The Macedonian and Thracian Dynasties

During the Hellenistic Period Macedon was governed by several different dynasties or royal families. The Argead dynasty to which Philip II and Alexander the Great belonged ruled in Macedon until 310 BC when Alexandros IV was executed. Kassandros continued this dynasty to a certain extent, because he was married to Thessalonike, a daughter of Philip II, and his three sons who ruled Macedon were all grandsons of Philip II. This dynasty officially ended in 295 when Alexandros V was deposed by Demetrios Poliorketes.

In 305 BC Antigonos the One-Eyed declared himself and his son Demetrios Poliorketes kings on a universal scale, and their “kingdom” included Macedon. Demetrios actually sat on the throne of Macedon from 295 to 287. After he fled from the kingdom Macedon passed into the hands of Lysimachos (also king of Thrace), Pyrrhos of Epeiros, Ptolemaios Keraunos, his brother Meleagros, Antipatros Etesias (the nephew of Kassandros), and ultimately into the hands of Demetrios’s son Antigonos Gonatas. The Antigonid dynasty then ruled Macedon until Antigonos’s great-grandson Perseus was deposed by the Romans in 168 BC.
Antigonos Monophthalmos “the One-Eyed” (ca.382-301 BC).

Antigonos was one of the most striking figures in the Hellenistic period. A giant, corpulent man with a deep booming voice and only one eye, Antigonos at one stage ruled an empire that stretched from the Aegean to the Indus River. He came perilously close to capturing the entire empire conquered by Alexander the Great. But in the end, he finished with nothing.

Antigonos began his career under Philip II, and went on to serve Alexander the Great with distinction. Antigonos took part in the early stages on Alexander’s invasion of Asia, and was appointed satrap of Phrygia in 332 and fought three victorious battles against Persian soldiers who escaped from the Battle of Issos. But it was not until after the death of Alexander the Great that he rose to real prominence.

Antigonos was confirmed as satrap in Phrygia after Alexander’s death, but fled to Macedon in 322/1 after Perdikkas threatened him. Antigonos warned Antipatros and Krateros that Perdikkas was planning to marry Kleopatra the sister of Alexander with the aim of seizing the throne, and drew them into a war against Perdikkas. Antigonos fought on the side of Antipatros and Krateros in the first war of the diadochoi, and an alliance was cemented between Antigonos and Antipatros in 320, when Demetrios married Phila, the daughter of Antipatros, and widow of Krateros. After Perdikkas was killed and Antipatros was made epimeletes of the kings in his place, Antigonos was appointed “general of Asia” with a brief to eliminate Eumenes of Kardia and the other remaining supporters of Perdikkas.

In 319 Antigonos joined Kassandros in rebelling against Polyperchon who had been chosen to succeed Antipatros as epimeletes of the kings. Presumably Antigonos believed that he was the most appropriate man for the job owing to his vast experience. For a time it brought him into agreement with Kassandros who believed that he himself was the right man for the job.

In 316 Antigonos finally captured and killed Eumenes of Kardia, and incorporated the last of the supporters of Perdikkas into his own army. This effectively gave Antigonos control of all the satrapies of Asia from the Indus River to the Aegean Sea. Only Seleukos in Babylonia, Lysimachos in Thrace, Ptolemy in Egypt and Kassandros in Macedon remained outside his direct control. Soon after eliminating Eumenes Antigonos provoked a quarrel with Seleukos who fled from his satrapy in fear of his life. Seleukos fled to Ptolemy, and encouraged him to stand against Antigonos. Antigonos’s obvious ambition forced the remaining independent satraps to act, and in 315 Lysimachos, Kassandros, Ptolemy and Seleukos formed a coalition against him.

1 Justin. 17.1.12.
2 Quintus Curtius. 4.34-5.
3 Diodoros. 18.3.2.
5 Diodoros. 18.39.7.
6 Diodoros. 18.49 passim.
7 Diodoros. 18.57.3-63, 19.12-34, 19.37-44; Plutarch, Eumenes. 12-19.
8 Diodoros. 19.55.2-9.
9 Diodoros. 19.57.1; Appian, Syrian Wars. 53.
Despite the fact that he possessed more resources than his rivals in terms of finances, territory, and manpower, Antigonos utterly failed to eliminate any of his remaining rivals. Antigonos was able to place considerable pressure on them, in particular Kassandros, but he was never able to provide the knockout blow. To make matters worse Seleukos recaptured his satrapy of Babylonia in 312 after Demetrios was disastrously defeated at Gaza. Antigonos and Demetrios utterly failed to dislodge Seleukos, and in 308 Seleukos defeated Antigonos in a pitched battle near Babylon.

In 307 Antigonos sent his son Demetrios (later surnamed Poliorketes) to liberate Athens from Kassandros. This was in accordance with a proclamation he had made in 315 that all the Greeks should be free. Antigonos had issued this proclamation in a bid to encourage the Greeks to ally themselves with him and support him in his bid to unify the kingdom of Alexander. The grateful Athenians proclaimed Antigonos and Demetrios as Saviours and Benefactors and awarded them divine honours. An Athenian orator, Stratokles, proposed a motion in the Athenian assembly that formally recognised them as gods. According to Plutarch, the Athenians set up golden cult statues of Demetrios and Antigonos in the market-place, referred to them as the “Saviour-gods”, made sacrifices to them as they did to the gods, and organised an annual games and procession be held in honour.

After liberating Athens Demetrios made alliances with various Greek states including Boiotia, Aitolia and Korinth. By 302 he had managed to revive the Korinthian League (or koinon) that Philip II had set up in 338. The members of the league had chosen Alexander to lead a Graeco-Macedonian army into Asia to avenge the Persian invasion in 480 BC, thus providing the moral justification for Alexander’s invasion of Asia. Antigonos and Demetrios now intended to use the league to justify attacking in Kassandros in Macedon.

In 306 Demetrios crushed the forces of Ptolemy in a sea battle at Salamis in Cyprus. Ptolemy’s fleet was annihilated, and he lost more than 10,000 men. This victory gave Antigonos and Demetrios virtual control of the Aegean Sea. When Antigonos learned that Demetrios had won such an emphatic victory he assumed the title of “king” (basileus) and placed a diadem on his head. Antigonos then gave a diadem to Demetrios and awarded the title basileus to him as well.

After Antigonos assembled a massive army of 80,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry and 83 elephants in an attempt to dislodge Ptolemy from Egypt. The invasion failed because Demetrios was unable to effect a landing on the opposite side of the Nile to allow Antigonos to cross. After this failure Antigonos sent Demetrios to capture the island of Rhodes. This venture dragged on for two years (305-304) and was also a spectacular failure. After these two humiliating failures Antigonos decided to risk everything in a pitched battle against all his enemies. He brought together an army of 70,000 heavy infantrymen, 10,000 cavalry and 75 elephants and marched into Asia Minor. Seleukos and Lysimachos met him at Ipsos with 64,000 foot-soldiers, 10,500 horsemen, 120 war-chariots, and 400 elephants.

References:

10 Plutarch, Demetrios. 5; Diodoros. 19.80.3-86.5; Appian, Syrian Wars. 54.
11 Polyainos. 4.9.1.
12 Plutarch, Demetrios. 12.
13 Plutarch, Demetrios. 18.
14 Plutarch, Demetrios. 29.
The battle initially went well for Antigonos and Demetrios. Antigonos lead the infantry, and Demetrios, who was leading the cavalry, drove the enemy horsemen completely from the field of battle. But it seems that Seleukos’s son Antiochos who was leading the horsemen deliberately retreated to draw Demetrios away from the battlefield. Once Demetrios was off the scene, Seleukos moved his elephants between Demetrios and his father’s infantrymen to prevent Demetrios from returning. Antigonos was thus in an unprotected position. Seleukos delayed his attack on Antigonos, with a series of feints and manoeuvres designed to demoralise Antigonos’s men. They deserted to Seleukos in droves, after which Seleukos attacked. Antigonos remained resolute to the end and waited in vain for Demetrios to return and rescue them. When one of his attendants warned that the enemy were aiming for him, Antigonos stalwartly replied, “Yes, what other objective could they have?” The remaining soldiers with him were cut down and Antigonos was left dead on the battlefield.
Demetrios Poliorketes “the Besieger” (337/6 or 334-285 BC).

Demetrios was the eldest son and right-hand man of Antigonos the One-Eyed. He was famous in his lifetime as the most handsome man on earth, and was infamous for his love affairs with queens, freeborn women and prostitutes.

Demetrios grew up in Asia in his father’s satrapy of Phrygia. When still a mere boy he and his father fled to Macedon after they were threatened by Perdikkas. Antigonos convinced Antipatros and Krateros to act against Perdikkas. Antigonos fought on the side of Antipatros and Krateros in the first war of the diadochoi, and an alliance was cemented between Antigonos and Antipatros in 320, when Demetrios married Phila, one of Antipatros’s many daughters, and the widow of Krateros. Plutarch indicates that Demetrios was reluctant to marry Phila because she was considerably older than himself. The marriage to Phila was to prove advantageous to Demetrios on numerous occasions, and she soon bore him a son, Antigonos Gonatas, whose descendants would sit on the throne of Macedon until the demise of his great-great-grandson Perseus in 167 BC.

When he came of age Demetrios served with in his father’s armies with distinction. Demetrios commanded his father’s cavalry in the battles against Eumenes at Paraitakene and Gabiene in 317/6. However, his first independent commands proved disastrous. In 312 Demetrios suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Seleukos and Ptolemy at Gaze in Koile-Syria. Some 8,000 of his men were taken prisoner and numerous more were slain. Demetrios followed up his defeat at Gaza by failing to prevent Seleukos from reclaiming his satrapy of Babylonia.

Demetrios learned from his mistakes, and within a few years he had developed into an accomplished general and admiral. Demetrios possessed an enormous fleet, and late in 308/7 Demetrios sailed into the Peiraieus and liberated Athens from Kassandros. The grateful Athenians proclaimed Demetrios and his father as Saviour-gods. They set up golden cult statues of Demetrios and Antigonos in the market-place, made sacrifices to them as they did to the gods, and organised an annual games and procession be held in honour.

Demetrios followed up this spectacular success with another. In 306 he defeated Ptolemy in a sea battle at Salamis in Cyprus. This was the largest sea battle since the Peloponnesian War, and Demetrios inflicted a crushing defeat on Ptolemy. Ptolemy’s fleet was annihilated, and he lost more than 10,000 men. This victory gave Demetrios virtual control of the Aegean Sea. None of his rivals could boast a fleet to match his own massive armada. When Antigonos learned that Demetrios had won in such an emphatic fashion he placed a diadem on his head, and assumed the title of “king” (basileus). Antigonos gave a diadem to Demetrios and awarded the title basileus to him as well.

Demetrios then began minting coins in Cyprus to commemorate his

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15 Plutarch, Demetrios. 2.
16 Diodoros. 18.23.4.
18 Plutarch, Demetrios. 5.
19 Plutarch, Demetrios. 7.
20 Plutarch, Demetrios. 10; Diodoros. 20.46.1-2.
21 Plutarch, Demetrios. 18.
victory over Ptolemy showing Poseidon the god of the sea wielding a trident on one side, and the goddess Nike (Victory) on the prow of ship on the other.

Antigonos resolved to invade Egypt after the overwhelming victory at Salamis. Despite being able to muster an army of 80,000 infantry (perhaps four times the number of troops that Ptolemy could put together), 8,000 cavalry, 83 elephants and 150 warships, the invasion was a disastrous failure because Demetrios was not able to affect a landing on the western side of the Nile to allow Antigonos to cross the river and attack the forces of Ptolemy.  

Demetrios followed up this failure with an even more spectacular failure that would haunt him for the rest of his life. A two-year long siege of Rhodes earned him the ironic epithet “Poliorketes” (the Besieger) a tag which stayed with him until he died. The island of Rhodes was a free state, and had hitherto maintained its neutrality by making treaties with all the competing dynasts. Antigonos targeted the island because the Rhodians had recently leaned towards Ptolemy and refused to participate in Antigonos’s campaign against Cyprus. Antigonos ignored their pleas of neutrality and made war on them. Demetrios attacked Rhodes with four hundred ships, great siege towers called “city-takers”, catapults, rams, fire arrows and other siege engines. He even enlisted the support of pirates for his operations. Almost the entire Greek world sympathised with the Rhodians, who were seen to be an innocent party being attacked by an irresistible force in the form of Demetrios. Ptolemy, Kassandros and Lysimachos each sent grain to help them hold out against Demetrios. (Ptolemy sent 300,000 bushels, Lysimachos sent 80,000 and Kassandros sent 10,000). Yet in spite of his technological advantages, and the massive size of the attacking forces, Demetrios failed. The siege dragged on inconclusively for more than a year, by which time the combatants concluded a compromise peace. The Rhodians surrendered one hundred hostages and aligned themselves with Antigonos, with the exception of any war against Ptolemy. The Rhodians hailed Ptolemy as a Saviour-god, and set up statues of Kassandros and Lysimachos in gratitude for their assistance. They also used scrap metal from the siege engines that Demetrios left behind to make a huge statue, which they erected at the entrance to their harbour. This was the so-called Colossus of Rhodes.

After his embarrassing failure at Rhodes, Demetrios returned to Greece. Demetrios spent the winter of 304 in Athens where his status as a “Saviour-god” seems to have gone completely to his head. He took to calling the goddess Athena his “elder sister”, and spent a winter living in the Parthenon. We cannot be sure exactly what Demetrios did on in the Parthenon, but it cannot have been good, for according to Plutarch, during his winter of debauchery, Demetrios “filled the akropolis with such wanton treatment of free-born youth and native Athenian women that the place was thought to be particularly pure when he shared his dissolute life with the well-known prostitutes, Chrysis, Lamia, Demo and Antikyra”.

22 Diodoros. 20.74-75.
23 Diodoros. 20.81.2.
24 Diodoros. 20.81-88, 91-100; Plutarch, Demetrios. 21-2.
25 Plutarch, Demetrios. 22.
26 Plutarch, Demetrios. 24.1.
27 Plutarch, Demetrios. 24.
Between 304 and 302 Demetrios managed to revive the old Korinthian League (or *koinon*). Philip II had set up the league in 338, and the members had chosen Alexander to lead a Graeco-Macedonian army into Asia to avenge the Persian invasion in 480 BC., thus providing the moral justification for Alexander’s invasion of Asia. During these years he built up a series of alliance with Greek states including Athens, Boiotia, Aitolia, Korinth, and numerous other Peloponnesian cities to place pressure on Kassandros in Macedon.

In 301 Demetrios joined Antigonos in Asia Minor for a military showdown against their rivals Lysimachos and Seleukos. Antigonos had decided to risk everything in a pitched battle against all his enemies. He and Demetrios brought together an army of 70,000 heavy infantrymen, 10,000 cavalry and 75 elephants and marched into Asia Minor. Seleukos and Lysimachos met them at Ipsos with 64,000 foot-soldiers, 10,500 horsemen, 120 war-chariots, and 400 elephants.28

The battle initially went well for Antigonos and Demetrios. Antigonos lead the infantry, and Demetrios, who was leading the cavalry, drove the enemy horsemen completely from the field of battle. But it seems that Seleukos’s son Antiochos who was leading the horsemen deliberately retreated to draw Demetrios away from the battlefield. Once Demetrios was off the scene, Seleukos moved his elephants between Demetrios and his father’s infantrymen to prevent Demetrios from returning. Antigonos was thus in an unprotected position. Seleukos delayed his attack on Antigonos, with a series of feints and manoeuvres designed to demoralise Antigonos’s men. They deserted to Seleukos in droves, after which Seleukos attacked. Antigonos remained resolute to the end and waited in vain for Demetrios to return and rescue them. Antigonos was slain before Demetrios could return. Antiochos III would later lose two major battles in exactly the same manner.

The vast empire of Antigonos was lost. Seleukos took control of Syria, Lysimachos took most of Asia Minor, and Ptolemy stole Koile-Syria. Demetrios escaped via Ephesos with 5,000 foot-soldiers and 4,000 horsemen. He still possessed his enormous fleet of over 300 warships, and controlled most of the Aegean islands. He also possessed Korinth in the Peloponnese. So while he had been defeated, Demetrios was still a force to be reckoned with. He proved this by plundering the territory of Lysimachos and gaining such booty that he was able to muster a considerable army.29 When Seleukos fell out with Lysimachos and Ptolemy after the division of Antigonos’s empire had not gone his way, he sought an alliance with Demetrios. The alliance was sealed Demetrios gave his daughter Stratonike (I) in marriage to Seleukos. (Seleukos later relinquished Stratonike to his eldest son Antiochos). Relations were good between Demetrios and Seleukos for a little while, but they fell out after Demetrios captured Kilikia around 299/8.30 Seleukos demanded that Demetrios hand Kilikia over to him, and when Demetrios refused demanded the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon instead. Demetrios angrily replied that he would never pay for the privilege of having Seleukos as a son-in-law, and soon after went to Greece to “liberate” Athens from the tyrant Lachares, who had seized power sometime after Ipsos. Demetrios captured the city in 296/5 and installed garrisons in

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the city and at Mounychia in the Peiraieus.\textsuperscript{31} The Peiraieus garrison would remain in place until 229/8.

In 295 Demetrios attacked Sparta, and while he was besieging the city he was invited to intervene in a squabble between Alexandros V and Antipatros over the Macedonian throne. Pyrrhos of Epeiros had driven out Antipatros by the time he arrived in Macedon, so Demetrios seized the opportunity to have Alexandros murdered and have himself proclaimed as king by the Macedonian army.\textsuperscript{32}

Demetrios reigned in Macedon from 294 until 287. He was an active king, and devoted himself to expanding the kingdom. He campaigned in Boiotia and Aitolia, as well as against Pyrrhos in Epeiros and Lysimachos in Thrace. He founded a city in Thessaly named Demetrias after himself. But while he was an active king, Demetrios was also extravagant and ostentatious. He had an elaborate wardrobe of hats and cloaks, including double-mitred crowns, golden shoes, and a cloak with the earth and celestial bodies depicted on it.\textsuperscript{33} It seems that by this time Demetrios had really come to believe in his own divinity. Demetrios also ignored his own people, and was even said to have dumped a load of written petitions from his subjects into a river rather than read them. When he told an old woman that he had no time to listen to her problems she scornfully replied, “Then don’t be king!”.\textsuperscript{34}

Demetrios quickly lost the support of his populace and his army. In 287 he was driven out of Macedon by a combined invasion by Pyrrhos and Lysimachos. Phila committed suicide, and Demetrios fled to Asia with a small army. Demetrios campaigned in Asia Minor, but was driven east by Agathokles the son of Lysimachos. He tried to raise support in the eastern satrapies, but failed. Disease and famine afflicted his army, and he was forced to surrender to Seleukos. Demetrios spent the last two years of his life imprisoned on an estate in Seleukos’s kingdom. He finally drank himself to death in 283.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{31} Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 33-4.
\textsuperscript{32} Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 35.
\textsuperscript{33} Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 41.
\textsuperscript{34} For Demetrios’s career as king in Macedon, see Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 39-42.
\textsuperscript{35} For the last phases of Demetrios’s life, see Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 43-53.
Kassandros (ca.355-297 BC).

Kassandros (Anglicised as Cassander) was the son of the leading Macedonian general Antipatros (Anglicised as Antipater). Kassandros was one of the most infamous figures from the Hellenistic period, and developed a reputation as a bloodthirsty tyrant by putting to death the mother, wife, and two sons of Alexander the Great. Kassandros was also said to have slit the throat of the famous Athenian orator Demades whilst he was on an embassy to Macedon after butchering Demades’s son with his own hands, and he appears to Athenian inscriptions as the very personification of slavery.

Kassandros was one of the childhood companions or syntrophoi of Alexander the Great, and along with Alexander he was educated by the great philosopher Aristotle. Although Kassandros was about the same age as Alexander and the son of one of the greatest Macedonian generals he does not seem to have played a prominent role during Alexander’s invasion of Asia. Diodoros indicates that Kassandros crossed into Asia in 334 in command of 900 Thracian and Paionian horsemen, but he disappears from the sources until just prior to Alexander’s death. It seems then that Kassandros returned to Macedon where his father ruled as regent in the absence of Alexander. Kassandros next appears in our sources representing his father’s interests at the court of Alexander at Babylon. Alexander treated Kassandros with utter hostility, reputedly hurling him against a wall when he laughed at the sight of a Persian prostrating himself before the king. Plutarch indicates that Alexander treated Kassandros with such brutality that many years later the mere sight of a statue of Alexander caused him to tremble and swoon.

Kassandros rose to true prominence after the conference at Triparadeisos in late 321. His father Antipatros was chosen as epimeletes or “manager” of Philippos III and Alexandros IV, and Antipatros then appointed his son as chiliarchos (second in command) to Antigonos the One-eyed who was made strategos of Asia and given the task of eliminating Eumenes of Kardia and the other supporters of Perdikkas.

When Antipatros in 319 he nominated Polyperchon as his successor as epimeletes and named Kassandros as his chiliarchos, Kassandros was outraged by the fact that his father has chosen him as epimeletes, “regarding it as outrageous that one not related by blood should succeed to the command of his father, and this while there was a son who was capable of directing public affairs and who had already given sufficient proof of his ability and courage”. Others including Antigonos were equally outraged. Kassandros made an alliance with Antigonos and immediately set about undermining Polyperchon’s position in Macedon. He also ensured that he had the support of the commanders of the Macedonian garrisons in various Greek cities, and even replaced the commander at Athens with his nephew Nikanor.

Kassandros invaded Macedon in 318, and received support from Philippos III and his wife Eurydike. He left to campaign in Greece, which left the king and his wife vulnerable in his absence. Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, wanted to rule Macedon through her grandson Alexandros IV. She murdered Philippos and

36 Diodoros. 17.17.3-4.
37 Plutarch, Alexander. 74.
38 Arrian, Met Alexander. fragment 9.34; Diodoros. 18.39.7.
39 Diodoros. 18.49.2.
Eurydike, and many of Kassandros’s friends and associates. She even exhumed the body of Kassandros’s brother Iolaos who had been accused of poisoning her son Alexander.

Kassandros returned to Macedon in 317 and overthrew Olympias. After taking control of the kingdom Kassandros executed Olympias and imprisoned Alexandros IV and his mother Rhoxane. He then ruled Macedon himself, but nominally as regent for Alexandros IV who was still a boy.

After seizing control in Macedon Kassandros did much to promote the name and memory of Philip II and to ensure that he was seen as the legitimate ruler of the kingdom. He ensured that his predecessor Philippos III received a proper burial in the royal tombs at Aigai (modern Vergina), and he married Thessalonike the daughter of Philip II thus ensuring that the bloodline of Philip continued. His three sons Philppos IV, Alexandros V and Antipatros were all grandsons of Philip and each succeeded to the throne in Macedon as a legitimate member of the Macedonian royal house.

Kassandros did much to suppress the memory of Alexander at the same time he was promoting his links to Philip II. In 316/5 he gained much popularity in Greece by re-founding the city of Thebes which Alexander had destroyed in 335. But Kassandros’s memory was permanently tainted by the murder of Alexandros IV and Rhoxane in 310. Kassandros ensured that Alexandros was eliminated before he could come of age and rule Macedon in his own right.

Kassandros continued his father’s policy of maintaining control of various Greek cities by installing garrisons of soldiers in them to ensure they remained loyal. He also supported oligarchic governments or tyrants in Greek cities as his father had done. For example, he kept control of Athens by placing a large garrison in the harbour of Peiraeus and installed Demetrios of Phaleron, and Athenian who had studied under Aristotle as a tyrant. Kassandros’s policies in Greece placed him in direct conflict with Antigonos the One-Eyed who had adopted a policy that all the Greek cities should be free (Antigonos hoped that this would ensure that the Greeks would ally themselves to him and support him in his bid to unify the kingdom of Alexander the Great). Because of this, Kassandros was a key member of the coalition against Antigonos. During the years between 315 and 311 he fought many campaigns with Seleukos, Ptolemy and Lysimachos against the forces of Antigonos in Europe and in Asia Minor.

In 305 he joined Antigonos and his son Demetrios Poliorketes, Ptolemy in Egypt, Lysimachos and Thrace and Seleukos in Babylonia in assuming the title of basileus or “king”. There is no evidence that Kassandros adopted the diadem worn by Alexander and the other kings, but he did adopt the title of king. Plutarch claimed that Kassandros declined the title despite the fact that others called him king, but numismatic and epigraphical evidence proves that Kassandros did call himself king. He is referred to as “King Kassandros” on coins and a bronze statue base from Dion describes him as “Kassandros son of Antipatros, King of the Macedonians”.

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40 Plutarch, Demetrios. 18.
41 Numerous coins bearing the words “of King Kassandros” have been found. The inscription from Dion can be found in Syll3 332. Cf. P. Green, Alexander to Actium, (London, 1990), p31.
During the years between 307 and 301 Kassandros was almost constantly involved in warfare in Greece against Antigonos and Demetrios and his allies, in particular the city of Athens, which Demetrios had liberated in 307. This warfare ended in 301 when Antigonos decided to risk it all on a pitched battle against all his enemies at Ipsos in Asia Minor. Kassandros contributed many troops to the great battle in which the forces of Lysimachos and Seleukos prevailed over Antigonos and Demetrios.\textsuperscript{42}

Despite his bloodthirsty reputation as the murderer of the mother, wife and son of Alexander the Great, Kassandros ruled Macedon well. He secured the borders with Thrace and Epeiros, and reduced the serious drain on Macedonian manpower and financial resources.

Kassandros died of tuberculosis ca.297 and was succeeded by son Philippos IV. He reigned only for a few months before dying. Presumably he also succumbed to tuberculosis. Kassandros’s younger sons, Alexandros V and Antipatros then succeeded as joint-kings with their mother Thessalonike acting as regent.

\textsuperscript{42} Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 
Lysimachos (ca.355-281 BC).

Lysimachos was a Macedonian from the city of Pella who served in the Companion Cavalry. By 328 he had risen to the position of one of Alexander’s seven official Bodyguards (somatophylakes). Tradition has it that Lysimachos was exceptionally strong, and once overpowered a lion. One tradition indicated that Lysimachos was badly wounded when hunting a lion, whilst another tradition suggested that Alexander shut Lysimachos up in a cage with a lion, and later found that Lysimachos had overpowered the beast. After Lysimachos’s encounter with the lion Alexander is said to have held him in the highest esteem. Lysimachos himself showed off the deep scars on his thighs and shoulders for many years to come.

After Alexander’s death Lysimachos was awarded the satrapy of Thrace. During his early years as satrap he allied himself with Antipatros and Krateros against Perdikkas, and married Nikaia the daughter of Antipatros. He played a very limited role in the war because he found that the Thracian dynast Seuthes had rebellion against Macedonian authority. Lysimachos was forced to make war against Seuthes and various local tribes, in particular the Odrysians and Getae. It was with some difficulty that he overcame these tribes. Lysimachos was rewarded for his nominal support for Antipatros with the confirmation of his position as satrap in Thrace at the conference at Triparadeisos.

Lysimachos joined Antigonos the One-Eyed and Kassandros in opposing the choice of Polyperchon as epimeletes. He was not in a position to play a leading role in the wars against Polyperchon, but his men did capture and put to death Kleitos the admiral of Polyperchon.

After he dealt with Seuthes, Lysimachos concentrated on consolidating his power in the east and in 315 joined with Seleukos, Ptolemys and Kassandros in opposing Antigonos the One-Eyed. Lysimachos was again unable to offer any real military contribution to the wars against Antigonos because he was busy dealing with internal problems. In 313 Antigonos convinced the Thracian dynast Seuthes to revolt, and Lysimachos was also forced to suppress a revolt among the cities on the Black Sea coast. In 309/8 he founded the city of Lysimacheia in the Chersonese in order to control access to and from the Black Sea.

Lysimachos assumed the title of “king” (basileus) in 306/5 after Antigonos, Demetrios Poliorketes and Ptolemys had done so. Demetrios ridiculed Lysimachos’s claims to kingship, referring to him as a “treasurer” (gazophylax). Lysimachos was enraged by this, because treasurers were usually eunuchs.

When Antigonos decided to risk everything in a pitched battle against all his enemies and brought together an army of 70,000 heavy infantrymen, 10,000 cavalry and 75 elephants and marched into Asia Minor. Lysimachos invaded Asia Minor to oppose

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44 Plutarch, *Demetrios*. 27.3; Quintus Curtius. 8.1.17; Pausanias. 1.9.5.
45 Diodoros. 18.3.2.
46 Arrian, *Met’ Alexander*.
47 Diodoros. 18.72.9.
48 Diodoros. 19.73.8.
him. He effected a junction with Seleukos who invaded Asia Minor from the east. They met Antigonos and Demetrios at Ipsos with 64,000 foot-soldiers, 10,500 horsemen, 120 war-chariots, and 400 elephants, and annihilated his army due partly to the tactical brilliance of Seleukos and partly due to the incompetence of Demetrios.\footnote{Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 29.}

As a result of this victory Lysimachos all the lands of Asia Minor north of the Taurus mountains, a source of vast wealth.

Lysimachos expanded his realm in 287 when he joined with Pyrrhos of Epeiros in expelling Demetrios from Macedon. They partitioned the kingdom, but two years later (after Seleukos had eliminated Demetrios), Lysimachos drove Pyrrhos out of Macedon and claimed the whole kingdom as his own. His vast kingdom now encompassed Macedon, Thrace, and all of Asia Minor north of the Taurus. His successes almost certainly aroused the jealousy and resentment of Seleukos.

Having acquired such power Lysimachos began to develop a reputation for being harsh and autocratic. He was tight-fisted with money and uncompromising in his dealings with his subjects. He re-founded the city of Ephesus as Arsinoeia by joining it with the cities of Lebedos and Kolophon and forcing the people to move from their homes. In 283 he made himself even less popular by executing his eldest son Agathokles. Agathokles had been popular, but he fell foul of Lysimachos’s second wife Arsinoë. One account says that Arsinoë fell for Agathokles and then plotted against him when he rejected her sexual advances;\footnote{Pausanias. 1.10.3.} “playing Potiphar’s wife to Agathocles’ Joseph” as Green has described it.\footnote{P. Green, \textit{Alexander to Actium}, (London, 1990), p132.} However, it may just be that Arsinoë conspired against Agathokles because she feared her children might suffer at his hands once Lysimachos was dead.

The killing of Agathokles proved to be his undoing, for Lysandra the widow of Agathokles fled to Seleukos and encouraged him to invade Asia Minor to avenge her husband. When Lysimachos’s satrap Philetairos seized control of the massive treasury at Pergamon and went over to him, Seleukos invaded Asia Minor The historian Memnon wrote that “Lysimachos was justly hated by his subjects because of his son’s murder, and Seleukos, upon learning of these events and considering that it would be easy to deprive him of his power, since the cities were revolting from him, joined battle against him”.

Lysimachos was slain in a pitched battle at Kouroupedeion in Asia Minor. His kingdom fell apart and was carved up by various dynasts. The Seleucids received some parts of Asia Minor, Philetairos took control of the areas around Pergamon which eventually became the Attalid kingdom, and Macedon ultimately fell into the hands of Antigonos Gonatas.

\footnotetext[49]{Plutarch, \textit{Demetrios}. 29.}
\footnotetext[50]{Pausanias. 1.10.3.}
\footnotetext[51]{P. Green, \textit{Alexander to Actium}, (London, 1990), p132.
Perseus (ca.213-166).

Perseus ruled Macedon from 179-168. He was the last legitimate king of Macedon before the kingdom was annexed by the Romans. He inherited a kingdom in crisis, and quickly turned things around. Unfortunately his successes aroused the resentment of the Romans and led to the complete destruction of his kingdom.

Perseus was the eldest son of Philipppos V of Macedon, and first appears in the sources during his father’s campaigns against the Romans. He also played a leading role as Rome’s ally against the Aitolians. But this does not mean that Perseus was a supporter of Rome. On the contrary, Perseus first makes a real mark in the sources in 183 when he became embroiled in a dispute over the succession to the Macedonian throne with his half-brother Demetrios. Perseus was the Philipppos’s eldest son and his designated heir, but Demetrios was popular amongst the Romans, who seem to have tried made an attempt to secure the throne for Demetrios. The problems started in 184 when Philipppos sent his son Demetrios back to Rome to lobby on his behalf. Demetrios had proved popular whilst serving as a hostage, and again made his mark at Rome. When he returned a year later there was trouble between Demetrios and Perseus because T. Quinctius Flamininus the Roman proconsul who had defeated Philipppos V at Kynoskephale had encouraged Demetrios to believe that Rome might ensure that he rather than Perseus would succeed their father when he died, which excited the jealousy of his elder brother. Philipppos was dismayed by the squabbling between his sons, but refused to listen to the accusations levelled by Perseus. Perseus grew desperate and produced a letter (which Livy claimed was a forgery) from Flamininus outlining Demetrios’s hopes of displacing his brother. When faced with this “evidence” Philipppos had Demetrios executed. Later Philipppos regretted his decision, believing that Perseus had fabricated the evidence. He died soon afterwards. Livy believed that Philipppos was overcome with remorse.

Thus Perseus succeeded to the throne under circumstances that would have made the Romans suspicious of him from the very beginning. But Perseus did his best to mollify the Romans. He asked them to ratify his position as king, and renewed the friendship (amicitia) they had previously made with his father Philipppos. Unfortunately Perseus must have raised further suspicions when he married Laodike V the daughter of Seleukos IV and gave his half-sister to Prusias II of Bithynia in a move that must have been aimed at isolating Rome’s ally Eumenes II of Pergamon.

Perseus also set about restoring his kingdom to its former glory. Polybios states that Perseus was aiming to restore Macedonian prestige in Greece and to ensure that Rome would “be chary…of giving harsh and unjust orders to the Macedonians”. He cancelled debts, wrote off taxes and declared a royal amnesty thus allowing exiles to return home to Macedon. Having ensuring his popularity at home, Perseus then set about extending Macedonian influence in Thrace, Dardania and Illyria. It was also alleged that Perseus sent envoys to Carthage. Again the Romans would have viewed these moves with suspicion.

52 Polybios. 9.27.3.
In the mid-170s Perseus campaigned in central Greece. Polybius states that Perseus was trying to cultivate Greek support: literally “cutting (a) Greek”,\(^{54}\) which is perhaps a metaphor for minting coinage.\(^ {53}\) When he restored Macedonian control over the region of Dolopia and was well received by Delphi the Greeks began to turn to Perseus for support and assistance. The increase in his prestige came at the expense of Eumenes of Pergamon, a strong supporter of Rome. Eumenes travelled to Rome to denounce Perseus.\(^ {55}\) The Romans heeded his complaints, and when Eumenes was nearly killed by a rock slide near Delphi on his way home Perseus was blamed for the accident.\(^{56}\) Perseus was thereupon declared an enemy of Rome in 171 and war soon followed. It is clear that Rome and Eumenes had very little hard evidence against Perseus. A letter the Romans sent to Delphi outlining the case against Perseus has survived, which includes such fanciful claims that Perseus was planning to poison the Senate!\(^ {57}\)

Perseus tried to mollify the Romans, but the Romans were bent on war. After Perseus won a cavalry victory over the Romans,\(^{58}\) he again offered to make peace. When his terms were rejected,\(^ {59}\) there was a surge of pro-Macedonian sentiment in Greece, because Perseus was increasingly seen to be the innocent victim of Roman aggression. The feeling was the Rome was waging a class war against the Greeks, and Polybios indicates that the pro-Macedonian sentiment of the impoverished masses “suddenly shone out like a fire.”\(^ {60}\)

By now Perseus had built up his military strength to such an extent that his army was larger than that of any king of Macedon aside from Alexander the Great. He now possessed 39,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, a potent force to be feared by the Romans.\(^ {61}\) The final battle between the Macedonians and the Romans took place at Pydna in the summer of 168. After some initial skirmishing Perseus led a massed charge of his phalanx at the Roman legions commanded by the Roman consul L. Aemilius Paullus. Green has described the phalanx employed by Perseus as “a spear-solid hedgehog formation designed to counter Roman legionary discipline”. Aemilius Paullus described the army of Perseus as the most terrifying thing he had ever seen, which is a strong statement given that he was a seasoned military veteran. But the massed charge failed when they moved onto uneven ground. Roman legionaries were able to infiltrate gaps in the phalanx and Perseus’s men were slaughtered. The sources indicate that more than 20,000 Macedonians were slain.

Perseus was captured and sent to Rome, where he was placed in chains and dragged through the streets as part of the triumph for Aemilius Paullus. He died in captivity two years later. The Macedonian monarchy was abolished, as was the monarchy of Epeiros. The territory of both kingdoms was broken up into four separate republics to be administered by Rome. 1,000 Greeks from Achaia were sent to Rome as hostages (including the historian Polybios), and 150,000 people from Epeiros were sold into slavery.

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\(^{53}\) Polybios. 25.3.1.


\(^{55}\) Livy. 42.11-13.

\(^{56}\) Livy. 42.15-17.

\(^{57}\) Austin #76.

\(^{58}\) Livy. 42.58-61.

\(^{59}\) Livy. 42.62; Polybios. 27.8.

\(^{60}\) Polybios. 27.9.1.

\(^{61}\) Livy. 42.51.
slavery. In the same year the Romans delivered the famous ultimatum to Antiochos IV to leave Egypt alone. Once again they were able to deal with Greeks separately. If Perseus and Antiochos had been able to effect a union things might have been very different.
Philippos III Arrhidaios (ca.357-317 BC).

Philippos III was the eldest son of Philip II. The son of Philip by Philinna of Larissa in Thessaly, he was born ca.357 and given the name Arrhidaios (Anglicised as Arrhidaeus). He appears to have suffered from a mental illness that rendered him inappropriate to succeed his father, but did not prevent him from accompanying Alexander on his Asian campaign. The tradition that Olympias altered his mind with drugs should not be trusted.  

Arrhidaios first appears in the sources in connection with the so-called “Pixodaros affair”. Pixodaros was the dynast of the Persian satrapy of Karia. When it was clear that Philip II intended to invade Asia, Pixodaros wrote to Philip and offered his daughter in marriage to Arrhidaios. Plutarch makes it clear that Pixodaros was hoping to cement a military alliance with Philip. Alexander panicked, believing that Philip was intending to displace him in favour of Arrhidaios, and sent Thessalos an actor to see Pixodaros and offer Alexander as son-in-law instead. Pixodaros was naturally pleased by this turn of events. Philip, however, was furious that his diplomatic initiative had been scuttled by Alexander and his friends. When he learned what Alexander had done he bitterly reproached his son for wishing to marry the daughter of man he felt was “no more than the slave of a barbarian king”, and banished four of Alexander’s closest companions – Ptolemy, Harpalos, Nearchos and Erygios – from the kingdom for their part in the proceedings.  

Arrhidaios disappears from the sources and does not reappear until after the death of Alexander in 323. While the Macedonian nobles at Babylon were trying to decide what to do about the succession because Alexander had not produced a legitimate heir, the Macedonian infantrymen hailed Arrhidaios as their king on the grounds that he was the son of Philip II. The Macedonian infantrymen were known for their xenophobia, and were probably trying to ensure that a Macedonian would sit on the throne rather than any child of Alexander’s Iranian wife Rhoxane.  

Arrhidaios was renamed Philippus to stress the link to his father, and was soon after married to his niece Adea who was renamed Eurydike (the same name as the mother of Philip II) to stress her links to the Macedonian royal house. He reigned as King Philippus III along with Alexander’s son by Rhoxane. The two incompetent kings were used as puppets by Perdikkas, Antipatros, Polyperchon and Kassandros each of whom served as “manager” of the joint-kings.  

Philippus Arrhidaios was a victim of the wars between Kassandros and Polyperchon. In 317 he was captured by Olympias (who supported Polyperchon) who put him to death along with his wife Eurydike to ensure that her son Alexandros IV would rule alone. Alexandros IV was murdered by Kassandros in 310.  

Kassandros honoured his memory and re-interred his remains and those of his wife at the site of the Macedonian royal tombs at Aigai (modern Vergina). His tomb has been tentatively identified as Tomb II in the tumulus at Vergina.

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Philippos V (238-179 BC).

Philippos V was one of the more striking figures in the Hellenistic period. He was energetic and innovative general who drew comparisons with Alexander the Great, but also had a reputation for indulging his passion for wine, women and song at every possible opportunity. An enigmatic figure, Philippos began his career at the head of a coalition of Greek states, and was at one stage hailed as the “darling of Greece”. But Philippos later earned a reputation as a brutal tyrant, and his loss of popularity in Greece lead to a disastrous defeat at the hands of Rome.

Philippos was the son of Demetrios II, and adopted son of Antigonos III Doson. When Demetrios II died Philippos was only nine years old, so his kinsman Antigonos III Doson “he who will give” ruled Macedon as his guardian. (Both Demetrios II and Antigonos Doson were grandsons of Demetrios Poliorketes. Demetrios was the son of Antigonos II Gonatas, whereas Antigonos Doson was the son of Demetrios “the Fair”). When Philippos came of age Antigonos Doson stepped down from the throne. Doson died not long after from tuberculosis.

Philippos succeeded to the throne in the summer of 221. Upon succeeding, Philippos campaigned along the northern frontiers of Macedon against the Dardanians and other barbarian tribes. He then became embroiled in the so-called “Social War”, leading a league of Greek states against Aitolia and the Peloponnesian states of Sparta and Elis. This war lasted from 220-217, and Philippos’s achievements earned him a reputation as a fine military leader.

After the Social War had ended Philippos returned his attentions to the northern and western frontiers of Macedon, a decision which drew him into contact and conflict with the Romans. In 217 Philippos invaded Illyria and drove out the pirate Skerdilaidas who had displaced his friend the Demetrios of Pharos as the ruler of southern Illyria. Skerdilaidas appealed to the Romans for assistance, who sent 10 quinqueremes to investigate. Philippos was forced to shelve his plans to build a naval base on the Adriatic coast.

After this setback Philippos made an alliance with Hannibal the Carthaginian against Rome (215). This alliance achieved little if anything for Philippos. He was not in a position to invade Italy, and Hannibal was in no position to assist Philippos in any way. All the alliance brought Philippos was the lasting enmity of Rome and the onset of the so-called “First Macedonian War” between himself and Rome. Philippos again campaigned in Illyria in 214/13. When a large Roman naval squadron appeared he abandoned and burned his fleet of 120 warships and retreated over the mountains. Thereupon the Roman commander M. Valerius Laevinus stationed his fleet in Illyria.

Civil strife in Messene then drew Philippos into the Peloponnese. After an abortive attack on Messene which disgusted his ally Aratos of Sikyon, Philippos returned to Illyria in 213 where he captured the city of Lissos to use as a naval base.

The Romans made an alliance with the Aitolians against Philippos in 212/11. Attalos of Pergamon also joined with the Romans and the Aitolians in opposing Philippos.

\textsuperscript{64} Polybios. 7.9.
The Aitolians proved so brutal in their tactics that the Achaians made an alliance with Philippos. Accounts of the warfare are confused, but we know that there was sporadic fighting in Illyria, Thrace, Thessaly and Akanania. The Romans were inactive in Greece for two years (207-6), and during this time the balance shifted as the Achaians developed into a potent fighting force under the leadership of Philopoimen. Philippos drove the Aitolians out of Thessaly and repelled the one and only foray that Attalos made into Greece. Philippos sacked the city of Thermon in Aitolia and forced the Aitolians to make peace in 206. The Romans who were still busy with Hannibal made peace with Philippos in 205.

After making peace with the Romans, Philippos turned his attention to the east. He employed the pirate Dikaiarchos to gain financial resources which he used to build up a large fleet. It was around this time (203/2) that Philippos allegedly made a secret pact with Antiochos III the Seleucid king to divide between them the possessions of the boy-king Ptolemy V. This pact did not lead to any significant gains for Philippos or Antiochos because they seem to have spent more time trying to cheat each other than try to gain Ptolemaic possessions. However, in 201 Philippos did capture the island Samos, the site of a Ptolemaic naval base. The ships that Philippos captured at Samos brought his fleet up to more than 200 warships. Philippos defeated the Rhodians in a sea battle and then invaded Asia Minor and ravaged the coastline of the Attalid kingdom. The Rhodians then combined with Attalos, Byzantion and Chios to defeat Philippos in another sea battle that cost him half his fleet. Philippos then withdrew to Europe.

In 200 Philippos involved himself in a war between Athens and Akarnania and ravaged the territory of the Athenians while a Roman embassy was present in the city. His general Nikanor advanced as far as Plato’s Academy just outside the city walls. The Athenians were outraged and declared war on Philippos and voted to overturn all the honours previously awarded to Philippos and the other Antigonid kings and queens. The Athenians pulled down statues of Philippos and his ancestors, abolished the two tribes named after Antigonos Monophthalmos and Demetrios Poliorketes, erased references to the Antigonid kings from their inscriptions and placed a curse on Philippos, his children, his kingdom, his army and navy and the entire race and name of the Macedonians.

The Romans responded by demanding that Philippos withdraw and promise not to make war on any Greek state. Philippos refused and the Roman Senate declared war on Philippos in order “to protect and liberate Greece”.

Philippos initially fared well in the war. He repelled a Roman invasion of Illyria in 199 and drove the Aitolians out of Thessaly in 198. But in 197 the Roman consul T. Quinctius Flamininus invaded Greece with a large army. Philippos decided to risk it all in one pitched battle. He brought his army of 25,000 men to Kynoskephale (the Dogs’ Heads) in Thessaly and attempted to destroy the legions of Flamininus with a massed charge by his phalanx. It almost succeeded as one phalanx routed the Roman legionaries opposing it. But the other lost formation and was cut to ribbons. The flank of the other phalanx was exposed and was broken up by a counterattack. Philippos was forced to come to terms with the Romans. As a result of the peace treaty

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65 Livy.
Philippos was to evacuate Greece altogether, pay a war indemnity of 1,000 talents and send his younger son Demetrios to Rome as a hostage to ensure his good behaviour. Rome then declared that all the Greeks of Europe and Asia were to be free – a none the subtle threat directed at Antiochos III, on whom they soon waged war. If Philippos and Antiochos had worked together against the Romans instead of against each other who knows what they could have achieved. Philippos mustered 25,000 troops at Kynoskephale and Antiochos gathered some 75,000 troops at Magnesia. If they had pooled their resources the Romans might not have been able stop them. Instead they allowed the Romans to deal with them separately and suffered the consequences.

Until 189 Philippos collaborated with the Romans, and assisted them in their campaigns against Nabis of Sparta in 195, and Antiochos III and the Aitolians between 192 and 189. His tribute was remitted after he allowed the Romans to pass through Macedon and Thrace to invade Asia Minor in 189. During this time Philippos reorganised his kingdom. He reopened mines, issued new currency and transplanted populations within his kingdom.

But the Greeks soon began to make accusations against Philippos, which led to Roman interference. The Romans were not pleased that Philippos had taken over various cities in Thrace and Thessaly that Antiochos had occupied. In 184 Philippos sent his son Demetrios back to Rome to lobby for him, for Demetrios had proved popular whilst serving as a hostage. When he returned a year later there was trouble between Demetrios and Perseus, Philippos’s eldest son and heir. It seems that Flamininus had encouraged Demetrios to believe that Rome might ensure that he rather than Perseus would succeed their father when he died, which excited the jealousy of his elder brother. Philippos was dismayed by the squabbling between his sons, but refused to listen to the accusations levelled by Perseus. Perseus grew desperate and produced a letter (which Livy claimed was a forgery) from Flamininus outlining Demetrios’s hopes of displacing his brother. When faced with this evidence Philippos had Demetrios executed. Later Philippos regretted his decision, believing that Perseus had fabricated the evidence. He died soon afterwards, perhaps overcome with remorse. Philippos was succeeded by Perseus.

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66 Livy. 39.23-4; Polybios. 23.1.