch, as we have seen above (page 11), calls Attalus Cleopatra’s uncle, which is more likely correct.

32. That is, as one of Parmenio’s co-commanders.

33. A different Attalus than the one sent over to Asia with Parmenio.

34. Those who regard the murder of Philip as the result of a conspiracy
Such was the death of Philip, who in the course of a twenty-four-year reign became the most powerful European king of his day and by virtue of the vastness of his empire came to see himself as enthroned with the twelve gods.

STOP

naturally point out the convenience to the plotters of having Pausanias thus forever silenced. (A similar set of circumstances surrounding the modern-day assassination of JFK has left room for multitudes of conspiracy theories.) An undisturbed tomb that appears to be that of Philip has recently been excavated, producing the king's skeleton (though some scholars claim it belongs to Philip's illegitimate son, Arrhidæus) and many important works of art.

II

Alexander in Europe

(Autumn 336–Winter 335 B.C.E.)

a. The northern campaigns

Philip's sudden death at the wedding festival of his daughter left Alexander the leading, but by no means the only, claimant to the Macedonian throne. The army immediately hailed him as its new monarch, but to secure his position, Alexander took the precaution of eliminating several rivals. Among others put to death during the opening months of his reign was Attalus, the uncle of Philip's new bride Cleopatra, with whom Alexander had quarreled so bitterly (see page 11 above). Cleopatra herself was reportedly dispatched along with her young daughter, and perhaps a second child as well, by Olympias, Alexander's tempestuous mother.

Meanwhile, trouble was brewing for Alexander in the Balkans and in Greece. The territories won by Philip in his long years of campaigning now saw an opportunity to reclaim their independence. The tribal kingdoms to the north of Macedonia went into revolt almost immediately. The Greeks were more cautious, but they openly celebrated the death of Philip—Demosthenes appeared in the Athenian assembly wearing a festive cloak, even though he was mourning the death of a daughter—and began plotting ways to release themselves from the League he had founded. At the same time the Persians, eager to rid themselves of the Macedonian advance force already entrenched in their western provinces, made clear they would give generous support to any Greek cities wishing to rebel. By any measure, Alexander's reign, and the Macedonian hegemony in Europe, were at a moment of extreme crisis.

At this point begins the record of Alexander's campaigns made by Arrian, the ancient source deemed by most historians to give the clearest and most reliable picture of this remarkable period. The strengths and weaknesses of Arrian's account have already been discussed in the Introduction to this volume and will be further elucidated in the footnotes that follow. It is a very flawed history by modern standards, biased at many points by its author's explicit admiration for, and even identification with, his subject; and it