

Filip I

I know that all men are accustomed to be more grateful to those who praise them than to those who give them counsel, especially if one offers his advice unbidden. And if I had not on a former occasion given you with most kindly intent such counsel as I believed would lead to a course of action worthy of one in your position, perhaps even now I should not be undertaking to declare my view concerning what I has happened to you. [2] But since I then did decide to concern myself your affairs, in the interests of my own state and of the other Greeks as well, I should be ashamed if, when comparatively unimportant things were the issue, I am known to have offered you advice, yet now I should have nothing to say concerning more urgent matters, particularly since I realize that in the former case your reputation alone was at stake, whereas at present it is your personal safety, which you have been thought to esteem too lightly by all who heard the abusive reproaches directed against you. [3] In truth there is no one who has not condemned you as being more reckless in assuming risks than is becoming to a king, and as caring more for men's praise of your courage than for the general welfare. For it is equally disgraceful, when your enemies threaten on every side, not to prove yourself superior to all the rest, and, when no urgent need has arisen, to hurl yourself into combats of such a kind that, if you succeeded, you would have accomplished nothing of importance, but if you lost your life, you would have destroyed all your present good fortune. [4] Not every death in war must be regarded as honorable; on the contrary, although when death is incurred for fatherland, for parents, and for children it is worthy of praise, yet when it brings harm to all of these and tarnishes the brilliance of past successes, it should be thought disgraceful and should be avoided as being the cause of great discredit. [5] I think that you would profitably imitate the fashion in which our city-states conduct the business of warfare. They all are accustomed, when they send forth an army, to take measures to secure the safety of the government and of the authority which is to decide what is to be done in the emergency. In consequence, if a single mischance befalls, their power is not also wholly destroyed; on the contrary, they can sustain many misfortunes and again recover their strength. [6] This principle you too should take into consideration, and consider no blessing more important than your safety, in order that you may not only duly make use of the victories which may be yours but also may rectify the mischances that may befall you. You might observe that the Lacedaemonians also are extremely solicitous for the safety of their kings, and appoint the most distinguished of the citizens as their bodyguards, and that for them it is a greater disgrace to suffer the kings to meet death than to throw away their shields. [7] And surely you are not unaware of what happened to Xerxes when

he wished to enslave the Greeks and to Cyrus when he laid claim to the kingdom. Thus Xerxes, although he had suffered defeats and calamities of such magnitude the like of which have never been known to befall other kings, because he preserved his life, not only retained his throne and handed it over to his children, but also so administered Asia that it was no less formidable to the Greeks than before. [8] Cyrus, however, after he had conquered all the military might of the king, would have gained mastery of the throne had it not been for his rashness, which caused him not only to forfeit that mighty empire, but brought his followers into extreme danger. And I could mention very many men who, becoming commanders of great armies, because they were slain before they need have died, brought destruction at the same time upon countless numbers of their followers. [9]

Bearing these examples in mind, you should not honor that courage which accompanies heedless folly and unseasonable ambition, nor, when so many hazards which are inherent in monarchy are at hand, should you devise for yourself still others that bring no glory and belong to the common soldier; nor should you vie with those who wish to escape from an unhappy existence or who rashly incur danger in the hope of a higher wage; [10] nor should you desire such glory as many, both Greeks and barbarians, obtain, but rather that exalted renown which you alone of living men could win. Nor should you be enamored of such virtues as even ignoble men share, but only of those of which no base person may partake; [11] nor wage inglorious and difficult wars when honorable and easy ones are possible, nor those which will cause grief and anxiety to your closest friends and arouse great hope in your enemies, as even now you have done. Nay, as to the barbarians with whom you are now waging war, it will suffice you to gain the mastery over them only so far as to secure the safety of your own territory, but the king who is now called Great you will attempt to overthrow, that you may both enhance your own renown and may point out to the Greek world who the enemy is against whom they should wage war. [12]

I should have greatly preferred to send you this letter before your campaign in order that, had you heeded my advice, you might not have incurred so great danger, or if you had rejected it, I should not now seem to be advising that same caution which has already, because of the wound you received, been approved by all; but, instead, your misfortune would be bearing witness to the truth of what I had said about the matter. [13]

Although I have much more to say, because of the nature of the subject, I will cease; for I think that you and the ablest of your companions will readily add as much as you wish to what I have

said. Besides, I fear my advice may be inopportune; for even now I have unawares gradually drifted beyond the due proportions of a letter and run into a lengthy discourse. [14]

Nevertheless, although this is the case, I must not omit discussion of the affairs of the city of Athens; on the contrary, I must try to urge you to cultivate friendly relations and intimacy with her. For I think there are many who report to you and tell you not only the most disparaging of the things said of you among us, but also add their own inventions; but it is not reasonable for you to pay any attention to these persons. [15] For you would in fact be acting inconsistently if you should find fault with our people for lending a ready ear to your calumniators, but yourself should be found giving credence to those who practise this art and should not perceive that the more easily influenced by nobodies such persons declare our city to be, the better suited to your ends they prove it. For if those who are powerless to be of any service to Athens can accomplish by words alone what they wish, surely it is right to expect that you, who are able in very deed to confer upon her the greatest benefits, would not fail to gain from us anything whatever. [16]

To the bitter accusers of our city I think I should place in contrast those who say that the very opposite is true, that is, those who assert that she has done no wrong at all, whether great or small. For my part, I would not make any such claim; for I should be ashamed if, while men in general do not regard even the gods as blameless, I should dare to affirm that our city had never transgressed at all. [17] Nevertheless, this I can say of Athens—that you could not find a city more useful to all the Greeks and to your enterprises; and to this fact you should give your special attention. For not only as your ally would she bring about many advantages to you, but even if she merely was believed to be on friendly terms with you. [18] For you might then more easily keep in subjection those who are now under your sway, if they should have no refuge, and of the barbarians you could more quickly conquer any you should wish. Yet is there any reason why you should not eagerly grasp at a relationship of goodwill such that you will hold securely not only your present dominion, but also without risk acquire another great one? [19] I marvel that so many who maintain great forces hire mercenary armies and expend so much money on them, although they know that such help has been the cause of greater injury than of salvation to those who relied upon them, and have made no effort to gain the friendship of a city which possesses such power that it has ere now often saved every Hellenic state and indeed all Greece. [20] Consider, too, that to many you appear to have been well advised because your treatment of the Thessalians has been just and advantageous to them, although they are a people not easy to handle, but high-spirited and seditious. You should, therefore, endeavor to show

yourself equally prudent towards us also, knowing as you do that, while the Thessalians have the territory next to you, it is we who are next to you in strength and influence, and that is what you should seek in every way to win for yourself. [21] For it is a much greater glory to capture the goodwill of cities than their walls; for achievements like the latter not only engender ill-will, but men attribute the credit for them to your armies; yet if you are able to win friendships and goodwill, all will praise the wisdom shown by you. [22]

You may well believe me in what I have said concerning Athens; for you will find that I have not been accustomed to flatter her in my discourses; on the contrary, more than anyone else I have censured her; nor am I highly esteemed by the masses or by those who form their opinions offhand, but, like yourself, I am misunderstood and disliked by them. But we are dissimilar in this, that they are thus disposed toward you because of your power and prosperity, but toward me because I lay claim to a wisdom greater than their own, and they see that more people wish to converse with me than with themselves. [23] I could wish that it were equally easy for us both to dispel the prejudice in which we are held by these; but as it is, you will put an end to it without difficulty if you wish, but I must be content with the standing I now have because of my old age and for many other reasons. [24]

I know not what more I need to say, except this only—that it will be a fine thing for you to entrust your royal power and your existing prosperity into the keeping of the goodwill of the Hellenic race.

Filip II

I have discussed with Antipater the course which is expedient for our city and for you, at sufficient length, I am convinced; but I wished to write to you also regarding the action which I think should be taken after the conclusion of peace, and while this advice is similar to that in my discourse, it is, however, expressed much more concisely. [2]

At that time, you recall, I counselled you that, after you had reconciled our city with Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, you should bring all the Greeks into concord, as I was of opinion that if you should persuade the principal cities to be favorably inclined to such a course, the others also would quickly follow. At that time, however, the state of affairs was different, and now it has come to pass that the need of persuasion no longer exists; for on account of the battle which has taken place, all are compelled to be prudent and to desire that which they surmise you wish to do and to say, namely, that they must desist from the madness and the spirit of aggrandizement,

which they were wont to display in their relations with each other, and must carry the war into Asia. [3] Many inquire of me whether I advised you to make the expedition against the barbarians or whether it was your idea and I concurred. I reply that I do not know for certain, since before then I had not been acquainted with you, but that I supposed that you had reached a decision in this matter and that I in my speech had fallen, with your desires. On hearing this, all entreated me to encourage you and to exhort you to hold fast to this same resolution, since they believe that no achievement could be more glorious, more useful to the Greeks, or more timely than this will be. [4]

If I possessed the same vigor which I formerly had and were not utterly spent with years, I should not be speaking with you by letter, but in your presence should myself be spurring and summoning you to undertake these tasks. But even as it is, I do exhort you, as best I can, not to put these matters aside until you bring them to a successful conclusion. To have an insatiate desire for anything else in the world is ignoble—for moderation is generally esteemed—but to set the heart upon a glory that is great and honorable, and never to be satiated with it, befits those men who have far excelled all others. And that is true of you. [5] Be assured that a glory unsurpassable and worthy of the deeds you have done in the past will be yours when you shall compel the barbarians—all but those who have fought on your side—to be serfs of the Greeks, and when you shall force the king who is now called Great to do whatever you command. For then will naught be left for you except to become a god. And to accomplish all this from your present status is much easier for you than it was for you to advance to the power and renown you now possess from the kingship which you had in the beginning. [6]

I am grateful to my old age for this reason alone, because it has prolonged my life to this moment, so that the dreams of my youth, which I attempted to commit to writing both in my Panegyricus and in the discourse which was sent to you, I am now seeing in part already coming to fulfillment through your achievements and in part I have hopes of their future realization.