

***Qazaqliq, or Ambitious Brigandage, and the Formation of the Qazaqs: State and Identity in Post-Mongol Central Eurasia.*** Joo-Yup Lee. Brill. 2016. 238 pp. (ISBN-13: 9789004306486).

This book by the Canadian Turkologist Joo-Yup Lee is devoted to the origins of one of the largest Turkic peoples of the modern world. The Kazakhs are the biggest ethnic group in the 9th largest state in the world, Kazakhstan. This people gave the name to their country. However, it also happens in history that the land gives its name to the people inhabiting it. A country's name can be just a geographical term (Austria, America, Spain, the Netherlands, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Ukraine), or can also originate from the name of a previous population, which was not necessarily direct, or the only ancestor of the modern inhabitants (Britain, Romania, France, Bulgaria). Sometimes the self-name (endonym) of the people and the name under which the neighboring peoples know it can be completely different: gypsies (self-names: *Romany*, or *Roma*), Finns (*suomalaiset*), Hungarians (*magyarok*), or Albanians (*shqiptarët*).

In the names of peoples, both designated by neighbors and self-names, different stages of political and ethno-linguistic history can be reflected. The most important event, of course, is the creation of statehood. An interesting example is Syria. The ancient country of Assyria gave the name to this historical region. The Semitic tribes, mainly the Arameans, used to inhabit it, and their language was a means of communication throughout the Middle East from the middle of the second millennium B.C. up to the early Middle Ages. About 17% of the Dead Sea Scrolls that were a source of the Old and New Testaments, including some books of the Old Testament, were written in Aramaic language. With the adoption of Christianity, the Arameans began to call their language Syrian (or Syriac), and after the spread of Islam and Arabization, the population of Syria became predominantly Arabic in language and national consciousness. The emergence of national Arab states after the First World War gave impetus to Syrian nationalism. Today, the Syrians are an Arab-speaking Muslim people, and what is very interesting is that a part of the Christian Arameans have begun to be called Assyrians, returning to the earliest name of the country and people. Changes of language, faith and political fate have been reflected in the names of the country's inhabitants.

A similar linguistic-historical analysis of the term *Qazaq* is the basis of the research by the author of the book under review. This research is a guiding thread for studying the early ethnic history of the Kazakh people. At the same time, the focus on studying the historical forms of the term *Qazaq* does not narrow the geographical scope of the study to the limits of the habitats of the Kazakh ethnos, but raises the importance of the book to the study of common problems of statehood and national identity in the wide space of western Eurasia.

The principal conceptual frame of the book is based on the fact that clanship was the foundation of the social organization of the nomadic communities of Eurasia, and the clans themselves were more tightly connected by their intra-clan ties than the flexible framework of inter-clan discipline. This gave the clan units of the tribal confederation considerable freedom in relation to the centralization efforts of emerging imperial structures. The resistance of certain clans to central government on the steppe often led to the emergence of new state formations. The book thoroughly explores the socio-political phenomenon of the withdrawal of individual groups of nomads led by a charismatic clan leader from the inter-clan political structure, the tribal confederation. This phenomenon was called *Qazaqliq*, or vagabondage. If a new independent core group could provide leadership in organizing trophy campaigns, it would attract new clans and warriors and could lead to the emergence of a new state (p. 48). According to the author, the rise of these nomadic freebooters to statehood passes through three stages: the breakaway of the politically ambitious clan leader, the organization of successful military campaigns against nomad neighbors and residents of neighboring agricultural regions, and the creation of new state structures (pp. 2, 7, 48-49, 57).

The author of the book gives numerous examples of such centrifugal phenomena in the history of Eurasia, which led to the formation of the nomadic states of the Rourans (52), the Tiele tribes (53), the Ashina Turks (pp. 53-54), the Shatuo Turks (p. 55), and the Qara-Khitai state (p. 54). He discerns a nomadic vagabondage in the founding story of almost all the nomadic empires of the Eurasian steppes (p. 61). At the same time, the author also provides a rationale for such consecutive phases of this phenomenon. He believes that the most important condition for the creation and survival of nomadic states and empires is the successful organization of raids against the agricultural population and the effective management of booty distribution. Violation of these conditions leads to the decline of the nomadic state (pp. 55, 57). An important theoretical significance of the book is also that the author draws a clear line between the methodological basis of Soviet historiography of the nomadic peoples of Eurasia and his own

approach. He reasonably criticizes the ideologically imposed position of Soviet historiography about the autochthony (indigenoussness) of every modern people in its present national territory and juxtaposes the latter with his own vision, according to which the identities of modern peoples begin with the use of a modern ethnic name coinciding with decisive historical shifts in the history of the ethnos (p. 5). He puts his own account of the origins of the ethnic history of the Kazakhs and Uzbeks onto this theoretical platform. For both modern peoples, the initial event in their ethnic identity was the falling away of the charismatic leaders of Abul Khair Khan and two other groups led by Janibeg Khan and Giray Khan from the Uzbek Khan *ulus* of the Golden Horde. The horde of Abul-Khair Khan was called Uzbeks, but Janibeg and Giray, who split from Abul Khair Khan, became known as Uzbek Qazaqs. It was the word *qazraq* that distinguished them from Uzbeks, followers of Abul Khair Khan and his descendants the Shibanid dynasty. Later, this word became the name of the Kazakh people (pp. 124-125, 129).

Having put the institution of the nomadic vagabondage (*Qazaqliq*) at the center of the research, the author subsequently examines the manifestation of this practice on the wide expanse of Eurasia. For many readers and novice researchers, the connection of this institution and the term with the freemen populations in the eastern Slavic states may not seem obvious. Dr. Joo-Yup Lee, on the basis of eloquent evidence from sources, convincingly shows that Russian and Ukrainian Cossacks also originate from a similar phenomenon of nomadic freemen. Moreover, the ethnic core of the formation of the Russian and Zaporozhye Cossacks were the Tatar Turks (pp. 9, 74). Cossacks and Kazakhs, connected with each other through the institution of freemen and freebooters (*Qazaqliq*), were the only ones among many other similar groups in Eurasian history for whom their socio-political status became an ethnic name. Continuing this logic of presentation, the author considers it possible to argue that the two peoples, Kazakhs and Ukrainians, are descendants of the *Qazraq* freemen, the former coming from the *qazaqs* of Janibeg and Giray, and the latter from the Zaporozhye Cossacks and Cossak Hetmanate of the 17th century (pp. 90, 98)

A consistent and complete selection of evidence from various sources about the phenomenon of the *Qazaqliq* and the semantic nuances of this term is an evident advantage of the book. The reader will be interested to learn about the origin and use of such widely known ethnic terms as Turk, Mongol, Uzbek, Kazakh, and Tatars (pp. 129-134).

Having noted the persuasive presentation of the author's concept of origin and designations of the modern peoples of Central Asia, it should be pointed out that the prevalence of the institution of vagabondage and its importance in founding the states of Central Asia is not exclusively a Eurasian phenomenon, as one might think following the author's account. Some other state formations in the Near and Middle East had similar stories of their emergence in antiquity and the Middle Ages. The story of Idrimi, the son of the ruler of the country Yamhad (Aleppo), unfairly expelled from his city, but returned to power with the help of nomadic vagabonds known in many ancient Middle Eastern sources as *habiru*, or *apiru* (15th century BCE), became very famous. Some researchers even linked the origin of the ancient Jews to these *habiru*. The legend of Romulus and Remus and the founding of Rome is surprisingly reminiscent of the history of the charismatic *Qazaq*-eponyms of Eurasia.

It should also be noted that a distinction between the *Qazaqs* ambitious clan leaders who chose vagrancy for political reasons, and fugitives descended from the common people who sought to get rid of the oppression of the nobility has not been laid down distinctly in the book. The history of Mugulü, the founder of the Rouran horde, who fled from punishment to the steppe, is visibly different from other examples of political vagrancy. Perhaps the peculiarity of the Russian Cossacks vis-à-vis the movement of the Kazakh Khans Janibek and Giray is hidden in this distinction.

The concentration of the author's attention on the materials of the history of nomadic *Qazaqs* sometimes leads to unjustified generalizations. The statement that Kazakhs and Mongols are the only direct heirs of the great empires of the Hunnu, the Kok-Türks and the Mongols of Genghis Khan can hardly be considered correct. The author overlooks that the Khazar Khaganate in the Caucasus and the Qarakhanid state in Central Asia, and after them the Timurids, were a continuation of the traditions of these great states; and the present Uzbeks, Azerbaijanis and Anatolian Turks can equally link their ethnic history to the ancient Turks. It was in the empires of the Eurasian nomads that the mastering of the achievements of agricultural civilizations took place and brought the settling of former nomads, which in turn influenced the formation of a new identity for the Turkic peoples. The success of the Turkic state formations and their economic well-being depended not only and not so much on the organization of predatory campaigns in agricultural areas, but rather on the ability to organize international trade on the Silk Road, secure timely cultivation and harvest-ing of lands under their control and maintenance of handicraft production in trade centers.

The publication of this book by Joo-Yup Lee is a remarkable event in the historiography of the nomadic peoples of Eurasia. This book presents the social mechanisms of the development of the ethnic and political landscape of the central Eurasian steppes in the post-Mongol period in a colorful and convincing manner, explains the appearance of ethnic names on the map of modern Central Asia and at the same time shows how integrated and interconnected has been the historical development of the contemporary population of this region – the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tatars, Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Mongols and other Eurasian peoples.

Farda Asadov  
*Institute of Oriental Studies, Baku, Azerbaijan*