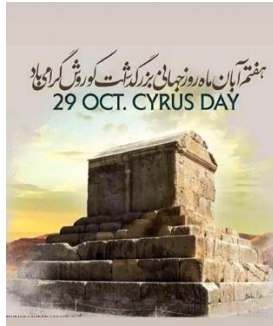


*Authors: Janan Moein & Arian Nazari*

*Date: October 28, 2020*



Cyrus The Great also called Cyrus II was born between 590 and 580 BCE in Fars, Iran, and was the leader of the Achamedian Empire, which is arguably the most expansive era of the greater Persian Empire. He was born into a family with an extensive line of leaders, his mother Mandane being the daughter of Astyages, the leader of the Median Empire, and his father being Cambyses who was a local prince. It is widely believed that Astyages had a dream one night that the baby Cyrus would grow up to overthrow him, and thus he ordered the infant to be slain. His chief advisor however chose to give the baby to a local shepherd who took care of him until he turned ten. At the age of ten, Astyages rediscovered his grandson, Cyrus who was exhibiting outstanding qualities. Astyages was impressed by his grandson and after some persuasion agreed to allow him to live, in spite of the dream he had about the boy ten years earlier. Once Cyrus reached manhood he revolted against his grandfather, Astyages, and forced his surrender in 550 BC. Cyrus wanted to consolidate the Median Empire and expand their territory. He began by conquering the Lydian empire, which is modern-day Turkey. He marched into Sardis the capital city of the Lydians and 546 BC taking control of many of the Ionian Greek cities on the Aegean coast. Next Cyrus sought to conquer the Babylonian Empire, whose population was dissatisfied with their malevolent leader Nabonidus. In October 539 BC the greatest city of the Ancient world was conquered by Cyrus The Great. In the Bible (e.g., Ezra 1:1–4), Cyrus is famous for freeing the Jewish captives in Babylonia and allowing them to return to their homeland. Cyrus was also tolerant of the Babylonians and others. The capture of Babylonia not only gave Cyrus control of Mesopotamia but also Syria and Palestine which had recently been conquered by the late Babylonians. Cyrus continued his never-ending conquest into Central Asia, Cyrus was known to tolerate all of his conquered subjects and allow them to practice their own religions and customs without persecution, meanwhile electing local officials to govern their people. The many states that were formed in the Achaemenid Empire were called Satraps. Cyrus is known to have written the first Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the Cyrus Cylinder. The Cylinder tells the story of the Persian conquest of Babylon and how the conquered were treated justly by Cyrus, with the Jews being allowed to return to their homeland and the Babylonians being given some level of autonomy. This treatment was unheard of in ancient times and showed the pioneering and benevolent outlook Cyrus had 2,500 years ago. Cyrus is believed to have died in modern-day Uzbekistan along the Syr Darya river fighting local nomads. He defeated a nomadic group East of the Caspian Sea named the Massegetai, who were of Scythian origin. Cyrus took the leader's son, Spargapises, as captive and the son committed suicide. The leader of the Massegetai was a woman named Tormyris who upon hearing of her son's death beheaded Cyrus the Great in battle.