

Cambridge University Press

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Muhammad A. Dandamaev and Vladimir G. Lukonin

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MUHAMMAD A. DANDAMAEV
and VLADIMIR G. LUKONIN

English edition by Philip L. Kohl
with the assistance of D. J. Dadson



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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 1989
Reprinted 1994
First paperback edition 2004

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Dandamaev, M. A.

The culture and social institutions of ancient Iran.

Translation of: Kul'tura i ekonomika Drevnego Irana.

Bibliography.

Includes index.

I. Iran – Civilization – To 640.

I. Lukonin, Vladimir Grigor'evich. II. Kohl, Philip L., 1946–

III. Dadson, D. J. IV. Title.

DS266.D2613 1988 935 87-21841

ISBN 0 521 32107 7 hardback

ISBN 0 521 61191 1 paperback

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FOREWORD

PHILIP L. KOHL

Dr Muhammad A. Dandamaev asked me to write the foreword to the English edition of this book. This is both an honor and a serious obligation since the history of the publication is at once complex and sad. The original translation was undertaken by Mr Dana J. Dadson who completed a rough draft of the entire book except for the sections entitled "The Culture of the Medes" (pp. 62–89), "Review of Written Sources" (pp. 368–98), and "The Most Important Secondary Literature" (pp. 399–401). Dr Dandamaev informed me of Mr Dadson's work after he learned that I was also planning a translation. I contacted Mr Dadson in December 1983, and we agreed that he would complete the preliminary translation and I would then edit and polish his text for publication. Regrettably Mr Dadson died unexpectedly in June 1984 without completing his translation. The three remaining sections were therefore translated initially by his associate, Mr Paul Gallagher.

Mr Dadson's translation, though rough, was meticulously accurate, and his contribution to this final English edition was immense. The publication simply might never have appeared had it not been for his efforts.

Sadly, another tragedy was to come. As Dr Dandamaev wrote to me: "While the English publication of this work is a great personal honor and I am grateful to Cambridge University Press for undertaking the difficult task of its preparation, the book, unfortunately, will appear as an orphan. At the end of August, 1984 I discussed with V. G. Lukonin plans for the English edition of our collaborative work. He was very enthusiastic about this translation and had planned to rewrite several sections of the book. However, his untimely death on 10 September 1984 did not allow him even to begin this work.

The original Russian edition of the book, which appeared in 1980, basically used the sources and literature which had been published or made available by the end of 1976. A great quantity of various cuneiform

texts, many books, and dozens of articles and archaeological reports have appeared during the last decade which have forced me to rewrite the book and introduce a significant number of additions. Thus, this current edition represents a revision taking into full account all the publications of texts, archaeological sources, and the secondary literature, which I had received at the time of correcting the translation in 1985 and the beginning of 1986. I. N. Medvedskaya rendered tremendous assistance in the revision of the sections on the archaeology of Iran and on Median culture, which had originally been written by V. G. Lukonin; she checked all this material, removed any mistakes, and inserted into the text any necessary changes which were required to take into account our current understanding of the archaeology of Iran from the 12th to the 7th centuries B.C.. In certain cases I. N. Medvedskaya also utilized materials from unfinished works of V. G. Lukonin, inserting them into different parts of the book. Lukonin had intended to select new illustrations for the English edition, and, after his death, I. N. Medvedskaya partially completed this task, suggesting several new illustrations. Many prominent Western scholars greatly assisted us in the preparation of this study. Especially important were the tireless support and criticism of E. Bickerman and R. Ghirshman, both of whom Lukonin and I had met on several occasions and with whom we had corresponded for over two decades until their deaths."

It is also relevant to note here that diacritical marks appear only for the translation of terms, and simplified spellings, which are customary in the historical literature written in English, are used in the remaining cases (in the spelling of personal names, etc.). Additions necessary for clarifying translations of ancient texts are placed in round brackets, while restorations of damaged texts are placed in square brackets. Wellesley College provided funding for the inputting of Mr Dadson's translation into the College's computer system. It also supported the considerable mailing expenses of preliminary and secondary drafts between Wellesley and Leningrad.

Despite the sadnesses that have attended the English edition of this work, I believe that the final product fully justifies the efforts of all those involved. The work will be considered a primary source not only for our understanding of Achaemenid Iran but also for any comparative evaluation of early empires. The empire founded by Cyrus II represented both the culmination of a long series of ancient Near Eastern empires – stretching at least as far back as the Akkadian empire, founded by Sargon I – and a qualitatively more extensive and heterogeneous multi-ethnic state than any that had gone before. How the Persians prevailed for over two hundred years, how they ruled and organized a state that stretched from the Nile to northwestern India, are questions explicitly addressed in

this study. They are also questions that invite comparisons with other pre-industrial empires.

I hope too that historians, anthropologists and archaeologists interested in the formation of such early complex empires as those of Han China, the Mesoamerican Aztecs or Andean Incas, will find this structural analysis of ancient Iranian social institutions a rich source for drawing comparisons and contrasts. The Achaemenids maintained political control through a variety of means which relied, in part, on manipulating pre-existing systems of writing and monetary and pricing mechanisms. Some early empires lacked comparably developed institutions but also succeeded in establishing control over extensive territories and disparate peoples. At what cost was such success achieved, and how might it be reflected in differences between the compositions of their armies and that of the Achaemenids or their policies of ethnic and religious tolerance/suppression relative to those of the Achaemenids? Such questions could be addressed after consideration of the rich structural analyses presented in this highly detailed study.

Unquestionably, the book represents a monumental contribution to our understanding of ancient Iran and the Achaemenid state. It is safe to assume that it will be accorded a most deserved place alongside Olmstead's *History of the Persian Empire* and other major syntheses of ancient Iran in contemporary scholarship. I also hope that specialists in other fields will find it useful as a primary reference work and source for comparison. Illustrative of the best of current Soviet scholarship on the ancient Near East, *The Culture and Social Institutions of Ancient Iran* deserves a broad audience in the West. I feel fortunate to have helped in its preparation.

AUTHORS' PREFACE

Iran is a country with an ancient and highly developed civilization. Its inhabitants were among the first on the path of historical progress, having already developed their own written language and state formations in the early third millennium B.C. Despite an historical destiny that has been far from painless, the people of Iran have retained and developed their culture without interruption over the course of many millennia, exerting favorable influence on neighboring and distant countries and, in turn, borrowing the achievements of these same societies.

Interest in Iran's past has always been great in the Soviet Union, both among scholars and a broad range of readers. This interest can easily be explained by the fact that the history of Iran from the earliest times has been inseparably linked with that of vast regions of the Soviet Union, most particularly with Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the south Russian steppes. Cultural contacts and trading relations, which were almost never interrupted in antiquity, have been especially fruitful.

During the past decades many works devoted to the ancient history and cultures of Iran have been published in the USSR, Iran and elsewhere. The majority are of a general nature, setting forth the history of Iran from the most ancient times to the tenth century A.D. A few books, on the other hand, have examined relatively restricted historical periods. Hitherto the book by the American orientalist A. T. Olmstead, *The History of the Persian Empire*, completed in 1943, published posthumously in 1948, and subsequently repeatedly reprinted without alteration, has been the most detailed investigation of the history and culture of ancient Iran. However, thousands of written sources have been brought into scholarly circulation since Olmstead's book first appeared. Many of these texts from Iran, Babylonia, Egypt and other provinces of the Persian Empire, remain incompletely studied and published, and they are treated only in the most general terms in other existing works on the early history of Iran.

Our sources for ancient Iran are also continuously augmented by the

intensive archaeological excavations being conducted in many regions of the country. The results of this work have been reported in hundreds of publications scattered through many journals.

The authors of the present book, which is devoted to the culture and social institutions of Iran from the appearance of the Iranian tribes on the Iranian plateau until the end of the Achaemenid period (the eleventh to the fourth centuries B.C.), have attempted to recreate an integral picture of the history of the Medes and the Persians based on archaeological remains, the rich cuneiform archives, and other sources. The volume contains the results of considerable primary research and its essential aim is to elucidate basic problems of the culture and economic life of ancient Iran.

Sources and literature which were published before the end of 1976 and were accessible to the authors have been utilized extensively, but it has been possible to consider later materials only selectively. Text references are provided in abbreviated form only, as full details of all publications cited are contained in the List of works cited. Parentheses are used to provide additions made for the sake of clarity in the translation of texts, while square brackets are used for the restoration of a text which has been partially destroyed.

Many Soviet and foreign scholars have willingly assisted the authors by informing them of new discoveries of archaeological remains and texts well in advance of their publication. During trips to Iran the authors have enjoyed the unfailing hospitality of their Iranian colleagues and authorities and have had the opportunity to study the most important remains of the ancient cultures directly. The authors express their profound gratitude to those who generously shared their knowledge with them and who encouraged the writing of this book.

The sections entitled "Archaeology in the 'Iron Age'," "Median Culture" and "Achaemenid Art" were written by V. G. Lukonin, whose materials have also been used in the sections entitled "Pasargadae" and "Persepolis." He also selected all the illustrations. The remaining portions were written by Dandamaev. E. A. Grantovsky and V. A. Livshits made valuable observations on the manuscript which allowed us to avoid some errors.