



PHILIP II'S BONES have revealed his final resting place: in Tomb I at Vergina, Greece.

ALAMY/ACI

The Tomb of Alexander the Great's Father Revised

A new forensic study appears to solve a long-standing debate over the burial location of King Philip II of Macedon, conqueror of Greece.

Back in 1977 and 1978, three great tombs were discovered in a burial mound at Vergina, Greece. Many archaeologists believed that Philip II lay inside Tomb II, dubbed “The Tomb of Philip.” But a skeletal analysis of the bones in Tomb I now suggest otherwise.

A team of Greek and Spanish archaeologists, the first to analyze the remains of the skeletons in Tomb I, found that the bones belong to a middle-aged man, a young woman

of approximately 18 years, and a newborn infant of unknown gender. The forensic evidence confirms the ages at death reported in ancient literary sources for Philip II and the last of his seven wives, as well as their infant child.

What’s more, three years before his assassination in 336 B.C., Philip II suffered a devastating leg injury. Though ancient authors differ on the precise location of the wound, the sources all indicate that the injury left him permanently

crippled. The left knee of the adult male from Tomb I shows a massive hole that caused severe ankylosis—an abnormal fusion of bones that impedes movement.

Given the new evidence that Philip II is buried in Tomb I, it is argued that the skeletons in Tomb II must belong to Arrhidaeus and Eurydice, Alexander’s half-brother and his wife. If this is the case, it’s possible that some of Alexander the Great’s armor could be buried with the pair.—*Nick Romeo*



JAMES L. STANFIELD/COURTESY OF MANCHESTER MUSEUM, THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

PHILIP II comes to life in a speculative reconstruction based on ancient bones. Blinded in one eye by an enemy’s arrow, Philip was an insightful and successful leader. Before receiving his leg injury, the length of his tibia and femur indicate that he would have stood nearly 5 feet 11 inches tall, a height well above average at the time.