With Athenian affairs as stable as anyone could make them, Philip turned his thoughts to problems closer to home. He first decided to settle matters among the Molossians by replacing their king Arybbas with his own brother-in-law, Alexandros. He resolved thereby to secure a tighter control of Epeiros that would protect the south-western border of his realm while giving him virtual control of the eastern Adriatic coast from Illyria to Akarnania. At the beginning of 342 despite the winter weather Philip led a mixed force of light-armed infantry, cavalry, archers, and mercenaries across Mt. Pindos into Ambrakia. He descended upon the cities of the Kassopia, ravaging the land with fire and storming the cities of Pandosia, Bucheta, Bitia, and Elateia. In the face of this onslaught Arybbas fled to Athens where he died in honored exile. Philip won Aitolian support by promising to award them Naupaktos. This gift would serve his interests by providing a strong and friendly harbor on the northern coast of the Corinthian Gulf. It would also constitute a slap to the unfriendly Achaians opposite. His operations in Ambrakia and Leukas also intimidated the Corinthians, who saw imminent danger to their vital economic routes to the west. The Athenians sent troops to Akarnania and Demosthenes as ambassador, but nothing came of these ventures. For the moment Philip had no ambitions farther south. By the early months of 342 his southern borders extended in a belt from Thessaly through occupied Phokis along a well-disposed Aitolia to Epeiros. He further strengthened this line by taking Echinos on the southern coast of Achaia Phthiotis from the Thebans, who had no right to it. Events in Elis and Megara favored Philip, who had, however, taken no hand in them and for the moment took no advantage of them. Oligarchic unrest in both places can best be described as local in nature and in a broader context more anti-Athenian than pro-Philippic. Where evidence exists, it points
to the conclusion that most Greeks looked favorably upon Philip.¹

Immediately after his expedition to Epeiros, Philip turned to Thrace, determined permanently to settle matters there. Nothing new shaped this policy that he had pursued since the beginning of his reign. He planned to conquer the rest of Thrace and politically eliminate Kersebleptes. Thrace would form a part of the Macedonian empire over which Philip exercised direct and undisputed control. Unlike Thessaly and Epeiros, both of which were technically independent, Philip would rule Thrace direct from his throne. In 342 Philip launched one of the most ambitious of his many daring campaigns, this one to demand a year or so of constant struggle. Chronology once again poses its own problems. Although his precise path cannot be recovered, his general course is clear. He planned to seize control of the Thracian coastal cities and to secure vital points in the river valleys of the Nestos and Hebrós. Geographically, if not perhaps chronologically, his way took him to Drongilos, or perhaps Tragilos, near Philippoi on the Nestos River. He also seized the unidentified Masteira, which perhaps stood in the same area. These victories tightened his grasp of the eastern frontier of Macedonia. Of greater importance were his designs on the wide ranges of the Hebrós River, the modern Maritza. In the west he founded Philippolis, modern Plodiv, which commanded the inland routes through the riverine plain as far eastwards as Kabyle on the central branch of the Hebrós, the modern Tonzos, and thence to the Euxine Sea. In the south at the mouth of the Hebrós he won Doriskos, thus establishing a firm hold on the Thracian interior, major points along the river’s broad watershed, and its principal outlet. He also spread Graeco-Macedonian culture, albeit that of the rough camp, well into the Balkan interior. Tenuous at first, control of this area served as a buffer to Macedonia proper. It also provided the raw material of economic prosperity and military manpower.²


² Dem. 9.34; Diod. 16.71.1–2; Justin 9.1.1. Drongilos and Masteira: Dem. 8.44;