

**Toksanbayev Almas**

**The medieval system of power of the nomads of Central Asia: problems of historiography**

**ABSTRACT**

**to the dissertation for the degree of doctor of philosophy (PhD) in the specialty 6D020300-«History»**

It is known that the system of political power in a nomadic society has developed into a historical continuity, experiencing the processes of maturity, starting from ancient times and ending with the middle ages. Studying the issues concerning the system of political power in the society of early nomads, the right of power and symbols of power, we have the opportunity to analyze the features and historical continuity of the political and power system of the medieval turkic khaganates and states of the mongolian era, as well as the Kazakh khanate and develop an objective historical approach to them.

Our attention was attracted by research on the peculiarities of the political organization of nomadic society in relation to the system of power in the medieval society of the nomads of Central Asia. This is due to the fact that many researchers, considering the history of political organization and the system of supreme power in a nomadic society, often limited themselves to studying the power structure of the khaganates in a certain period. This makes the research topic more important.

**The object of the research** is the historiography and methodological problem of the medieval system of power of the nomads of Central Asia.

**As a subject of research.** Historiographical analysis of the works of scientists who studied the system of political power of nomadic peoples.

**The purpose of the research work.** The main purpose of the dissertation is to identify the main stages, the nature and content and directions of the evolution of historical views, achievements and shortcomings of foreign and domestic historiography related to the system of power in the medieval society of the nomads of Central Asia and to determine on this basis the prospects of the research topic.

In accordance with the identified goal, it is envisaged to solve the following **tasks:**

– Features of scientific approaches of researchers who considered the problem of power in the society of nomads of antiquity and the middle ages at different stages, identification and analysis of dynamics and directions of theoretical and methodological conclusions;

– Consideration in foreign and domestic historiography of the problem of statehood, political power and the image of the ruler in a nomadic society by analyzing multi-vector theoretical and methodological conclusions concerning political power in a nomadic society;

- Analyzing the conclusions of research concerning the sanctity (sacredness) of power in a nomadic society, to identify the specific features of the organization of a nomadic society;
- Comparative analysis of the conclusions concerning the theory of chiefdom, which is one of the priorities in the study of the features of the political organization of nomadic society, with the data accumulated to date historical, including archaeological and oral sources;
- To reveal the study of the problem of inheritance of supreme power and the historical continuity of the rights of power in a nomadic society;
- To show the level, directions, results of studying symbols and attributes of power in a nomadic society.

**Theoretical and methodological basis of research work.** It is based on the general methodology and methods of historiographical research. Therefore, in accordance with the research features of our topic, the dissertation, guided primarily by the «comparative historical» method, allows us to comprehensively reflect research on the system of power in a nomadic society and in its comparison with the evolution of territorial and methodological positions regarding the problem of statehood in a nomadic society.

In the course of the study, the method of «real analysis» was taken as a basis for analyzing the problems of inheritance of power, the right of power and symbols and attributes in a nomadic society.

The methods of data systematization, comparative analysis, grouping of opinions and conclusions, «concretization» in the search for prerequisites for identifying the known causes of the concept of sacredness among nomads, deducing previously unexplored problems in expanding the topic, analyzing new ideas, judgments, conclusions were used.

In the course of the research, was guided by «logical analysis» and was generally used as one of the leading methods for determining the development and formulation of methodological positions and historiographical concepts concerning the problems of the power system in nomadic society. Also in the course of the study, the methods of «problem-periodic and systematic» were used, allowing to express synthesis, logical positivism, chronological narration, division of a broad topic into several small issues.

In the research work, in order to reveal the inner content of the topic, the problem of studying the course of thought and scientific opinion of a number of researchers from the present to the past was realized. For this purpose, the method of «retrospective research» was also partially used.

Due to the fact that the research work is one of the urgent problems in the history of Kazakhstan, closely related to the political power of the state, ideology and demands in the development of society, the method of «historiographical systematization» widely used in historiographical research was used in the course of the study.

**The source basis of the dissertation work:** The source basis of the dissertation work can be divided into two parts in accordance with the chronological

features of the works written about the system of power in the medieval nomadic society.

First, the historiographical data that conducted a historical study of the system of power in the nomadic society. Historiographical data is divided into four groups by chronological periods.

- first, studies of the mid-nineteenth and early XX centuries,
- second, studies covering the period up to the first half of the XX century,
- third, studies of the 60-90s of the XX century and
- fourth, it covers research from the 90s of the XX century to the present.

Second, historical data about the system of power and the image of the ruler of the nomads and the attributes of power.

**Scientific novelty of research work.** The historiography of the system of power in the medieval nomadic society is determined by research at the dissertation level. The scientific novelty of the work consisted in a historiographical and methodological analysis of the conclusions and judgments formed in the research using a comparison of historical, archaeological and folklore (poem, legend, mythology) sources concerning the features of the power system in a nomadic society in antiquity and the middle ages, the image of the ruler, symbols of power. In addition, in research work:

- Various theoretical and methodological approaches and approaches to the study of the political organization of a nomadic society, including the type, form and features of the supreme power, are systematized, the stages of development and the results of historical research are analyzed.

- The achievements and shortcomings of the works of foreign and domestic researchers on the supreme power and statehood in the society of the nomads of antiquity and the middle ages are clearly summarized in a new perspective for the first time.

- The conclusions of studies concerning the sanctity (sacredness) of power in a nomadic society are analyzed, it is formulated that in the worldview of the nomads of Central Asia, the concept of power and ruler was identified with the concept of «boon».

- It was shown that the theory of leadership, which is one of the priority directions in cultural and anthropological approaches and formulations that began to form after the second half of the XX century on the issue of power, cannot clearly define the features of socio-political organization, the state structure of nomads.

- On the basis of a comparative analysis of historiographical studies, the historical continuity of the inheritance of supreme power and the rights of power in a nomadic society has been revealed.

- With the help of determining the level, directions, results of studying symbols and attributes of power in a nomadic society, the problems of nomadic medieval society were concretized in a new way, which became the subject of further research in relation to the study of the problem of political power.

**The main conclusions to be made for defense:**

– In historical science, conclusions prevailed that medieval nomadic peoples did not reach the level of a «state», their political organization was based on «occupation» and «conquest», the association in harsh climatic conditions did not have an acephalous, segmental character. The negative assessment, given in accordance with the established theoretical conclusions in the study of the problem of statehood and political power in a nomadic society, has long remained dominant in the historical analysis of this problem. However, over time, these conclusions about the system of power and statehood among nomadic peoples with the development of theoretical and methodological positions in domestic historical science have reached a new level and correct views on state power have been formed among nomads.

– The development of historical science and archaeological discoveries reflecting the elements of power in a nomadic society influenced the implementation of several theoretical and methodological positions in subsequent studies. As a result, contradictory opinions regarding the political organization of nomadic peoples and the formation of a system of power also denied their significance. To date, several theories and conclusions have been formed in historiography related to the study of the political and social structure and statehood in a nomadic civilization.

– In the question we are considering, researchers began to study the features and historical continuity of the system of power in a nomadic society. But, despite the fact that this problem is largely reflected in the studies of domestic historians, it is difficult to say that it is fully recognized by foreign scientists.

– Although the foundations of the theory of leadership in a nomadic society in the soviet period largely corresponded to political conclusions, domestic researchers expanded the subject area using examples of paleosocial research and analyzed historical and anthropological methodology in the research space. Based on the materials of domestic archaeologists, the problem of historical continuity of leadership theory is considered within the framework of new approaches. The analysis of archaeological research from a historiographic point of view, in turn, contributes to the theoretical reconstruction of the image of the ruler in traditional society.

– In the traditional nomadic society, one can see that the sacred image of power and ruler is associated with the worldview values of nomads. In the history of the long-term formation of the structure of political power among nomads, the importance of mutual understanding and respect between the ruler/power and the people consists of faith in the ruler. In the worldview of the nomads of Central Asia, power and ruler were correlated with the concept of «boon», perceived as bringing peace and abundance, prosperity to the country and had a certain ideological appearance among the population. This is evidenced by numerous proverbs linking rulers stored in the national memory with grace.

– The concept of this concept in western historiography does not fully reveal the features of the political, social and public organization of the nomads of Eurasia, who gave rise to a common diversity, including the civilization of the Great Steppe. In the works of researchers of steppe history, the priority of ideological understanding is emphasized.

– Although the issues of inheritance of supreme power in a nomadic society, the traditions of the khanate and the right to power were well considered in the works of domestic historians in chronological order, the differences in individual elements within were not fully disclosed. Studies of the system of power in written sources concerning these problems are reflected only in a few studies by historians. Kazakh folklore summarizes valuable information about the attributes of power and the image of the ruler and supreme power in the traditional kazakh society. Such ethnographic data help historians to draw important conclusions proving that the system of power in a traditional society originates from ancient times.

**The applied value of the work.** The applied significance of the research work is expressed in the fact that the theoretical-conceptual and theoretical-methodological problems of the system of power in the nomadic society of Central Asia are widely used not only by historiographers and ethnologists, but also in related fields of science, including archaeology, sociology, political science. The results of the research work can be used as the main guidelines for the historiographical analysis of the image of power and ruler in the world of nomads or in the future when conducting theoretical comparative studies.

**Critical passing of the research work.** The dissertation work was performed at the department of «History of Kazakhstan» at Kazakh National University named after al-Farabi. The main conclusions and results of the research work are published on the basis of 9 scientific articles. They are presented by the publications recommended by the control committee of the MES of the RK – 4 articles; at foreign international scientific conferences – 1; at domestic republican and international conferences – 3; in a journal with a non-zero impact factor indexed in the Scopus database – 1.