

The Borders of Ancient Makedonia I: To Perdikkas III¹

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Summary:

At a time that cannot be closely determined, about 1,000 B.C., the Makedones began to establish themselves in a small area north of Mount Olympos. At a later date their kings were buried at Aigai (close to Vergina), which must have been the centre of the territory that they began to control. By the beginning of the 4th century B.C. they had expanded (with a few short periods of contraction) in a remarkable manner, 'absorbing' or expelling the neighbouring groups of people until their territory extended further to the north and west and to the sea (although not at first to Chalkidike, where there were many colonies established by southern Hellenic cities) and to the Axios river. However, it is clear that many of the groups that they had 'absorbed' still retained their identity and independence, even if they were in some way under the control of the rulers of Makedonia. For this reason, the 'borders' of Makedonia are difficult to define, at least before the time of Philippos II.

By 500 B.C. they were the leading power in the area. About 400 B.C. they moved their capital further north to Pella, which was near a river which was at that time navigable to the Thermaic Gulf. In the fourth century B.C. Philippos II (360/59-336 B.C.) again expanded the area under their control, annexing Chalkidike and land to the east. 'Makedonia' now became approximately the same as the modern Greek province of Makedonia. As neighbours the Makedonians now had the Illyrians to the west, the Paiones to the north, and the Dardanoi beyond them, the Thessalians to the south and the Thrakes to the east. These were independent groups, although the Paionians may have had a 'client kingdom' relationship with the Makedonians (their kings issued coins independently, but they supplied cavalry to assist Alexander the Great in his eastward campaign).

This geographical area stayed the same until the Roman conquest of 168 B.C. After this the Romans tried to destroy the identity of the Makedonians by establishing a new province that was split into four different areas, with restrictions on some activities that might be

¹This study will present a selection of the more important passages of the surviving ancient literary evidence regarding this topic, and comment on them. Those who wish to study the evidence further will need to have access to the monumental work by N.G.L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia* (three volumes, Oxford 1972-1988, vol. 2 written in conjunction with G.T. Griffith, vol. 3 in conjunction with F.W. Walbank). This will remain of permanent value. For more recent studies the collection, *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, edited by Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Oxford 2010) should be consulted, since it not only contains material of considerable relevance, but will also direct the reader to publications produced in the intervening period.

conducted between one area and another. After two decades this proved to be unsuccessful, and after a revolt (which was quickly quelled), another approach was adopted. A new Roman province was created which was still called 'Makedonia', but now contained land which stretched as far as the Adriatic, and much further south than the original Makedonia. As a result, 'Makedonia' became a geographical rather than an ethnic name. In the following centuries, the borders of this province were modified again, but it still covered a much larger area than the Makedonia that had existed in the time of Philip II and his son Alexander the Great.

Humans (or at least, tool-using primates) lived in Makedonia for a long time before the *Makedones* arrived. They were certainly there at least fifty thousand years ago in the Palaeolithic period, and perhaps much earlier (if the scientific controversies about the age of a female skull discovered at Petralona in Chalkidike could be resolved, we might be able to reach a more definite conclusion).

But to say this is to imply that the modern 'Makedonia' is the same as the ancient one. This is a more complicated story. In the first place, the concept of fixed 'borders' is something that does not necessarily apply to early human groups,² and even today, when they can be measured from the sky, borders are sometimes permanent, sometimes variable. In this context we might quote the statement attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus, which is preserved by later writers in various forms, that everything is 'in a state of flux', and that 'you cannot step into the same river twice', because the water is different.

The sea, or a wide river, provides the best border, mountain ranges may often be almost as good at separating one group from another, and a narrow defile like Tempe, as we shall see later, can serve the same purpose. But borders on land can often be changed, and although in modern times this rarely happens, there are still times when they become uncertain, or are formally changed for one reason or another. So it is not surprising that this should have happened with Makedonia, which in ancient times expanded in various directions, sometimes with slight contractions.

Its nature also changed: its greatest expansion, which took place after it was conquered by the Romans, led to its becoming a geographical and administrative area, rather than a territory which was connected with any single racial group. This expansion will be described in a later part of this study, since in this first section we are concerned only with the period before the accession of Philip II, the father of Alexandros the Great.

So when did the *Makedones* first settle in Makedonia? No archaeological evidence of the introduction of this new group into the area has been found – in this respect they have something in common with the *Dorieis* who are reported as having begun to enter the

²'Border studies' in relation to ancient Greek history are a field in which little work has been done. This is not surprising; evidence which might lead to defining borders exactly often does not exist. For Makedonia in particular there is little written evidence, so although the researches of Hammond and others have established approximate borders, uncertainty remains, although there are some exceptions (for example, see *Recherches sur les marches orientales des Temenides (Anthemonte-Kalinda) 1ère partie (Meletemata 11)* by M.B. Hatzopoulos and Louisa D. Loukopoulou, Athens 1992).

Greek peninsula from the north at some time after 1200 B.C., after which they are said to have settled in parts of it, and on Crete and some other islands. Historians have in the past referred to the 'Dorian Invasion' (and I am guilty of this), but there is no archaeological evidence for an invasion, unless you believe that the fortification of some sites in southern Greece at this period was caused by fear of these invaders, and the ancient literary sources do not tell us anything precise about it; all that we can be sure of is that the dialect of some Hellenic groups in later times was called 'Dorian' (with an *alpha* instead of an *eta* being its most obvious distinctive feature, a feature that also occurs in words that we are told are 'Makedonian', although other features appear to have more in common with the dialect of the area in northern Boiotia and Thessalia that is known as Aiolis), and this suggests that the Dorians, whoever they were, may have arrived in Hellas from a different direction from some others, and so were in some way separate from other groups with which they later coalesced into being Hellenes.

There was also a 'Doric' style of architecture. Its name suggests that although it was used for buildings constructed by non-Dorians, its origin was attributed to them, but it cannot be associated with the early *Makedones*, so the idea of a Dorian-Makedonian connection cannot be supported in this way.

An attractive theory is, however, that the *Makedones* were the last wave of the *Dorieis*, and that they stayed in the north rather than moving southward. This is at any rate what Herodotos seems to be saying in one passage:³

*... the former (the Dorieis) have moved very frequently; their home in Deukalion's reign was Phthiotis and in the reign of Doros son of Hellen the country known as Histiaiotis in the neighbourhood of Ossa and Olympos; when driven from there by the Kadmeioi they settled in Pindos and were known as Makednoi; from there they emigrated to Dryopis, and finally to the Peloponnesos, where they got their present name of Dorieis.*⁴

This can be supported by the surviving fragments of their language, which, as already mentioned, sometimes use the long Dorian *alpha* instead of the long *epsilon* or *eta*. But this is only one among several possibilities, and the evidence is so limited that nothing about the origin of the *Makedones* can be stated with confidence, and the question is of little relevance to the present study, which is concerned with the territory that they occupied.

In this context, however, it is important to note that in the so-called 'Catalogue of Ships', a long passage of uncertain date that appears in the second book of the Homeric epic the *Iliad*, and seems to reproduce a list that gives the names of a number of different groups which are said to be attacking or defending Troy, the *Makedones* are not mentioned (alt-

³1.56.

⁴ This passage, which might have been intended to link the *Makedones* with the *Dorieis*, tells us nothing useful about their final location, except for providing an alternative form of their name, and suggesting that they had at one time settled in Pindos (which might mean the Pindos range of mountains, or Pindos itself). In that case, they would at a later time have moved to the northern side of Mount Olympos.

though their later neighbours the *Paiones* are said to be on the Trojan side, which suggests that they may once have had a home in Asia Minor, although in the Homeric text they are associated with the Axios/Vardarios river).⁵

The traditional date of 'the Trojan War' (whatever that actually was) is about 1200 B.C. If the *Makedones* were in fact relatively late arrivals in what later came to be called *Makedonia*, a very approximate date of around 1000 B.C. for their first settlement may therefore be suggested, although they certainly did not have a significant presence there for several centuries after that. At first they seem to have occupied only a small area NNE of Mount Olympos, perhaps arriving from the Pindos range.⁶ Their centre seems to have been at Aigai near the modern Vergina from a very early stage, and this possibility is supported by the fact that even after their capital was removed to Pella,⁷ some royal burials still took place at Aigai.⁸

To the south, there was at that time no such country or nation as Greece. 'Hellas', the proper name of this country,⁹ was at first the name of a small area in Thessaly, which gradually came to be used to describe an expanded area in the Hellenic peninsula, then the Peloponnese as well, and finally the whole Hellenic world.

Makedonia as a geographical area is also not mentioned in ancient literature until relatively late. The first passage of relevance, which gives us only the name of its legendary founder Makedon, occurs in a fragment of a lost work by the poet Hesiod, composed around 700 B.C. The fragment is preserved as a quotation in an article on Makedonia in the *Ethnika* of Stephanos of Byzantion, a work compiled from earlier sources in the middle of the sixth century of the Christian era. This, however, mentions Makedonia only in its introduction to the quotation, but by that time the name had been established for a millennium. The passage reads as follows (the text of Stephanos presented here has been improved with the help of a recycling of it in the later work 'On Themes' composed by the emperor Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos):

'Makedonia: the country, from Makedon son of Zeus and Thyia daughter of Deukalion, as the poet Hesiodos says: "And she, becoming pregnant to Zeus, gave birth

⁵*Iliad* 2.848-50: 'Pyraichmes led the Paionians who come from the area of the Axios River.' It does indeed seem, as will be shown below, that the Paionians may have dwelt along the Axios/Vardarios river before they were pushed out by the *Makedones*.

⁶See Herodotos 1.56 (quoted previously). Hammond, *Epirus* (Oxford 1967), pp. 525-40, discusses this movement, and proposes that the Molossians who came to occupy land on the west of the Pindos range were in fact a western group of the *Makedones*; this might be one reason for Philip II's second marriage to the Molossian princess Olympias, who became the mother of Alexandros III ('the Great').

⁷There is no precise literary or other evidence for the date of this, but most scholars think that it took place during the reign of Archelaos (413-399 B.C.), although some prefer to attribute it to Amyntas III (393-370 B.C.). Of course it is always possible that it was a process that did not happen in any particular year.

⁸The tombs that were discovered there by the Greek archaeologist Manolis Andronikos in 1977 are so lavishly appointed that they must be royal burials, and are certainly to be dated to the fourth century B.C., after the capital had been moved to Pella.

⁹'Greece' and 'Greek' are names used by the Romans, based on the nearest Greek group to them. The name 'Hellas' is rarely used officially by non-Greeks (exceptions are found in Chinese, Vietnamese and Norwegian).

for the one who rejoiced in the thunderbolt two sons, Magnes and Makedon who battled from horses, and they had their dwellings around Pieria and Olympos.”¹⁰

The use of the name ‘Makedon’ is probably a typical example of an attempt to explain the name of a place by inventing an original founder, but the rest of this passage provides good evidence for the original settling place of the *Makedones*, and the association with horses (used for cavalry or to draw chariots) seems correct, since Lower Makedonia (*i.e.* the part nearer the sea), which includes the area called Pieria, has some flat areas very suitable for breeding and training war horses. However, this does not mean that Makedonia was always recognised as a separate and defined political area with defined boundaries before the fourth century B.C.¹¹ When a ‘League of Delos’ was established after the Persian invasions, and the Athenians pushed most of its members into contributing money instead of men and ships (which led to the building of a large fleet controlled by the Athenians), the lists of the 1/60 part of their contributions that was given to Athena as a reward for protecting this money at Athens (a group of inscriptions which scholars call ‘The Athenian Tribute Lists’), locate places such as Methone (on the west of the Thermaic Gulf) in ‘Thrake’. This was not because it was assumed that its inhabitants were *Thrakes*; it was probably because although by that time it had been recognised for a long time that there were *Makedones*, there was not yet a general recognition of the geographical area that they were beginning to control as Makedonia. This is in spite of the fact that Herodotos, who was composing his *Histories* at about the same time, could refer to ‘Makedonia’,¹² to ‘Upper (ano) Makedonia’¹³ and to ‘Lower (kato) Makedonia’¹⁴. Putting together the inscriptions and the literary passages, it seems that although a general consciousness of the existence of a country that could be named after the leading group that existed there had come into existence, and this could be recognised by Thoukydides (as in the passage quoted below), the name had not yet become part of formal administrative language.

On the other hand, even as early as the beginning of the seventh century B.C., the *Makedones* had become a recognised group, and their kings, beginning with Perdikkas I,¹⁵ are accepted as having a genuine existence. Hereditary kingship became an outmoded form of government elsewhere in the area that would gradually be known as Hellas¹⁶, but like the

¹⁰ A similarly invented founder Makedon was reported by Ailianos, *On Animals* 10.48: ‘A son was born to Lykaon king of Emathia, and called Makedon, after whom the country was named after it had ceased to keep its ancient name. Then he (Makedon) had a manly son of exceptional beauty, named Pindos.’

¹¹ It may be relevant that in a few places Herodotos uses the more abstract forms *Makedonis* (*sc. ge*) and *Paionis*, which may imply that he was thinking in terms of approximate geographical areas rather than countries.

¹² 5.17 and 20-21.

¹³ 7.128.

¹⁴ 7.173.

¹⁵ Alternative versions of the establishment of the dynasty, such as an earlier Archelaos who preceded the known king of that name, or a king named Karanos who preceded Perdikkas in some accounts, may be inventions, and certainly cannot be verified. The ancient sources for these statements (recycled in Justin’s epitome of the lost work of Pompeius Trogus, composed in the time of Augustus), which refer to these earlier kings, have been omitted from this study.

¹⁶ The history of this word is interesting. When we first meet it in the Homeric *Iliad* it seems to refer to a small area near the southern border of Thessalia, but it then begins to be used occasionally to describe central Greece (but not the Peloponnesos). However, by the end of the sixth century B.C. it occurs in contexts where it means the whole of mainland Greece. The *Graikes* or *Graikoi* from whom the word ‘Greek’ is derived occupied an area on the east side

Spartans and some of their closer neighbours, the *Makedones* retained it for a long time after most other states in the Hellenic peninsula had moved to other ways of being ruled.

The territory that they controlled gradually became larger, and here we must consider further the multitude of other groups that they came to influence, or rule. The most important period of expansion in the earlier stages was the reign of Alexandros I (c. 498-454 B.C.) At this point it is appropriate to quote a passage from the *History* of Thoukydides, referring to an invasion of Makedonia in 429/8 B.C. by the Odrysians:¹⁷

So they (the army of Sitalkes, king of the Odrysians) assembled at Doberos and were preparing to invade Lower Makedonia, which Perdikkas was ruling, from the heights above. In the upper country there are some Makedonians also –the Lynkestai, the Elimiotai and other tribes¹⁸ – who are allies of the Makedonian king and his subjects, but have separate kingdoms of their own. It was Alexandros the father of Perdikkas (II), and his forebears, who originally gained the part of the country on the coast that is now Makedonia. They were previously Temenids from Argos who became kings after defeating in battle and expelling the Pierians from Pieria, who later dwelt in Phagres and other places under Mount Pangaion beyond the Strymon (the country between the sea and the lower slopes of Pangaion is still called the Pierian Gulf), and the Bottiaioi¹⁹ (who now dwell as neighbours of the Chalkideis) from Bottia. They also gained a narrow strip of Paionia along the River Axios, extending from the mountains to Pella and the sea.²⁰ Then, after driving out the Edones, they now have control of the country called Mygdonia, which lies between the Axios and the Strymon. They also drove out the Eordoi from the country now called Eordaia – most were killed, though a few still live around Physka – and the Almopians from Almopia. These Makedonians also conquered and still hold places that belonged to other tribes – Anthemios,²¹ Krestonia,²² Bisaltia²³ and much that belonged to the Makedonians them-

of the Adriatic Sea near Dodona, and it was from them that the Romans derived the words *Graecus* and *Graecia* which led later nations in Europe, followed by other non-European nations, to call the country 'Greece' in various slightly different linguistic forms.

¹⁷2.99, referring in the first place to an invasion that took place in 429/8 B.C.

¹⁸ The Lynkestai can be located north of Lake Kastoria, and the Elymiotai along the Pindos range (Hammond, *History of Macedonia*, 1, 102ff.).

¹⁹This group provides an excellent example of a population which was expelled by the *Makedones* (their original territory was around Pella, although the locating of the Makedonian capital there could of course not have been foreseen as early as this). In the fourth century some coins were issued bearing their name, and some numismatists have wondered whether they might have retained a presence in their original home. There is, however, no other evidence to support this theory.

²⁰This reinforces the statement of Iliad 2.848-50 which suggests that the Paionians once controlled land along the Axios/Vardarios as far as the sea.

²¹On the east side of the Thermaic Gulf, to the north of Chalkidike.

²²To the north-east of Pella, between the Amphaxitis and Strymon rivers. Thoukydides does not tell us when any of these areas came under Makedonian control, but it is clear that by the time that he was writing, they had expanded well beyond the east bank of the Axios/Vardarios river.

²³Bisaltai: near Amphipolis, a Thracian tribe, annexed by Alexandros I (498-54) to his kingdom (which then gained a talent of silver a day from their mines). Even after the Romans had conquered Makedonia in the 2nd century B.C., the Bisaltai seem still to have been recognised as a separate group (they are mentioned in three places in Livy's history *Ab Urbe Condita*, 44, 45, 8; 45, 29, 7 and 30, 3), and this is one of the best of examples of the way in which

selves. The whole country is now called Makedonia, and Perdikkas the son of Alexandros was the king of it when Sitalkes invaded it.

This important passage, as has been noticed by scholars, shows an unusual interest in listing groups that were not of any special relevance to the events that were being described. It is possible that it takes this form because when Thoukydides visited that area in the first part of the Peloponnesian War (he was the Athenian commander who failed to protect Amphipolis from the Spartan commander Brasidas), he found its history interesting. Whatever the reason for its inclusion in his work, it is by far the most important evidence for the state of Makedonia at the time that he was writing. To understand it properly, it is necessary to realise that the subject of these sentences is not the *Makedones*, but the Temenids from Argos (also therefore called the Argeadai) who had made themselves the ruling house in Makedonia.²⁴ The *Makedones* whom they ruled seem to have enlarged their territory, either by expelling other tribes, or 'absorbing' them (whatever that means), or by entering into a relationship that allowed the other tribes to keep their identities and their chieftains, but made them in some way subservient to the kings of Makedonia. This makes it difficult or impossible to define the 'borders' of Makedonia at this time, because we cannot say whether the territory of the Lynkestians or other groups that were in some way subservient to the *Makedones* should be considered as being part of Makedonia, although if we follow Thoukydides, it would seem that this would be the case with the groups that he mentions later as dwelling between the Axios and the Strymon. It was only with the greater dominance that was achieved in the middle of the fourth century by Philip II, that we can begin to think of this larger Makedonia as being a more clearly defined country with more or less permanent borders, although the existence of 'client states/kingdoms' still makes it very difficult to decide exactly where the borders might have been.

Going back to the sixth or earlier fifth century, we know of many other tribes in this area, either from literary evidence (for example, the Ainianeis, Bistoneis, Dobreis, Odomanteis, Orestai, Pelagones and Tymphaioi, some of whom should probably be classed as Thracian) or, in a few cases, only from coins that they issued which bore their names (the Derrones, Orreskioi and Zaeleis, who must have been located in areas where they could mine silver for export, and therefore placed on their coinage information which would allow its source to be identified). This again reinforces the situation described by Thoukydides, which suggests that by his time the *Makedones* had become by far the leading group, but that the existence of other groups was also still recognised.

After this general introduction, let us look at some more specific moments in the early history of Makedonia. By the late 6th century B.C. the history of the country was beginning to be influenced by its relationship with the enormously powerful kingdom of Persia. During the reigns of Amyntas I (c.540-498 B.C.) and Alexandros I (498-454 B.C.) we find that the

'Makedonia' in one sense had become the name of a country, although some of the elements of its population, like the Scots and Welsh and Irish in Britain, had retained their identities and perhaps some degree of independence.

²⁴They claimed to have arrived from Argos in the Peloponnese, and this was the basis of the claim by Alexandros I that he should be allowed to compete in the Olympic Games (see Herodotos, *Histories* 5.22). However, there are other places named Argos, one of them actually in an area close to the first small area of what later became Makedonia. No certainty is possible.

Persians first, after a failed invasion of Skythia, moved into Thrake and Makedonia and set up a sort of Persian 'satrapy' there,²⁵ and later forced Alexandros to join them when they invaded Greece. No ancient source tells us how the non-Makedonian groups in Makedonia were treated by the Persians at this time, but it is probable that individually they would have been regarded as insignificant, and that the only official dealings would have been with the Makedonian kings or their direct representatives. This was perhaps a mistake on their part, because, as Herodotos tells us, Alexandros was able to give information and advice to his contacts in the south that enabled them to avoid an early defeat by giving up the idea of making what would have been a vain attempt to defend Thessalia.²⁶ Although the story of his slipping into the Greek camp from the Persian one in the following year, just before the battle of Plataia, to bring a message²⁷ is open to doubt, it reinforces the general picture of a king who had to pretend to be supporting an enemy who could not be defeated by his own forces. And at the battle of Salamis, Herodotos tells us that some of the non-Athenian ships were crewed by men of 'Dorian and Makedonian blood', who had emigrated southwards, an interesting idea, although not relevant to the present study.²⁸

In addition, the slightly later historian Thoukydides provides further information, which makes it clear that for him (as he wrote of the events of 432 B.C.), Makedonia was a defined area which included Therme (where Thessalonike was later founded) and Pydna.²⁹

First they arrived in Makedonia, where they found that the original force of one thousand had just captured Therme and were besieging Pydna ... Leaving Makedonia then, they came to Beroia, and from there went on to Strepsa.³⁰ After making an unsuccessful attempt at capturing that place, they marched on by land to Potidaia.

In a later passage (referring to 424 B.C.), Thoukydides also locates Dion in Makedonia:³¹

²⁵Herodotos 5.12-17; the statement that the Paionians were deported to Persia can be only partially true, since they certainly existed in their territory north of Makedonia later, issued coins both before and after the time of Alexandros III, and were only incorporated in Makedonia after the Romans established a province there in 148 B.C.

²⁶Herodotos 7.173.

²⁷Herodotos 9. 44-5.

²⁸A passage in a much later work (Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus 7.4.1) states that after being defeated in 480 B.C. at the battle of Salamis, the Persian King Xerxes gave Alexandros I the right to rule over an area 'from Olympos to the Haimos mountain.' Pompeius Trogus was writing during the reign of Augustus, so must have been dependent on some earlier source which has been lost. The most likely interpretation of these words is that Xerxes, who would have hoped for Alexandros's further support, was promising him that Makedonia would in future be independent rather than being a satrapy of Persia, as it had been for some years.

²⁹1.56-7 and 61. In the first of these passages, which says that the Chalkidians and Bottiaians (who had moved to Chalkidike) 'border on Makedonia', it seems that Potidaia in Chalkidike at the head of the Pallene peninsula might have been thought of as being in Thrake, which is not surprising since the expansion that took place under Philip II had not yet happened. But in the second, Perdikkas II is recognized as 'King of Makedonia', not 'of the Makedones', and this reinforces the idea that by this time the existence of this country as a geographical area, not simply an area in which a tribe resided, had been recognized. In the second, it seems that Therme (later Thessaloniki) and Pydna (on the west coast of the Thermaic Gulf) are both thought of as being within Makedonia by this time.

³⁰This is a modern editor's emendation of the manuscript reading *epistrepsantes*, 'after turning back', which makes no sense in this context, to *epistrepsan*. In the Athenian Tribute Lists, as previously noted, all the places in this area are listed under 'Thrake', but this is probably because for administrative convenience Makedonia was not yet recognized as a separate geographical entity.

³¹4.78 (424 B.C.).

... *Dion, a Makedonian polis at the foot of Mount Olympos on the frontier with Thessalia, in the kingdom of Perdikkas ...*

On the other hand, another passage in the *History* of Thukydides³² makes it clear that the north-west boundary of Makedonia at this time stopped short of the Erigon River, because the Lynkestians were independent at this time:

... *Perdikkas, with the army of Brasidas added to his own force, marched at once against Arrhibaios, son of Bromeros, king (basileus) of the Lynkestian Makedones, whose country bordered on his own, whom he wished to bring under his control.*

This is an interesting sentence, which shows how flexible the concept of 'boundaries' is in relation to this area: Bromeros, like other chieftains (*basileus* does not necessarily always mean the ruler of a whole country), seems to have been partly independent, but also partly involved in a relationship in which obedience to Perdikkas might be expected.

At the beginning of the fourth century, therefore, the last date with which this introductory study of the borders of Makedonia is concerned, it seems as if at least some of its boundaries can be fairly closely defined. Starting with the coastal area, the southern border can be said to begin at the pass of Tempe, because Herodotos writes of "Tempe, the pass that leads from Lower Makedonia into Thessalia along the river Peneus, between Olympos and Ossa",³³ and the *Makedones* will have controlled the coast at least as far as Therme, after expelling the Paionians (although the Athenian Peisistratos also controlled some territory there)³⁴. The eastern border, however, presents some difficulties. Amyntas I is said to have offered the former ruler of Athens, Hippias, Anthemous in Chalkidike south of Therme about 500 B.C., an offer that he did not accept.³⁵ This suggests that the *Makedones* were by that time in control of that area. Alexandros I seems to have expanded his area of control when the Persians fled homeward in 479 B.C. after the failure of their second invasion, and reached the west bank of the River Strymon. However, later in the same century the Athenians were competing with him for control of the territory stretching inland from Chalkidike, and established a colony inland at Amphipolis (originally a Thracian settlement aptly named *Ennea Hodoi*, 'Nine Ways', because it sat on several trade routes on land and along the Strymon river) in 437/6 B.C. So it was not until the time of Philippos II that the Makedonians had complete control of this area.

To the north, the border of Makedonia might have been approximately the same as the northern border of modern Greece if we assume that the Paionians had now been pushed back from their original territory, but to the west the situation was more fluid, because the Illyrians continually made incursions, although these were not necessarily intended to

³²4.83.

³³7.173.

³⁴Aristoteles, *Athenaion Politeia* 15.

³⁵*Histories* 5.94.

seize territory that they could hold permanently, but rather as raids to carry off livestock, any portable property and humans to become slaves.

In conclusion, we may review the history of Makedonia in terms of the dimensions of the country in the time of its kings from the time of Amyntas I, the earliest to be much more than a name, until the reign of Perdikkas III (365-360 B.C.), where this preliminary study will end. By the end of the reign of Amyntas, Makedonia consisted of a border with Thessalia on the south, with the Molossians and Illyrians to the west and the Paionians to the north, after the Persian king Dareios had broken their power in 511 B.C. and deported many of them to Persia.³⁶ The eastern border probably by that time lay along the western bank of the Axios/Vardar River. Dareios did not have complete control of this area, because, for example, along the western coast of the Thermaic Gulf there was a colony, Methone, that had been settled from Eretria, but we have no record of any tensions arising from this situation, any more than there were tensions between the colonies established from the south along the coast of Chalkidike and the pre-existing groups living there. Also, we have to distinguish between the genuine original Makedonian territory in Pieria, and the outlying areas to the north and north-west that were occupied by tribes that seem to have been to some extent under the control of the *Makedones*, but would not yet have been thought of as being located in their territory.

Amyntas's successor Alexandros I (c.498-454 B.C.) is well known because of his apparently successful bid to compete in the Olympic Games. However, a few years before he succeeded his father, Makedonia passed under the control of the Persian king, becoming the equivalent of a Persian 'satrapy'. This led to a balancing act, particularly at the time of the second Persian invasion of 480/79 B.C., when the *Makedones* were forced to give support to the invaders, while at the same time Alexandros was sending useful messages to the southern cities which were defending their country. Not surprisingly, it is not possible to point to any significant increase in the territory that he ruled until after the defeated Persians had departed in 479 B.C., but during the last two decades of his reign, he seems to have expanded Makedonian control as far as the west bank of the Strymon.³⁷

Alexandros's son Perdikkas II (c.454-c.413 B.C.) was faced with a new problem. The Athenians were taking a great interest in the area that he ruled (probably because much of it was richly timbered, and the naval power that Athens increasingly controlled (paid for to a great extent by the other members of the League of Delos), and several Athenian colonies were established in Makedonian territory, one of them at Amphipolis, a long way inland in the northern part of Chalkidike. Another city, Berge, on the Strymon, had already come under Athenian control, and Perdikkas's silver coinage is extremely limited and consists only of very small denominations. This suggests that he had lost control of the silver mines in this area, which was the home of a group called the Bisaltai.

³⁶Herodotos 5.14-17.

³⁷See the extract from the *History* of Thoukydides (2.99) quoted above, which specifically attributes some expansion to Alexandros I.

Archelaos (c.413-c.399 B.C.), Perdikkas' son, was evidently a most active ruler. In addition, by this time the situation had changed: Athens was losing the power that it had once had, after the disastrous expedition to Sicily, and it seems that Archelaos was recognised as being of great help to them in supplying timber for ships and oars. He was honoured at Athens for this as an *euergetes* at Athens, as a surviving inscription tells us.³⁸ There are records of his struggles with the tribes on his western frontier, but no precise indication of whether territory was lost or gained. However, we can assume that he regained the land on the western side of the Strymon occupied by the Bisaltai that Perdikkas II had lost, since his coinage is relatively plentiful and not confined to small denominations. In addition, he gave a daughter in marriage to the ruler of the Elimiotai, who formed his south-western border along the Haliakmon River. This suggests that he was protecting this border, even if Elimiotis could not be considered a client kingdom. He also seems to have been involved in Thessalia towards the end of his reign, and may have received the area immediately to the south of Mount Olympus as a result, although this occupation, whatever its terms were, did not last long.

For six years after the death of Archelaos there was instability in Makedonia, with no fewer than four kings ruling (Orestes, Aëropos, Amyntas II and Pausanias). They were succeeded by Amyntas III (389-369 B.C.). By the time that he became king, some territory in the eastern part of his kingdom seems to have been lost to the cities in Chalkidike that had formed a Chalkidian League, and expanded the area under control in a northward direction, with Olynthos taking the lead. At one time they had actually reduced the area under the control of the Makedonians by gaining Anthemous and Pella. Also, in 393 B.C. he lost much of his territory to the Illyrians, and actually had to leave his kingdom, with Argaios II being installed in his place, but regained it in the following year with the help of the Thessalians. The gradual increase in power of the Chalkidian League, centred on Olynthos, led to the loss of territory even as far as Pella in the decade that followed, because Amyntas ceded land to the League in the hope of support against the Illyrians.

Some years later, he negotiated a treaty with the Spartans which led to their capturing Olynthos in 379 B.C. and (at least for a few years) disbanding the Chalkidian league.

He was succeeded by his eldest son Alexander II (c.371-368 B.C.), who during his short reign fended off an attack from the west by the Illyrians and from the east by a would-be king called Pausanias, gaining help from the Athenians. He also briefly gained control of part of Thessalia, including Larissa, but this did not last long, after he was expelled from Thessalia by a force from Thebes.

Finally, in this introductory essay, we come to Perdikkas III (368-359 B.C.), the predecessor of Philippos II. At the time of his accession he tried to regain Amphipolis in the north of Makedonia after it had been controlled by the Athenians for a long time, but without success. Also at this time much of Upper Makedonia was still held by the Illyrians, and when he made an attempt some years after his accession to reconquer this area, he was disastrously defeated and lost his life.

³⁸*Inscriptiones Graecae* I (3rd edition), no. 117.

In conclusion, it may be said that in this first period of the history of Makedonia and the *Makedones* there were periods of expansion and some small contractions, and in 359 B.C. the country and the nation were in a vulnerable position. The arrival of the young Philippos II, however, changed the situation considerably, as will be explained in the second tranche of this essay (see the next edition of the *Macedonian Studies Journal*).