

# Speech as xerxes

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Greetings, subjects. My reign was sufficient and completely beneficial to the Persian society, I deserve this power as even Herodetus the Greek writer said with " among all these immense numbers there was not a man who, for stature and noble bearing, was more worthy than Xerxes to wield so vast a power. I deserved to take the throne, and it was Ahuramazda's will. Other sons of Darius there were, but thus unto Ahura-Mazda was the desire - Darius my father made me the greatest after himself. When my father Darius went away from the throne, by the will of Ahura-Mazda I became king on my fathers throne.

I am of royal decent and Achmaenid blood runs through me as I am Xerxes, the great king, king of kings, king of lands, containing many men, king in this great earth far and wide, son of Darius the king, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of the Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan seed. I have legitimate reason to access the throne. Greek writers have depicted me as an impetuous, arrogant and sadistic madman. But this is the view of a Greek, not only are the Greeks inferior to me but they are also not going to give an accurate description, and are of course going to be bias. I destroyed parts of their beloved homeland so their views of me can be somewhat inaccurate because of their anger towards me. Greek writers have spoken of me as having negative aspects, but my inscriptions throughout my kingdom say otherwise as I take the good virtues that have been bestowed upon me by Ahura-Mazda. I took care of the revolts in both Egypt and Babylonia swiftly and successfully, with proper actions undertaken to teach the inhabitants a lesson.

Egypt lost the privilege of self-government and local autonomy, and even though the Babylonians revolted twice because the first punishment wasn't as harsh, the second time they revolted they lost their Gods and in effect this stopped the revolts in the future. Greek writers described my actions towards the revolts as trying to crush their religions without thought, but they failed to mention that it is general practice of rulers in dealing with rebellious countries to destroy sanctuaries. As said in an inscription in Persepolis, when my father Darius went away from the throne, I became king on his throne by the grace of Ahuramazda. After I became king, I finished what had been done by my father, and I added other works. The palace through my building program became twice as big as it was in Darius's reign, there was an innovative design shown in Persepolis with the staircases for example. The palace was not a permanent residential place, but rather an administrative centre and focus for religious ritual with there also being inscriptions that give details of religion. For the war on Greece, the correct decision was made that they must be punished for their assistance in the Ionians revolt so I made preparations for invasion over 4 years.

First I decided to take diplomatic measures, so I sent out envoys to demand earth and water from the Greeks. But because Athens and Sparta were my target, I decided best not to ask for their submission but to just punish them and lay the assault on them. I demanded for my subjects of the provinces to send men for the army I was sending, this army was the largest in recorded history said by Herodotus and further determined by modern historians. I decided that the soldiers of my army needed easier movement, so there was a bridge at Hellespont built over the years in preparation. There was the

matter of supplies and food for the many warriors that would travel to Greece, so supply depots were set up for easy access of supplies while travelling or waiting. I then entrusted the Egyptians with the task to make the materials to build a bridge across the Strymon River, the bridge was close to the supply depot at Eion. My father previously sent his ships to Greece unaware of the weather conditions, this resulted in a storm sinking the ships.

I learnt from this mistake and built a canal at Mt Athos so the Persian ships could safely pass through. The attack on Greece began at Thermopylae and the cowards hid in the mountains not willing to fight with honor. It was then by the will of Ahura-Mazda that a Greek called Ephialtes came to me and spoke of a mountain pass that allowed us to surround the Greeks and crush their inferior soldiers, Herodotus told the story of the Battle of Thermopylae. After this victory I was then deceived by a Greek who told me that the Greeks were fleeing, so the fleet was sent to Salamis and was ambushed unfairly. It was at this defeat I thought it best to retreat and protect the bridges which was the smarter decision in the situation, after this decision was made I left Mardonius in command of the forces and returned to Persia. To carry out my father's legacy I inherited his foreign policy in which I was expected to further expand the Persian empire. The three things I was required to do through the foreign policy was to punish the Greeks, further expand empire and to gain personal glory as my predecessors had done.

Through the Greek campaign I accomplished the task that was inherited, I punished the Athenians and burnt their city so my real goal was achieved, I also further expanded the empire to the East with the addition of provinces such as Thrace and Macedonia and I also added territory in the most distant

Eastern provinces. Through the building program personal glory was in an obvious way achieved, and the palace in Persepolis showed this and left an impression even after my reign finished. It was also said by J. L O'Neil that I wasn't interested in military affairs and preferred building activities.

Religious policy was properly taken out, as said in an inscription written by myself is that I copied the religion of my father Darius who recognised Ahuramazda as the supreme creator or God. More importantly, I recognise that I was king through the favor of Ahuramazda which was also said in an inscription. Doing this made religion an important political dimension and through this I was an instrument of Ahura-Mazda.

I strengthened the religion shown in the " daeva" inscription which eliminated other Gods and made the " demon" Gods no longer worshipped. I was successful in what was expected of me as a Persian ruler, I demonstrated that I was fit to rule the empire and I continued my fathers legacy. Inscriptions throughout Persia said that even after the retreat from Greece my subjects still respected me and thought of me as a great king, showing that the loss did not damage Persian society.