

# Kunderewicz, Cezary

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"Rabstvo v Vavilonii VII-IV vv. do n.e. (626-331 gg.)", M. A. Dandamayev, Moscow 1974 : [recenzja]

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as might appear from his epigrams. Love for a boy is simply a literary motif. The poet, who, contrary to Fraser's opinion, was not in the habit of "baring his heart" expresses in his verses what he would like to write about, and not what he really felt. This principle could be applied to many other questions as well, including Callimachus's attitude to religion.

Thus one could take up a number of points with the author of *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, but this does not alter the fact that it is a book that will be indispensable to all students of hellenistic culture, useful, too, because of its extensive footnotes, its splendid, analytic index, an undoubtedly great work which the author dedicates, with a beautiful tribute, ΦΙΛΟΙΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΥΣΙΝ, whose names, given in the *Preface* and often cited in the footnotes, are well known to every historian of ancient culture who has worked in Alexandria in the second half of the 20th century.

[Warszawa]

*Anna Świderek*

M. A. Dandamayev, *Rabstvo v Vavilonii VII-IV vv. do n.e.* (626-331 gg.) [Slavery in Babylonia in the 7th-4th Centuries B.C. (the years 626-331)], Moscow, 1974, 493 p.

The author considers his work as a preliminary study of the social and economic structure of Babylonian society. His purpose was to collect and thoroughly investigate the evidence contained in the documents from the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenian periods and for this reason he had transcribed and translated in Russian all cuneiform documents from the 11th to the 2nd centuries B.C. known and accessible to him. After a foreword (pp. 3-6) follows a short survey of the sources (pp. 7-19) and more important Assyriological studies (pp. 19-22). The introductory part of the book ends with a concise description of social and economic situation in Babylonia in the period in question (pp. 23-43). In the following chapters the author presents a detailed analysis of the sources. The Chapter One is devoted to the problem of slaves owned by private persons (pp. 44-272), the second treats of the temple slavery (pp. 273-324), the third—of the royal slaves (pp. 325-340), the fourth—of the dependent social groups (defined as *glebae adscripti*, pp. 341-379). Then the author summarizes his conclusions (pp. 380-390). In an appendix are given the transliterations of selected texts (pp. 391-427). The book contains also a copious bibliography (pp. 428-444), an index of transcribed and translated documents (p. 445), an index of documents translated only (p. 446), an imposing general index of utilized sources (pp. 447-476), an English summary, (pp. 477-486), the addenda (p. 487) and the table of contents in Russian (pp. 488-490) and in English (pp. 490-493).

After a very patient and laborious analysis of the sources the author came to the conclusions which generally correspond to the conclusions reached by I. Men-

delsohn in *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (1949). The number of Neo-Babylonian citizens who had slaves was relatively small. The free population outnumbered the slaves by far. The slaves could not easily become freemen. The slaves were in great part occupied in domestic service. In the agriculture and in the handicraft industry the slave labour was used on a limited scale and the free labour dominated. The labour of the *glebae adscripti* (dependants of private individuals or bodies) played an important role in the economy. The slaves did not constitute a homogeneous social class. Among them were tenant-farmers who hired workers, the slave-owners and money-lenders. The slave could have a family, immovables and movables and work on his own account. He was considered to be both subject and object in legal relationships. He could buy movables and real estates, sell his possessions, accept the property as a pledge, buy and sell other slaves, hire and litigate with free persons. The slaves who possessed the means of production (only by right of *peculium*) paid to their masters a quit-rent in addition to a percentage of income from their business. There were also slaves who had no possessions and worked under supervision of their masters. Between these categories of slaves there was in common that all the slaves were the property of their masters and could be sold. The slavery was taken for granted even by the slaves themselves. There were no great organized revolts of the slaves. They sometimes protested against poor living conditions mainly by running away.

The author criticizes a current opinion in the Soviet Orientalist literature that "the Ancient Near Eastern Societies present, as a whole, the earliest stages of slave society". In the English summary his opinion is expressed as follows: "...slavery never reached in Babylonia such a degree of development that one could speak about slave labour having the leading role in society. Slave labour was only one of several types of forced labour and, besides, not always the most considerable according to its role. In other words, the slaves constituted only a part of the dependent persons deprived of property in the means of production and exploited by extra-economic means i.e. by direct coercion. The problem whether the social structure of Lower Mesopotamia in first millenium B.C. represents a quite specific way of development of the slave economy...or the same type of slave economy existed also in some other countries, is to be studied with the help of comparative historical investigations of various ancient societies". The summary ends with a general observation that, nevertheless: "In the Ancient East the economics and society itself were unthinkable without slavery which was an important part of economic and social structure". Here one might quote the opinion of another Soviet scholar, G. A. Melikishvili. In an English summary of his essay in the *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 2, 1975, p. 45, one reads: "The whole configuration of the ancient Near Eastern societies is best defined as characteristic not of 'slaves' but of 'pre-feudal' society".

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