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ADDRESS TO PHILIP OF ISOCRATES

INTRODUCTION

Although both the *Second Olynthiac* of Demosthenes and the *Address to Philip* of Isocrates focus on the character and policies of Philip of Macedon, it is often hard to believe that they are discussing the same man. The despicable debauchee pictured in Demosthenes has metamorphosed himself into a capable and conscientious leader well qualified to carry out Isocrates' project, the Greek invasion of Persia. The man Demosthenes thought was a barbarian has become a Greek of the most distinguished genealogy. The enemy of Hellenic culture has become the man who could extend and invigorate it. In short, Demosthenes and Isocrates present totally different responses to the same undeniable fact, the emergence of Macedon as a major power in the Greek world.

It is this same fact that accounts for some of the changes that have taken place in Isocrates' project in the thirty-five years or so since he first set down in the *Panegyricus* his plan for the invasion of Asia. The idea is still the same, but he has a totally new conception of the organization needed to implement it. The *Panegyricus* concentrated on the two traditional leaders of Greece, Athens and Sparta, and mentioned Macedon only in passing. The *Address to Philip* beseeches the Macedonian king to lead the expedition, for Isocrates has abandoned his hope that Athens or any other Greek city could serve as an effective leader.

Thus Isocrates, like Demosthenes, attests the importance of the rise of Macedon as a new factor in Greek foreign relations. But unlike Demosthenes, Isocrates believes that this new power can cooperate with the city-states and

ultimately strengthen and enrich all Greece. At the time of the publication of the *Address to Philip* this expectation had recently been encouraged by a peace which Athens and Macedon had agreed upon in 346 B.C., after ten years of sporadic fighting. This treaty, negotiated among others by Aeschines, a less than enthusiastic Demosthenes, and one Philocrates, after whom it is named, seemed to Isocrates to provide an auspicious opportunity for renewing his proposals for the attack on Persia. This is the primary purpose of the *Address to Philip* (346 B.C.) but at the same time by stressing that Philip was a true Greek and by calling attention to the possibility of cooperation with him Isocrates held out a constructive alternative to the policies of those who were anxious to discredit Philocrates, destroy the peace, and find some way to humiliate Philip. Isocrates could hope that even if his proposal was not adopted, he might yet help steer Athens away from a collision with Macedon.

Once again, as the next few speeches will make clear, the collision was not to be avoided. The Peace of Philocrates was more a truce than a lasting adjudication of conflicting interests. The few years' breathing space that it afforded was not used for serious negotiations and no understanding was reached between Athens and Macedon. Isocrates seems again to have spoken to deaf ears. But the speech he produced, apart from its substantial literary merits and the vigor of thought and style so remarkable in a man ninety years old, invites speculation about one of the most intriguing possibilities in the history of Greece. Here is an intelligent and by no means uninformed Athenian who challenges Demosthenes' assessment of Philip and proclaims the possibility of cooperation between Macedon and the rest of Greece.

The translation by George Norlin, former president of the University of Colorado, which is used here first appeared in the Loeb Classical Library in 1928. It aims at a different sort of accuracy from that sought by John Gillies in his *Panegyricus*. Norlin attempted, with some unavoidable exceptions, to translate sentence for sentence, denying himself the freedom to combine, expand, and compress that Gillies had so lavishly exercised. The result is a precise but

perhaps pedestrian version which prefers an affectionate closeness to the Greek to the blandishments of English rhetoric.

Isocrates begins his speech by referring to Athens' dispute with Macedon over her old colony Amphipolis, an important trade and mining town in Thrace. It was a struggle for the control of this city that ten years earlier in 356 had led to the outbreak of hostilities between Philip and Athens. The recent peace negotiated by Philocrates and others was welcomed by Isocrates, but he points out it is not likely to endure unless

[9] the greatest states of Hellas should resolve to put an end to their mutual quarrels and carry the war beyond our borders into Asia, and should determine to wrest from the barbarians the advantages which they now think it proper to get for themselves at the expense of the Hellenes. This was, in fact, the course which I had already advocated in the *Panegyric* discourse.

[10] Having pondered these matters and come to the conclusion that there could never be found a subject nobler than this, of more general appeal, or of greater profit to us all, I was moved to write upon it a second time. Yet I did not fail to appreciate my own deficiencies; I knew that this theme called for a man, not of my years, but in the full bloom of his vigour and with natural endowments far above those of other men; [11] and I realized also that it is difficult to deliver two discourses with tolerable success upon the same subject, especially when the one which was first published was so written that even my detractors imitate and admire it more than do those who praise it to excess. [12] Nevertheless, disregarding all these difficulties, I have become so ambitious in my old age that I have determined by address-

90 years old

ing my discourse to you at the same time to set an example to my disciples and make it evident to them that to burden our national assemblies with oratory and to address all the people who there throng together is, in reality, to address no one at all; that such speeches are quite as ineffectual as the legal codes and constitutions drawn up by the sophists; [13] and, finally, that those who desire, not to chatter empty nonsense, but to further some practical purpose, and those who think they have hit upon some plan for the common good, must leave it to others to harangue at the public festivals, but must themselves win over someone to champion their cause from among men who are capable not only of speech but of action and who occupy a high position in the world—if, that is to say, they are to command any attention.

[14] It was with this mind then that I chose to address to you what I have to say—not that I singled you out to curry your favour, although in truth I would give much to speak acceptably to you. It was not, however, with this in view that I came to my decision, but rather because I saw that all the other men of high repute were living under the control of politics and laws, with no power to do anything save what was prescribed, and that, furthermore, they were sadly unequal to the enterprise which I shall propose; [15] while you and you alone had been granted by fortune free scope both to send ambassadors to whomsoever you desire and to receive them from whomsoever you please, and to say whatever you think expedient; and that, besides, you, beyond any of the Hellenes, were possessed of both wealth and power, which are the only things in the world that are adapted at once to persuade and to compel; and these aids, I think, even the cause which I shall propose to you will need to have on its side. [16] For I am going to advise you to champion the cause of concord among

Philip's freedom vs. Greek constitutional restrictions

the Hellenes and of a campaign against the barbarian; and as persuasion will be helpful in dealing with the Hellenes, so compulsion will be useful in dealing with the barbarians. This, then, is the general scope of my discourse. . . .

[30] I affirm that, without neglecting any of your own interests, you ought to make an effort to reconcile Argos and Lacedaemon and Thebes and Athens; for if you can bring these cities together, you will not find it hard to unite the others as well; [31] for all the rest are under the protection of the aforesaid cities, and fly for refuge, when they are alarmed, to one or other of these powers, and they all draw upon them for succour. So that if you can persuade four cities only to take a sane view of things, you will deliver the others also from many evils.

The proposal

[32] Now you will realize that it is not becoming in you to disregard any of these cities if you will review their conduct in relation to your ancestors; for you will find that each one of them is to be credited with great friendship and important services to your house: Argos is the land of your fathers, and is entitled to as much consideration at your hands as are your own ancestors; the Thebans honour the founder of your race, both by processions and by sacrifices, beyond all the other gods; [33] the Lacedaemonians have conferred upon his descendants the kingship and the power of command for all time; and as for our city, we are informed by those whom we credit in matters of ancient history that she aided Heracles to win his immortality (in what way you can easily learn at another time; it would be unseasonable for me to relate it now), and that she aided his children to preserve their lives. [34] Yes, Athens single-handed sustained the greatest dangers against the power of Eurystheus, put an end to his insolence, and freed Heracles' sons from the fears by

The Greeks honor Philip's ancestor, Heracles

Cf. Lysias *Funeral Oration* §§11–16

which they were continually beset. Because of these services we deserve the gratitude, not only of those who then were preserved from destruction, but also of those who are now living; for to us it is due both that they are alive and that they enjoy the blessings which are now theirs, since they never could have seen the light of day at all had not the sons of Heracles been preserved from death.

[35] Therefore, seeing that these cities have each and all shown such a spirit, no quarrel should ever have arisen between you and any one of them. But unfortunately we are all prone by nature to do wrong more often than right; and so it is fair to charge the mistakes of the past to our common weakness. Yet for the future you must be on your guard to prevent a like occurrence, and must consider what service you can render them which will make it manifest that you have acted in a manner worthy both of yourself and of what these cities have done. [36] And the opportunity now serves you; for you would not only be repaying the debt of gratitude which you owed them, but, because so much time has elapsed, they will credit you with being first in friendly offices. And it is a good thing to have the appearance of conferring benefits upon the greatest states of Hellas and at the same time to profit yourself no less than them. [37] But apart from this, if anything unpleasant has arisen between you and any of them, you will wipe it out completely; for friendly acts in the present crisis will make you forget the wrongs which you have done each other in the past. Yes, and this also is beyond question, that all men hold in fondest memory those benefits which they receive in times of trouble. [38] And you see how utterly wretched these states have become because of their warfare, and how like they are to men engaged in a personal encounter; for no one can reconcile the parties to a quarrel while their wrath is rising; but after they

have punished each other badly, they need no mediator, but separate of their own accord. And that is just what I think these states also will do unless you first take them in hand.

[39] Now perhaps someone will venture to object to what I have proposed, saying that I am trying to persuade you to set yourself to an impossible task, since the Argives could never be friendly to the Lacedaemonians, nor the Lacedaemonians to the Thebans, and since, in general, those who have been accustomed throughout their whole existence to press their own selfish interests can never share and share alike with each other. [40] Well, I myself do not believe that at the time when our city was the first power in Hellas, or again when Lacedaemon occupied that position, any such result could have been accomplished, since the one or the other of these two cities could easily have blocked the attempt; but as things are now, I am not of the same mind regarding them. For I know that they have all been brought down to the same level by their misfortunes, and so I think that they would much prefer the mutual advantages which would come from a unity of purpose to the selfish gains which accrued from their policy in those days. [41] Furthermore, while I grant that no one else in the world could reconcile these cities, yet nothing of the sort is difficult for you; for I see that you have carried through to a successful end many undertakings which the rest of the world looked upon as hopeless and unthinkable, and therefore it would be nothing strange if you should be able single-handed to effect this union. In fact, men of high purposes and exceptional gifts ought not to undertake enterprises which any of the common run might carry out with success, but rather those which no one would attempt save men with endowments and power such as you possess.

[42] But I marvel that those who think that none of

The period of
Athenian
dominance
477-405 B.C.

these proposals could possibly be carried out are not aware, either by their own knowledge or by tradition, that there have been many terrible wars after which the participants have come to an understanding and rendered great services to one another. For what could exceed the enmity which the Hellenes felt toward Xerxes? Yet everyone knows that we and the Lacedaemonians came to prize his friendship more than that of those who helped us to establish our respective empires. [43] But why speak of ancient history, or of our dealings with the barbarians? If one should scan and review the misfortunes of the Hellenes in general, these will appear as nothing in comparison with those which we Athenians have experienced through the Thebans and the Lacedaemonians. Nevertheless, when the Lacedaemonians took the field against the Thebans and were minded to humiliate Boeotia and break up the league of her cities, we sent a relief expedition and thwarted the desires of the Lacedaemonians. [44] And again, when fortune shifted her favour and the Thebans and the Peloponnesians were one and all trying to devastate Lacedaemon, we alone among the Hellenes formed an alliance with the Lacedaemonians and helped to save them from destruction. [45] So then, seeing that such great reversals are wont to occur, and that our states care nothing about their former enmities or about their oaths or about anything else save what they conceive to be expedient for themselves, and that expediency is the sole object to which they give their affections and devote all their zeal, no man, unless obsessed by utter folly, could fail to believe that now also they will show the same disposition, especially if you take the lead in their reconciliation, while selfish interests urge and present ills constrain them to this course. I, for my part, believe that, with these influences fighting on your side, everything will turn out as it should.

E.g., the disasters of the Peloponnesian War, 431–404 B.C.

378 B.C.

370–69 B.C.

[46] But I think that you can get most light on the question whether these cities are inclined toward peace with each other or toward war, if I review, not merely in general terms nor yet with excessive detail, the principal facts in their present situation. And first of all, let us consider the condition of the Lacedaemonians.

[47] The Lacedaemonians were the leaders of the Hellenes, not long ago, on both land and sea, and yet they suffered so great a reversal of fortune when they met defeat at Leuctra that they were deprived of their power over the Hellenes, and lost such of their warriors as chose to die rather than survive defeat at the hands of those over whom they had once been masters. [48] Furthermore, they were obliged to look on while all the Peloponnesians, who formerly had followed the lead of Lacedaemon against the rest of the world, united with the Thebans and invaded their territory; and against these the Lacedaemonians were compelled to risk battle, not in the country to save the crops, but in the heart of the city, before the very seat of their government, to save their wives and children—a crisis in which defeat meant instant destruction, [49] and victory has none the more delivered them from their ills; nay, they are now warred upon by their neighbours; they are distrusted by all the Peloponnesians; they are hated by most of the Hellenes; they are harried and plundered day and night by their own serfs; and not a day passes that they do not have to take the field or fight against some force or other, or march to the rescue of their perishing comrades. [50] But the worst of their afflictions is that they live in continual fear that the Thebans may patch up their quarrel with the Phocians and, returning again, ring them about with still greater calamities than have befallen them in the past. How, then, can we refuse to believe that people so hard pressed would gladly see at the head of a movement for peace a man who commands

The period of Spartan dominance, 405–371 B.C.

The campaigns of Epaminondas, 371–62 B.C.

confidence and has the power to put an end to the wars in which they are involved?

Argos and her
neighbours,
e.g., Sparta

[51] Now as to the Argives, you will see that in some respects they are no better off than the Lacedaemonians, while in others their condition is worse; for they have been in a state of war with their neighbours from the day they founded their city, just as have the Lacedaemonians; but there is this difference, that the neighbours of the Lacedaemonians are weaker than they, while those of the Argives are stronger—a condition which all would admit to be the greatest of misfortunes. And so unsuccessful are they in their warfare that hardly a year passes that they are not compelled to witness their own territory being ravaged and laid waste. [52] But what is most deplorable of all is that, during the intervals when their enemies cease from harrying them, they themselves put to death the most eminent and wealthy of their citizens; and they have more pleasure in doing this than any other people have in slaying their foes. The cause of their living in such disorder is none other than the state of war; and if you can put a stop to this, you will not only deliver them from these evils but you will cause them to adopt a better policy with respect to their other interests as well.

Thebes' vic-
tory at Leuc-
tra, 371 B.C.

[53] And as for the condition of the Thebans, surely you have not failed to note that also. They won a splendid victory and covered themselves with glory, but because they did not make good use of their success they are now in no better case than those who have suffered defeat and failure. For no sooner had they triumphed over their foes than, neglecting everything else, they began to annoy the cities of the Peloponnese; they made bold to reduce Thessaly to subjection; they threatened their neighbours, the Megarians; they robbed our city of a portion of its territory; they ravaged Euboea; they sent men-of-war to Byzantium as if they purposed to rule

both land and sea; [54] and, finally, they began war upon the Phocians, expecting that in a short time they would conquer their cities, occupy all the surrounding territory, and prevail over all the treasures at Delphi by the outlay of their own funds. But none of these hopes has been realized; instead of seizing the cities of the Phocians they have lost cities of their own; and now when they invade the enemy's territory they inflict less damage upon them than they suffer when they are retreating to their own country; [55] for while they are in Phocian territory they succeed in killing a few hireling soldiers who are better off dead than alive, but when they retreat they lose of their own citizens those who are most esteemed and most ready to die for their fatherland. And so completely have their fortunes shifted, that whereas they once hoped that all Hellas would be subject to them, now they rest upon you the hopes of their own deliverance. Therefore I think that the Thebans also will do with alacrity whatever you command or advise.

[56] It would still remain for me to speak about our city, had she not come to her senses before the others and made peace; but now I need only say this: I think that she will join forces with you in carrying out your policy, especially if she can be made to see that your object is to prepare for the campaign against the barbarians. . . .

[68] Consider how worthy a thing it is to undertake, above all, deeds of such a character that if you succeed you will cause your own reputation to rival that of the foremost men of history, while if you fall short of your expectations you will at any rate win the good will of all the Hellenes—which is a better thing to gain than to take by force many Hellenic cities; for achievements of the latter kind entail envy and hostility and much opprobrium, but that which I have urged entails none of these things. Nay, if some god were to give you the choice of

Thebes'
aggressive
behavior,
369–46 B.C.

Athens

An appeal to
Philip's pride

the interests and the occupations in which you would wish to spend your life, you could not, at least if you took my advice, choose any in preference to this; [69] for you will not only be envied of others, but you will also count yourself a happy man. For what good fortune could then surpass your own? Men of the highest renown will come as ambassadors from the greatest states to your court; you will advise with them about the general welfare, for which no other man will be found to have shown a like concern; [70] you will see all Hellas on tip-toe with interest in whatever you happen to propose; and no one will be indifferent to the measures which are being decided in your councils, but, on the contrary, some will seek news of how matters stand, some will pray that you will not be thwarted in your aims, and others will fear lest something befall you before your efforts are crowned with success. [71] If all this should come to pass, would you not have good reason to be proud? Would you not rejoice throughout your life in the knowledge that you had been a leader in such great affairs? And what man that is even moderately endowed with reason would not exhort you to fix your choice above all upon that course of action which is capable of bearing at one and the same time the twofold fruits, if I may so speak, of surpassing joys and of imperishable honours?

[72] Now I should content myself with what I have already said on this topic, had I not passed over a certain matter—not that it slipped my memory, but because I hesitated to speak of it—which I am now resolved to disclose to you. For I think that it is profitable for you to hear about it, and that it is becoming in me to speak, as I am wont to do, without reserve.

[73] I observe that you are being painted in false colours by men who are jealous of you, for one thing, and are, besides, in the habit of stirring up trouble in

their own cities—men who look upon a state of peace which is for the good of all as a state of war upon their selfish interests. Heedless of all other considerations, they keep talking about your power, representing that it is being built up, not in behalf of Hellas, but against her, that you have for a long time been plotting against us all, [74] and that, while you are giving it out that you intend to go to the rescue of the Messenians, if you can settle the Phocian question, you really design to subdue the Peloponnesus to your rule. The Thessalians, they say, and the Thebans, and all those who belong to the Amphictyony, stand ready to follow your lead; while the Argives, the Messenians, the Megalopolitans, and many of the others are prepared to join forces with you and wipe out the Lacedaemonians; and if you succeed in doing this, you will easily be master of the rest of Hellas. [75] By speaking this rubbish, by pretending to have exact knowledge and by speedily effecting in words the overthrow of the whole world, they are convincing many people. They convince, most of all, those who hunger for the same calamities as do the speechmakers; next, those who exercise no judgement about their common welfare, but, utterly obtuse in their own perceptions, are very grateful to men who pretend to feel alarm and fear in their behalf; and lastly, those who do not deny that you appear to be plotting against the Hellenes, but are of the opinion that the purpose with which you are charged is a worthy ambition.

[76] For these latter are so far divorced from intelligence that they do not realize that one may apply the same words in some cases to a man's injury, in others to his advantage. For example, if at the present moment one were to say that the King of Asia was plotting against the Hellenes, and had made preparations to send an expedition against us, he would not be saying anything disparaging of him; nay, he would, on the contrary, make us

Slanders
against
Philip

His support of
the Delphic
Amphictyony
merely a pre-
liminary to an
attack on
Sparta

E.g., Philip

think more highly of his courage and his worth. But if, on the other hand, one should bring this charge against one of the descendants of Heracles, who made himself the benefactor of all Hellas, he would bring upon him the greatest opprobrium. [77] For who would not feel indignation and loathing if a man should be found to be plotting against those in whose behalf his ancestor elected to live a life of perils, and if he made no effort to preserve the good will which the latter had bequeathed as a legacy to his posterity, but, heedless of these examples, set his heart on reprehensible and wicked deeds?

[78] You ought to give these matters careful thought, and not look on with indifference while rumours are springing up around you of the sort which your enemies seek to fasten upon you, but which your friends, to a man, would not hesitate to deny. And yet it is in the feelings of both these parties that you can best see the truth as to your own interests. [79] Perhaps, however, you conceive that it argues a mean spirit to pay attention to the drivellers who heap abuse upon you and to those who are influenced by what they say, especially when your own conscience is free from any sense of guilt. But you ought not to despise the multitude nor count it a little thing to have the respect of the whole world; on the contrary, you ought then, and only then, to be satisfied that you enjoy a reputation which is good and great and worthy of yourself and of your forefathers and of the achievements of your line, [80] when you have brought the Hellenes to feel toward you as you see the Lacedaemonians feel toward their kings, and as your companions feel toward yourself. And it is not difficult for you to attain this if you determine to show yourself equally friendly to all, and cease treating some of the cities as friends and others as strangers, and if, furthermore, you fix your choice upon the kind of policy by which you can make yourself trusted by the Hellenes and feared by the barbarians.

A gentle criticism

After a brief interlude in which he discusses his personal qualifications for proposing such an expedition, Isocrates turns to the strategic prerequisites for a successful invasion of Persia:

[86] The point of departure, then, which I have taken for my whole discussion is, I believe, the one which is proper for those who urge an expedition against Asia. For one must undertake nothing until he finds the Hellenes doing one of two things: either actually supporting the undertaking or according it their entire approval. . . . [89] On these points no man of intelligence would venture to contradict me. But I think that if any of the others should be prompted to advise you in favour of the expedition against Asia, they would resort to a plea of this kind: that it has been the fortune of all who have undertaken a war against the King, without exception, to rise from obscurity to brilliant distinction, from poverty to wealth, and from low estate to be masters of many lands and cities. [90] I, however, am not going to urge you on such grounds, but by the example of men who were looked upon as failures: I mean those who took the field with Cyrus and Clearchus.

Argument by example

Everyone agrees that these won as complete a victory in battle over all the forces of the King as if they had come to blows with their womenfolk, but that at the very moment when they seemed to be masters of the field they failed of success, owing to the impetuosity of Cyrus. For he in his exultation rushed in pursuit far in advance of the others; and, being caught in the midst of the enemy, was killed. [91] But the King, notwithstanding that his foes had suffered so severe a loss, felt so thorough a contempt for his own forces that he invited Clearchus and the other captains to a parley, promising to give them great gifts and to pay their soldiers their wages in full and to give them safe conveyance home; then, having lured them by such prospects,

The Greek troops hired by Cyrus, 401-399 B.C.

Compare
Xenophon's
Anabasis

and having assured them by the most solemn pledges known to the Persians, he seized them and put them to death, deliberately choosing to outrage the gods rather than risk a clash with our soldiers, bereft though they now were of Cyrus's aid. [92] And what challenge could be nobler or more convincing than this? For it is evident that, if it had not been for Cyrus, even that army would have overthrown the power of the King. But for you it is easy both to guard against the disaster which befell at that time and to equip yourself with an armament much stronger than that which defeated the forces of the King. How, then, since you possess both these advantages, can you fail to undertake this expedition with all confidence? . . .

Compare §80

[95] Therefore, as next in order I think that I should speak of the war-strength which will be available to you as compared with that which Clearchus and his followers had. First and most important of all, you will have the good will of the Hellenes if you choose to abide by the advice which I have given you concerning them; they, on the other hand, found the Hellenes intensely hostile because of the decarchies which the Lacedaemonians had set up; for the Hellenes thought that, if Cyrus and Clearchus should succeed, their yoke would be heavier still, but that if the King conquered they would be delivered from their present hardships; and this is just what did happen to them. [96] Besides, you will find as many soldiers at your service as you wish, for such is now the state of affairs in Hellas that it is easier to get together a greater and stronger army from among those who wander in exile than from those who live under their own polities. But in those days there was no body of professional soldiers, and so, being compelled to collect mercenaries from the several states, they had to spend more money on bounties for their recruiting agents than on pay for the troops. [97] And, lastly, if

Availability
of mercenaries

we should be inclined to make a careful review of the two cases and institute a comparison between you, who are to be at the head of the present expedition and to decide on every measure, and Clearchus, who was in charge of the enterprise of that day, we should find that he had never before been in command of any force whatever on either land or sea and yet attained renown from the misfortune which befell him on the continent of Asia; [98] while you, on the contrary, have succeeded in so many and such mighty achievements that if I were making them the subject of a speech before another audience, I should do well to recount them, but, since I am addressing myself to you, you would rightly think it senseless and gratuitous in me to tell you the story of your own deeds. [99] It is well for me to speak to you also about the two Kings, the one against whom I am advising you to take the field, and the one against whom Clearchus made war, in order that you may know the temper and the power of each. In the first place, the father of the present King once defeated our city and later the city of the Lacedaemonians, while this King has never overcome anyone of the armies which have been violating his territory. [100] Secondly, the former took the whole of Asia from the Hellenes by the terms of the Treaty; while this King is so far from exercising dominion over others that he is not in control even of the cities which were surrendered to him; and such is the state of affairs that there is no one who is not in doubt what to believe—whether he has given them up because of his cowardice, or whether they have learned to despise and condemn the power of the barbarians.

[101] Consider the state of affairs in his empire. Who could hear the facts and not be spurred to war against him? Egypt was, it is true, in revolt even when Cyrus made his expedition; but her people nevertheless were living in continual fear lest the King might some day

Artaxerxes II,
ruled 404–
358 B.C.

Artaxerxes III,
ruled
358–38 B.C.

The King's
Peace of
386 B.C.

Failure of
Artaxerxes'
Egyptian
campaign of
351 B.C.

Affairs in
Caria

Mausolus,
ruler of Caria,
died 353 B.C.

lead an army in person and overcome the natural obstacles which, thanks to the Nile, their country presents, and all their military defences as well. But now this King has delivered them from that dread; for after he had brought together and fitted out the largest force he could possibly raise and marched against them, he retired from Egypt not only defeated, but laughed at and scorned as unfit either to be a king or to command an army. [102] Furthermore, Cyprus and Phoenicia and Cilicia, and that region from which the barbarians used to recruit their fleet, belonged at that time to the King, but now they have either revolted from him or are so involved in war and its attendant ills that none of these peoples is of any use to him; while to you, if you desire to make war upon him, they will be serviceable. [103] And mark also that Idrieus, who is the most prosperous of the present rulers of the mainland, must in the nature of things be more hostile to the interests of the King than are those who are making open war against him; verily he would be of all men the most perverse if he did not desire the dissolution of that empire which outrages his brother, which made war upon himself, and which at all times has never ceased to plot against him in its desire to be master of his person and of all his wealth. [104] It is through fear of these things that he is now constrained to pay court to the King and to send him much tribute every year; but if you should cross over to the mainland with an army, he would greet you with joy, in the belief that you were come to his relief; and you will also induce many of the other satraps to throw off the King's power if you promise them "freedom" and scatter broadcast over Asia that word which, when sown among the Hellenes, has broken up both our empire and that of the Lacedaemonians.

In a brief excursus on the Macedonian royal family Isocrates points out that an invasion of Persia

would be in keeping with the traditions of Philip's ancestors. He even discusses the successes achieved against the barbarians by the mythical founder of Philip's line, Heracles.

[114] I do not mean that you will be able to imitate Heracles in all his exploits; for even among the gods there are some who could not do that; but in the qualities of the spirit, in devotion to humanity, and in the good will which he cherished toward the Hellenes, you can come close to his purposes. And it lies in your power, if you will heed my words, to attain whatever glory you yourself desire; [115] for it is easier for you to rise from your present station and win the noblest fame than it has been to advance from the station which you inherited to the fame which is now yours. And mark that I am summoning you to an undertaking in which you will make expeditions, not with the barbarians against men who have given you no just cause, but with the Hellenes against those upon whom it is fitting that the descendants of Heracles should wage war. . . .

[119] From many considerations you ought to act in this way, but especially from the experiences of Jason. For he, without having achieved anything comparable to what you have done, won the highest renown, not from what he did, but from what he said; for he kept talking as if he intended to cross over to the continent and make war upon the King. [120] Now since Jason by use of words alone advanced himself so far, what opinion must we expect the world will have of you if you actually do this thing; above all, if you undertake to conquer the whole empire of the King, or, at any rate, to wrest from it a vast extent of territory and sever from it—to use a current phrase—"Asia from Cilicia to Sinope"; and if, furthermore, you undertake to establish cities in this region, and to settle in permanent abodes those who now, for lack of the daily necessities of life, are

Further com-
parison of
Philip to
Heracles

Jason, tyrant
of Pherac,
ruled circa
380–70 B.C.

Social unrest

wandering from place to place and committing outrages upon whomsoever they encounter? [121] If we do not stop these men from banding together, by providing sufficient livelihood for them, they will grow before we know it into so great a multitude as to be a terror no less to the Hellenes than to the barbarians. But we pay no heed to them; nay, we shut our eyes to the fact that a terrible menace which threatens us all alike is waxing day by day. [122] It is therefore the duty of a man who is high-minded, who is a lover of Hellas, who has a broader vision than the rest of the world, to employ these bands in a war against the barbarians, to strip from that empire all the territory which I defined a moment ago, to deliver these homeless wanderers from the ills by which they are afflicted and which they inflict upon others, to collect them into cities, and with these cities to fix the boundary of Hellas, making of them buffer states to shield us all. [123] For by doing this, you will not only make them prosperous, but you will put us all on a footing of security. If, however, you do not succeed in these objects, this much you will at any rate easily accomplish,—the liberation of the cities which are on the coast of Asia. . . .

[127] Nevertheless, since the others are so lacking in spirit, I think it is opportune for you to head the war against the King; and, while it is only natural for the other descendants of Heracles, and for men who are under the bonds of their polities and laws, to cleave fondly to that state in which they happen to dwell, it is your privilege, as one who has been blessed with untrammelled freedom, to consider all Hellas your fatherland, as did the founder of your race, and to be as ready to brave perils for her sake as for the things about which you are personally most concerned. [128] Perhaps there are those—men capable of nothing else but criticism—who will venture to rebuke me because I have chosen to

challenge you to the task of leading the expedition against the barbarians and of taking Hellas under your care, while I have passed over my own city. [129] Well, if I were trying to present this matter to any others before having broached it to my own country, which has thrice freed Hellas—twice from the barbarians and once from the Lacedaemonian yoke—I should confess my error. In truth, however, it will be found that I turned to Athens first of all and endeavoured to win her over to this cause with all the earnestness of which my nature is capable, but when I perceived that she cared less for what I said than for the ravings of the platform orators, I gave her up, although I did not abandon my efforts. [130] Wherefore I might justly be praised on every hand, because throughout my whole life I have constantly employed such powers as I possess in warring on the barbarians, in condemning those who opposed my plan, and in striving to arouse to action whomever I think will best be able to benefit the Hellenes in any way or to rob the barbarians of their present prosperity. [131] Consequently, I am now addressing myself to you, although I am not unaware that when I am proposing this course many will look at it askance, but that when you are actually carrying it out all will rejoice in it; for no one has had any part in what I have proposed, but when the benefits from it shall have been realized in fact, everyone without fail will look to have his portion.

[132] Consider what disgrace it is to sit idly and see Asia flourishing more than Europe and the barbarians enjoying a greater prosperity than the Hellenes; and, what is more, to see those who derive their power from Cyrus, who as a child was cast out by his mother on the public highway, addressed by the title of "The Great King," while the descendants of Heracles, who because of his virtue was exalted by his father to the rank of a god, are addressed by meaner titles than they. We must not

490 B.C.
Marathon480 B.C.
Salamis394 B.C.
CnidusThe prosper-
ity of Asia

allow this state of affairs to go on; no, we must change and reverse it entirely. [133] Rest assured that I should never have attempted to persuade you to undertake this at all had power and wealth been the only things which I saw would come of it; for I think that you already have more than enough of such things, and that any man is beyond measure insatiable who deliberately chooses the extreme hazard of either winning these prizes or losing his life. [134] No, it is not with a view to the acquisition of wealth and power that I urge this course, but in the belief that by means of these you will win a name of surpassing greatness and glory. Bear in mind that while we all possess bodies that are mortal, yet by virtue of good will and praise and good report and memory which keeps pace with the passage of time we partake of immortality—a boon for which we may well strive with all our might and suffer any hardship whatsoever. [135] You may observe that even common citizens of the best sort, who would exchange their lives for nothing else, are willing for the sake of winning glory to lay them down in battle; and, in general, that those who crave always an honour greater than they already possess are praised by all men, while those who are insatiable with regard to any other thing under the sun are looked upon as intemperate and mean. [136] But more important than all that I have said is the truth that wealth and positions of power often fall into the hands of our foes, whereas the good will of our fellow-countrymen and the other rewards which I have mentioned are possessions to which none can fall heir but our own children, and they alone. I could not, therefore, respect myself if I failed to advance these motives in urging you to make this expedition and wage war and brave its perils. . . .

Immortality

Conclusion

[149] Now if, after examining and reviewing all these admonitions in your own mind, you feel that my discourse is in any part rather weak and inadequate, set it down to

my age, which might well claim the indulgence of all; but if it is up to the standard of my former publications, I would have you believe that it was not my old age that conceived it but the divine will that prompted it, not out of solicitude for me, but because of its concern for Hellas, and because of its desire to deliver her out of her present distress and to crown you with a glory far greater than you now possess. [150] I think that you are not unaware in what manner the gods order the affairs of mortals: for not with their own hands do they deal out the blessings and curses that befall us; rather they inspire in each of us such a state of mind [151] that good or ill, as the case may be, is visited upon us through one another. For example, it may be that even now the gods have assigned to me the task of speech while to you they allot the task of action, considering that you will be the best master in that province, while in the field of speech I might prove least irksome to my hearers. Indeed, I believe that even your past achievements would never have reached such magnitude had not one of the gods helped you to succeed; and I believe he did so, [152] not that you might spend your whole life warring upon the barbarians in Europe alone, but that, having been trained and having gained experience and come to know your own powers in these campaigns, you might set your heart upon the course which I have urged upon you. It were therefore shameful, now that fortune nobly leads the way, to lag behind and refuse to follow whither she desires to lead you forward.

[153] It is my belief that, while you ought to honour everyone who has any praise for your past accomplishments, you ought to consider that those laud you in the noblest terms who judge your nature capable of even greater triumphs, and not those whose discourse has gratified you for the moment only, but those who will cause future generations to admire your achievements

beyond the deeds of any man of the generations that are past. I would like to say many things in this strain, but I am not able; the reason why, I have stated more often than I ought.

[154] It remains, then, to summarize what I have said in this discourse, in order that you may see in the smallest compass the substance of my counsels. I assert that it is incumbent upon you to work for the good of the Hellenes, to reign as king over the Macedonians, and to extend your power over the greatest possible number of the barbarians. For if you do these things, all men will be grateful to you: the Hellenes for your kindness to them; the Macedonians if you reign over them, not like a tyrant, but like a king; and the rest of the nations, if by your hands they are delivered from barbaric despotism and are brought under the protection of Hellas.

[155] How well this discourse has been composed with respect to appropriateness and finish of style is a question which it is fair to ask my hearers to answer; but that no one could give you better advice than this, or advice more suited to the present situation—of this I believe that I am well assured.