The arrival of Hülegü in Iran during the mid-1250s was not a simple military campaign but the migration of at least part of his entourage.¹ Women accompanied the expedition to the Middle East and settled in Iran in successive waves of migration. In this new land, they became a minority within a majority population that was not only Muslim but had been ruled solely by Muslim rulers for 600 years until the arrival of the Mongols.² Furthermore, the territory comprised both nomadic and sedentary populations that were integrated in a more balanced way than in Central Asia or Russia.³ It was different from China, too, in terms of wealth, urban development and population size. The dynasty started by Hülegü (d. 1265) belonged to the line of Tolui and Sorghaghtani Beki, probably the branch of the royal family least supportive of the nomadic model of extractive production, because of its exposure to and interaction with sedentary populations in its appanages.⁴ Furthermore, the division of the Mongol Empire into four khanates in the conquered territories (China, Russia, Iran and Central Asia) after 1260 propitiated different relationships between the Mongols and the native populations in each of these territories.⁵

This division also affected the development of women’s rule in each of these uluses. In China, women occasionally assumed the position of empress regent on behalf of their sons in similar terms to the Qarakhitai and the Mongols during the united empire. In Russia and Central Asia, beyond the two examples mentioned in the previous chapter, the institution of female regency was not maintained beyond the 1250s as happened in Yuan China.⁶ In particular, the Ilkhanate presents an interesting case in the evolution of the political status of Mongol women in the Mongol Empire. In her doctoral dissertation, Karin Quade-Reutter discussed the differences between the recognition of political authority and the actual political influence in the affairs of the state held by Turco-Mongol women in Ilkhanid Iran.⁷ Although one is reluctant to fully commit to the Weberian framework applied to the political thought and practice of the Mongol Empire done by Quade-Reutter, her discussion on the notions of
‘power’ (*Macht*), ‘rule’ (*Herrschaft*), ‘authority’ (*Autorität*) and ‘violence’ (*Gewalt*) help to clarify what exactly we are talking about when analysing the role of women in the political life of the Ilkhanate. As we will see, women in the Ilkhanate exercised ‘power’ in a variety of forms and their political status was not static during the period of Mongol domination of Iran. This chapter focuses on the evolution of female rule in the Ilkhanate and elucidates what happened to the political position of women in Iran once the Mongols had settled in the region. The chapter is divided into two parts based on a geographical and political division of the Ilkhanid territories. The first part examines the role of women in the central government of the Mongol dominion in Iran, while the second part concentrates on those regions that were subject to the Mongols but enjoyed degrees of autonomy and were ruled by local dynasties. This latter section focuses on the Turkic dynasties that ruled the regions of Fars, Kerman and Anatolia as subjects of the Ilkhans. This presents an interesting point of comparison for looking at the role of women in politics in the ‘peripheries’ of the empire vis-à-vis the power centre represented by the royal camp.

*In Search of a Mongol Queen in Ilkhanid Iran*

Influential women accompanied Hülegü on his campaign to the west, settling in Iran once the conquest was finished and the Ilkhanate established, not without controversy, in 1260. According to Rashid al-Din, the chief wife of the newly self-proclaimed Ilkhan was Doquz Khatun, a Kerait woman whose first husband was Tolui and upon whose death she was passed to Hülegü. Her second marriage seems to have been consummated just before Hülegü’s departure to Iran in the early 1250s. Like Sorghaghtani Beki, she was a Nestorian Christian who openly showed her Christian faith when she arrived in the Middle East, and it was this religious affiliation that attracted most of the attention of the chroniclers of the time, and, consequently, information regarding her participation in the affairs of state is limited. However, some aspects of her life at court can be discovered among the available material. We know that she acquired high social status and accumulated a considerable amount of wealth in her *ordo*, which passed to other *khātūns* after her death. Doquz Khatun’s first marriage to Tolui conferred upon her a great deal of prestige and recognition among the royal family. Rashid al-Din explains that, ‘since she [Doquz Khatun] has been his father’s wife she was greater than the other wives, even though he [Hülegü] had married some of them before her’. Furthermore, the Persian historian recalls an anecdote in which Möngke Khan advises his brother Hülegü prior to the latter’s campaign in the west.
Figure 3.1 The Ilkhans and *khātūns* of Iran
He enumerates the different territories he should conquer before offering some final remarks to his younger brother:

Be awake and sober in all situations. Let the subjects be free of excessive taxes and impositions. Return devastated lands to flourishing state. Conquer the realm of the rebellious through the might of the great God so that your summer and winter pastures may be many. Consult Doquz Khātūn on all matters.15

There is no way of knowing whether the Great Khan ever pronounced these words, and it might be of only little interest even if he had, but what this quote illustrates is the high status acquired by Doquz Khatun, if not in her homeland then at least in Iran, where Rashid al-Din was writing his chronicle. The quotation lends weight to the notion of a Toluid conception of government based mostly on protecting the sedentary lands by taxing them in accordance with the idea of rule fostered first by Sorghaghtani Beki and later on by her son Qubilai in China. If the Toluids were not entirely aware of this model, the ‘official’ Persian historians of the early fourteenth century looked back at them – and particularly at their women Sorghaghtani and Doquz – as depositaries of this idea of governance.

Specific interventions by Doquz Khatun into political affairs are recorded in two Arabic sources. They mention that an Ayyubid prince went to Hülegü’s court to present his father’s submission to the Mongols. Doquz Khatun offered the prince the chance to stay with her and become her son, promising him command of a region and a hundred horsemen.16 A second statement refers to her mediating with the Khan in order to bestow amān to this same prince.17 This latter action illustrates the queen’s political involvement in state affairs, interceding in a way that closely resembles the interventions made by Mongol khātūns in pre-imperial Mongolia. Unfortunately, no other specific intervention by Doquz Khatun into state affairs is mentioned, as far as I am aware, in the available sources, where most of her deeds are related to her position as a Christian queen.18 Doquz died very soon after Hülegü and three months before the coronation of his successor Abaqa Khan (r. 1265–82). The succession process differed significantly from those held in the empire in the 1240s, where the struggle for succession arose during the female regencies in-between quriltai. On this occasion, no women were considered for the regency and Abaqa ascended the throne because he knew ‘well the customs and ancient yosun [Mongol tradition] and yasa, and Hülegü Khan made him the heir designate during his lifetime’.19 The proximity of the heir to the court (he was in Mazandaran in northern Iran) might be a possible reason why there was no need for an interregnum after Hülegü’s death, allowing Abaqa to quickly seize the Ilkhanate throne. However, we could also add that the
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fact that Doquz, the most influential khātūn of Iran, had passed away a few months earlier leaving no sons of her own, might have mitigated the further involvement of women in this succession.

Abaqa Khan was born of Yesünjin Khatun (d. 1272), who had not accompanied Hülegü to the west, but arrived later on with other khātūns and sons of the new ruler of Iran. He established his capital in Tabriz and enjoyed a relatively peaceful succession process, having only mild opposition from his brother Yoshmut who, finding himself without support, returned to his region in northern Iran. The relationship between the brothers does not seem to have been conflictive, since soon afterwards Yoshmut was leading an army against Noqai of the Golden Horde, with whom hostilities had resumed. In fact, Abaqa’s Ilkhanate was surrounded by enemies because, apart from the enmity with his cousins of the Golden Horde and Central Asia, he had to deal with the opposition of the Mamluk dynasty in Egypt. This political situation, which presented a Muslim alternative in the Middle East to the new pagan Mongol rulers of Iran, led Abaqa to constantly look towards the Christian West for allies and on several occasions he sent embassies to European kingdoms and popes.

But, while Abaqa’s legitimacy seems to have been unquestioned, the situation changed after his death in 1282, beginning a period of internal dispute in the Ilkhanate that saw the rise of the first Mongol ruler to convert to Islam, Tegüder Ahmad Khan (r. 1282–4), who after two years was overthrown by Abaqa’s son Arghun (r. 1284–91). The sources do not generally portray Tegüder as a great ruler and his short reign did not allow him to leave a political legacy beyond his Muslim faith. His mother, however, was an interesting character, though someone not generally mentioned by scholars in the field. Qutui Khatun belonged to the Qonqirat people and arrived in Iran with the second wave of Hülegü’s relatives, those who had remained in Mongolia when he had set out on his conquest of Iran. This later group seem to have arrived around the year 1268, when they were received by Abaqa, who ‘went out in greeting’. In the same paragraph, Rashid al-Din speaks of Qutui Khatun a number of times and, despite the fact that many of Hülegü’s sons were in her company, the narrative seems to be constructed around her. The frequency with which she is mentioned by name indicates that, by the time Rashid al-Din was writing his chronicle, this particular khātūn was well enough known among his readership for her presence as a leading figure in the expedition to be highlighted. Another Persian chronicler, Hamd Allah Mustawfi, describes Qutui Khatun as ‘a moon emulating the sun, who made the heart of the shah joyful’, and Rashid al-Din says that she was ‘extremely intelligent and clever’. Without ever being named queen,
she was nevertheless recorded several times as being instrumental in the coronation, rule and deposition of her son.

Two political parties had confronted each other after Abaqa’s death in 1282 and, interestingly enough, they were led by Hülegü’s wives, though they came to Iran in different expeditions. One was Öljei Khatun, an Oyrat woman who had accompanied Hülegü to the west, and the other was the abovementioned Qutui Khatun of the Qonqirat people. Both of them hurried to support their respective sons’ claims to the throne. Like Qutui, Öljei Khatun had achieved high status in Iran too and, apart from being the wife of both Hülegü and Abaqa, she took charge of the care of the son of the Abbasid caliph after the latter had been executed by Hülegü in 1258. Not surprisingly, in the quriltai that was held to elect the new Ilkhan ‘disagreement prevailed’ between the two parties. Öljei Khatun pushed to have her son nominated, while other members of the royal family and the amirs supported Tegüder’s claim. The turning point came when, while the argument was in progress between the two factions, news arrived of the death of Möngke Temür, Öljei’s son, clearing the way for Qutui to elevate her son to Iran’s throne.

Tegüder was finally enthroned on 6 May 1282 and, because of his Muslim faith, he took the name Ahmad. His faith changed the dynamics of Mongol external alliances, especially in relation to the Mamluk Sultanate. Upon being enthroned, the new Ilkhan sent a threatening embassy to Sultan Qalawun of Egypt emphasising the fact that the ruler of Iran was now a Muslim and a protector of the faith. Tegüder also informed the Sultan of his intention to establish Islamic law in his realm, and set out to pardon criminals, inspect religious endowments, protect pilgrims and found religious buildings. As Anne F. Broadbridge has noted, these measures undermined Qalawun’s legitimacy as the ‘protector of Islam’, whilst a demand for submission and vassalage was included in the letter sent by Tegüder and his scribes to Egypt. In response, Qalawun’s chancellory played the card of seniority in Islam (or seniority of conversion to Islam) in an attempt to retain his legitimacy as the ‘king of Islam’ and indicated that he would accept peace as an equal but not as a vassal of the Mongol Ilkhan. The fact that peace had been considered an option at some point in this diplomatic exchange has been interpreted by some scholars as an attempt by the Mongol rulers to reach peace with the Mamluks for the first time; such an attempt, if sincere, came to naught.

Despite this crucial diplomatic activity occurring during his reign, Tegüder does not seem to have spent too much time taking care of state affairs. A description by Rashid al-Din portrays the situation in the court of Sultan Ahmad in the following terms:
Figure 3.2 The early Oyrats and their connection to the Chinggisid family
He [Ahmad Tegüder] used to go often to his house [of Shaykh Abdul-Rahman], which was near the back gate of the ordu, and participated in samaʿ [music], paying little attention to matters of finance and state. His mother Qutui Khatun, who was extremely intelligent and clever, took care of fiscal affairs together with Asiq. … In short, with Shaykh Abdul-Rahman’s and Sahib Shamsuddin’s approval he sent Mawlama Qutbuddin Shirazi, the most learned man in the world, on an embassy to Egypt on [25 August 1282].

This scenario appears similar to that of the Mongol Empire at the time of Töregene, where rulers relied on members of the family and the local amirs to govern, but fundamentally left their authority in the hands of their mothers. However, Qutui was never recognised as empress or Ilkhan of Iran, whereas Töregene appears as empress in Chinese and Persian sources. It is difficult to assess the situation precisely, but it is reasonable to suggest that Qutui was to some extent in charge of the administration. She not only received diplomatic envoys sent to her son but also engineered, at least in part, a foreign policy strategy of the Mongols towards the Mamluk Sultanate. Though her authority was not recognised officially, some hints suggest that she was recognised as being the one in charge by the Ilkhan himself, who did not make a decision regarding the affairs of state until his mother had had the last word on the matter. In other words, and to express it with the terminology used by Quade-Reutter based on political science, Qutui would have exercised ‘power’ (Macht) but not ‘rule’ (Herrschaft) over the Ilkhanate.

Tegüder’s reign appears to have been far from popular among certain sections of the Mongol and Persian elites. An opposition began to emerge, instigated by supporters of Arghun, the son of Abaqa and consequently the Ilkhan’s nephew. The enmity between Arghun and Tegüder increased during the two years of the latter’s rule (and Qutui’s administration), with Arghun and important members of Hülegü’s family sealing alliances against the ruling Ilkhan behind his back. One important alliance that Arghun managed to consolidate was with Qonqurtai. Rashid al-Din states that ‘On July 12, 1282, Ahmad rewarded Qonqurtai, gave him Toqiyatai Khātūn and sent him off to guard Anatolia’. Arghun gained the confidence of this member of the royal family, who had originally supported Tegüder, and secured a political alliance with him. Interestingly enough, this pact was sealed ‘in the ordu of Toqiyatai Khātūn, who had mediated the friendship, and they swore that henceforth envoys would be exchanged. This was the reason [why] Qonqurtai was [later] killed [by Tegüder]’. Arghun also seems to have attracted the support of the party which had proposed Möngke Temür for the throne in 1282 as an alternative to Tegüder. Playing a decisive role in this group was Hülegü’s widow.
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Öljei Khatun and, once Arghun was on the throne, she was made responsible with the task of punishing rebels on behalf of the new Ilkhan.\(^{45}\)

When Tegüder realised the betrayal, he immediately replaced Qonqurtai with Alinaq and sent the latter to arrest Arghun. Some members of the royal family joined Alinaq, placing themselves under his command, setting the arena for an open civil war in the Ilkhanate.\(^{46}\) Lagzi, the son of the influential amir Arghun Aqa, ‘went with a troop and attacked Qutlugh Khātūn’s [Arghun’s chief wife] ordu and pillaged her baggage’.\(^{47}\) After seeing the ordo of one of his wives’ being plundered, Arghun decided to submit and

set out with Būlūğān Khātūn [‘Bozorg’] for Ahmad’s camp, and on Thursday the 13th of Rabi‘ II [19 June 1284] he came before Ahmad, who embraced him and kissed his face. Then he turned him over to Alinaq and said, ‘Keep him well until we get to Qutui Khātūn and try him’.\(^{48}\)

Two women are presented here as political actors in the struggle. On the one hand, the Ilkhan’s mother is recognised once again as the person having the last word in the affairs of state. On the other, a new woman appears on the scene: Bulughan Khatun (d. 1286) is the only person mentioned whom Arghun chose to accompany him to meet the Ilkhan.\(^{49}\) In addition to Bulughan’s importance in the economic and military power balance of the Ilkhanate, she is also described as being responsible for organising a banquet for Tegüder and his subordinates once he had imprisoned Arghun.\(^{50}\) During the reception, while Arghun was kept under the surveillance of Alinaq, she sent a message to her husband telling him about a plot to get Alinaq drunk, attack the guards and release him from captivity. The plan was successful and, on 4 July 1284, ‘Arghun, who had been a prisoner when night fell, woke up in the morning as the emperor of the face of the earth’.\(^{51}\) Immediately afterwards, Alinaq was put to death and the victorious faction advanced to the camp of the Ilkhan to seize him and put Arghun on the throne.

The whole description of events made by Rashid al-Din and followed by other Persian historians of the time underlines the importance of women in the process of kingmaking. Women were deeply involved in the political development of the Ilkhanate in the early years of the 1280s. First, Arghun made his claim to the throne with the argument that it was Möngke Temür who should have been named Ilkhan after his father’s death; by doing this, he gained the support of Möngke’s mother, Öljei Khatun. Faced with Arghun’s diplomatic and military offensive, now Tegüder Ahmad’s reaction was to withdraw and put his mother Qutui Khatun in charge of the new succession crisis.\(^{52}\) She once again stepped up for her son and began organising the resistance of her son’s supporters
against the usurper Arghun. However, unfortunately for Qutui, she could not foresee that

all of a sudden the Qara’unas army arrived and plundered those ordus so thoroughly that, aside from the ashes in the fireplaces, not a trace remained. They left Qutui Khātūn, Tōdai Khātūn, and Armini Khātūn naked and two thousand of them took up guard over Ahmad.53

The invasion of the Qara’unas and the damage they made to the properties and armies of Tegüder by sacking the possessions of his wives and mother appear to have served as the coup de grâce to Qutui’s aspiration to maintain her son on the throne.54

Following the downfall of Qutui, a quick replacement for the role of influential woman in the Ilkhanate was found in the form of Bulughan Khatun. As Melville has noted, the importance gained by Bulughan is testified to by the fact that, when she died on 23 Safar 685 (20 April 1286), Arghun wanted a woman from her family to succeed her and sent a request to Qubilai in China for a relative of Bulughan to be sent to Iran.55 Princess Kokachin was dispatched from China to become Arghun’s wife, but, by the time of her arrival, he was dead and so she instead married Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304).56 During Arghun’s reign, Bulughan and Öljei remained the most influential women in the court, but when they passed away, other wives began to grow in importance.57 More significantly, the pivotal role of kingmaker among Arghun’s wives was played by Örüg Khatun, about whom nothing appears in the sources until the death of her husband in 1291 and the rise of her new husband, Geikhatu Ilkhan (r. 1291–5).58 Rashid al-Din mentions that in 1291, immediately after Arghun’s death, she masterminded a plan in support of Geikhatu against his rival Baidu.59

The succession was contested by three factions initially: Geikhatu, Baidu (grandson of Hulegū by his son Taraghai) and Ghazan Khan (Arghun’s son). Ghazan Khan withdrew, though, and remained in Khurasan.60

Obviously, all the potential candidates for the throne of the Ilkhanate were direct descendants of Hulegū but while Geikhatu and Ghazan were from the line of Abaqa, Baidu represented a different line of succession.61 The struggle for the Ilkhanid throne became a contest between two lines of descent, one represented by the Abaqaids and another by the non-Abaqaid Huleguids.62 In turn, the nomadic tradition of elected regency seems to have disappeared among the Mongols in Iran, and the reunion held by family members to elect the new Ilkhan became a ritual, rather than actually being a king’s election meeting. Perhaps the comparatively short distances in the Ilkhanate vis-à-vis the united Mongol Empire might have played a role in making unnecessary the establishment of a regent
for short inter-regnun periods in Mongol Iran as was required for the Great Khanate. But also, once the royal succession became hereditary through the male line of Hülegü’s sons, women were of course ruled out from becoming regents or queens of the Ilkhanate. However, they seem to have adapted to the new political scenario. During Geikhatu’s reign, Örüg Khatun is presented as a counsellor of the Ilkhan, and as someone needing his approval to issue commands. Geikhatu’s reluctance to shed blood is usually highlighted in the sources, with the responsibility for overseeing punishment being assigned to his wife. For example, the rebel Toghan was sentenced to death only after Örüg Khatun had convinced the Ilkhan that, if he were pardoned, ‘no one will serve you wholehearted from this day forth’. In contrast with Mongol queens of previous periods such as Örgina, Töregene, Qutui and even Öljei (Hülegü’s wife), Örüg’s influence was restricted to advising her husband and we have no evidence of her effectively ruling over affairs of state. Toghan was not executed until the Ilkhan had replied: ‘Certainly that is what someone who does what he has done deserves’.

After Geikhatu’s reign came to an end in 1294, and moving into the fourteenth century, there is a very slow but steady decrease in the amount of information about women in Ilkhanid state affairs. One reason is that Rashid al-Din’s account of the Mongol Empire ends at the time of Ghazan’s reign and so we are deprived thereafter of the detailed account of women that the Persian historian had provided for the earlier period. However, we do have Kashani’s *Tarikh-i Uljaytu* for the period of Öljeitü’s reign (r. 1304–16), and in its references to women it offers a clear contrast to Rashid al-Din’s earlier chronicles of the Ilkhanate. Kashani dedicates only a few pages to describing the wives and daughters of a new ruler and only sporadically refers to them later on in the text, mostly to mark the dates of their deaths or marriages. Some of Öljeitü’s wives are mentioned, but mostly in relation to the ‘revolt of the amirs’ that occurred after his death. It might be the case that Rashid al-Din had better access to the role of women in the political events of the Ilkhanate than those Persian historians that succeeded him. However, as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, an economic and religious transformation certainly transformed the women’s pivotal role in the political arena of the Ilkhanate from the late thirteenth century onwards. Despite recent disagreements concerning the validity of the claim of there being a ‘decline’ of the Mongol Empire, the reign of Abu Sa’id (r. 1317–35) points towards transformations in the kingship structure of the Ilkhanate where an Abaqaid line of succession was imposed, limiting the political influence of court members (including women) in state affairs.
After Öljeitü’s death in 1316, his eldest living son, Abu Saʻid, was put on the throne without encountering any opposition, something that was in itself new to the Ilkhanate.69 The new king was born in 1305 and so when he was proclaimed king he was only eleven years old. The youth of the new Ilkhan Abu Saʻid caused a similar power vacuum to the one that had occurred after the deaths of Ögetei Khan in 1241 and Güyük Khan in 1248, or even after the death of Qara-Hülegü of the Chaghataid Khanate in 1252. As we have seen in Chapter 2, on all these three occasions, women had stepped in to take control of the realm as regents for their sons. However, while a parallel situation, female regency was not adopted in the Ilkhanate despite the fact that the mother of the young king was not only alive but was herself a noble descendant of Hülegü.70 Instead, the person chosen to be regent was Amir Chopan, the son of Todan Bahadur of the Suldus people, who had had a prolific political career supporting first Geikhatu, then Baidu, ultimately abandoning the latter in order to join forces with Ghazan Khan.71 Amir Chopan’s election seems to have been organised directly by Öljeitü,72 but his legitimacy also rested, to some extent, on his marriage to two daughters of the deceased Ilkhan.73 He was named amīr al-umarāʾ (chief Amir or commander-in-chief of the army) and increasingly took control of the kingdom, provoking the opposition of other amirs in the court.74 It was not until around 1325 that the Ilkhan, now twenty years of age, began to challenge Chopan’s authority, and it was a woman who was the trigger for the conflict that ensued.75

Baghdad Khatun was the daughter of the Amir Chopan and Abu Saʻid had fallen madly in love with her. Since Chopan’s daughter was already married, the amir initially opposed any new union, which provided the Ilkhan with the justification to remove Chopan from his position and to persecute his sons.76 Once the amir was defeated and killed, Abu Saʻid married Baghdad Khatun, who is credited with having substantial influence over him from then on.77 This period in the history of Iran is characterised by the constant exchanging of alliances and by betrayals in the court, in which these women played a prominent role.78 However, their political activity, as presented in the available sources, seems to have been restricted to the court itself, with the role of women in this period revolving around conspiracies to assassinate various members of the royal family, as they pursued their particular personal or family interest. If we trust the post Ilkhanid sources that describe her life, Baghdad Khatun was a queen consort of Iran constantly conspiring to manipulate her husband in order to favour the interests of the remainder of the Chopanid family. She was put on trial, accused of organising a plot to assassinate Abu Saʻid around 1330, together with her former husband Shaykh Hasan.79 Initially,
the Ilkhan gave credence to the accusation but her life was spared thanks to the intervention of her mother Kurdujin Beki Khatun. Apart from mother of Baghdad Khatun and widow of Amir Chopan, Kurdujin Beki was the aunt of the Ilkhan himself, which certainly contributed to retain the favour of the Abu Saʿid. A committee was formed to investigate the issue and eventually the two accused were exonerated. This incident seems to have reinforced the role of Baghdad Khatun in the court in such a way that ‘the two lovers ruled together the affairs of the kingdom, to the extent that any other influence [in government] was eclipsed’.

It seems that the royal couple managed to calm the internal turmoil that Mongol Iran was experiencing in the third and fourth decades of the fourteenth century. As Mustawfi notes in his history,

after the marriage [between Baghdad Khatun and Abu Saʿid] was solemnised and right was done; the chief of the princesses took her place beside the shah and as a result, kingdom and sovereign became great. Thanks to this good fortune, the famous Chopans had served him [the Sultan] in another way.

However, the death of Abu Saʿid on 13 Rabiʿ II 736 (30 November 1335) marked the beginning of a new succession struggle, which eventually led to the end of the line of Hülegü rulers in Iran. The struggle for the Ilkhanate was fought between different factions such as Chopanids, who represented the bureaucratic and more ‘Persianised’ branch of the Mongol elite, and other pro-Mongol noyans (military commanders) who supported a more traditional Mongol state. Disagreement over the succession provoked a deep crisis in which the political unity of the Ilkhanate were at stake. The noyan party accused Baghdad Khatun of poisoning Abu Saʿid and of committing treachery by suggesting (most probably falsely) that she contacted Ozbek Khan, the ruler of the Golden Horde, to organise an invasion of the Ilkhanate. Whilst Baghdad represented the Chopanid interest, Arpa Khan emerged as the noyan alternative, and one of his first actions after taking control was to order the execution of Baghdad Khatun on the above charges. The Golden Horde invaded northern Iran and Arpa saw his chance to legitimise his right to rule despite not being a direct descendant of Hülegü. Although he defeated Ozbek’s troops, this seems not to have been enough to claim the throne and it was necessary to marry Sati Beg, the sister of Abu Saʿid and widow of Chopan, in order to present himself as the legitimate ruler of Iran.

But, in spite of his marriage and military victories, Arpa’s position was still not secured. The Mongol custom of elective monarchy among members of the royal family had fallen into desuetude and a direct family connection with the founder of the dynasty through the line of his son.
Abaqa had long been the main criterion to legitimise a new ruler in the eyes of many of the Ilkhanid elite. There seems to have been great internal opposition towards Arpa’s ‘Mongol’ manners and the viziers of different regions challenged his right to rule. The governor of Baghdad, ʿAli Padshah, and Abu Said’s maternal uncle put forward an alternative Ilkhan in the person of Musa (grandson of Baidu), and decided to attack Arpa.88 Both sides fought in 1336, with Arpa fleeing, but ultimately being captured and executed a month later. New khans began appearing in different areas of Iran and Khurasan and a succession of battles took place, with betrayals and executions spreading among the viziers and the extensive Mongol royal family.89 Of the many factions, two major contenders prevailed: Shaykh Hasan ‘Bozorg’ and Shaykh Hasan Kuchek.90 Trying to content their supporters, the two engaged in a constant switching of alliances and appointing of khans, but what is interesting is that, at some point in this struggle, the Chopanid Shaykh Hasan Kuchek decided to revert to a Mongol tradition never used before in Iran and appointed a woman, Sati Beg (r. 1339), as the Ilkhan of Iran.91 Being herself a direct descendant of Hülegü and at the same time the former wife of Chopan, she should in theory have been a suitable regent in the eyes of both parties in the dispute. The desperate search for a monarch had already led some of the nobles of both sides to reconsider female rule as a last option some time before Sati Beg’s appointment.92

Thus, the chaotic last years of the Ilkhanate did eventually see a woman sitting on the throne. She seemed to gain recognition of her rule when the $khūţba$ was pronounced in her name in mosques and coins were issued proclaiming her queenship.93 However, her accession had been part of a political manoeuvre carried out by Hasan Kuchek in the context of the internal disputes in Iran. Sati Beg was left precious little real power to exercise any type of political authority.94 In the sources, she is portrayed as a puppet in the hands of Hasan. He unilaterally sent a message to a rival offering him Queen Sati Beg in marriage, his only aim being to lure the rival into a trap. According to Hafiz-i Abru, she had no voice whatsoever in the matter and was completely dependent on the wishes of the male members of the royal family and the amirs.95 Consequently, sources for this period offer a very different view on the influence of ruling women from that of the later earlier Mongol Empire. The difference between this queen and the nomadic $khāţūn$ queens of the mid-thirteenth century is significant. The women in this period seem to have lost their importance, for not only were they no longer active as political agents in state affairs, in contrast with their Mongol empress predecessors, but they were also deprived of their economic autonomy and the highly influential positions
they had once occupied (see Chapter 4). It seems that these women only played a role at a symbolic level, when there was no agreement over whom the male ruler should be, with female rule being completely dependent on male patronage. It was under these circumstances that the reign of the only official queen of the Ilkhanate lasted a mere nine months, at the end of which, ‘towards the end of 739 [July 1339] it occurred to “Little” Amir Shaykh-Hasan that Iran could not be ruled by a woman … and he forced Sati-Beg to marry Sulayman Khan’, bringing to an end the rule of the line of Hülegü, who had arrived in Iran over eighty years earlier.

Mongol rule in Iran is marked by the absence of any woman being recognised as ruler in the way that women had been in the times of the unified empire or in Central Asia. However, this did not prevent women from participating in state affairs in a number of ways. Those female political practices examined in the previous chapter, which took place in the period prior to Hülegü’s campaign in the west, remained as core characteristics of women’s political activity. Women continued to occupy high positions at court, participated in the election of the new ruler by establishing alliances in support of their sons, and acted as counsellors to their male counterparts (sons or husbands). In this period, there was no nominal recognition of female rule, but Mongol women nevertheless played a crucial role in the political arena in Iran, supporting members of the royal family who aspired to the throne. The role of women in Mongol Iran changed after Ghazan Khan’s conversion to Islam. The centralisation measures of the new Padshah al-Islam and his Persian amirs progressively denied women their role as active political agents, replacing it with a role more limited to court conspiracies, unable to act on clear political agenda in the way their predecessors had done. Women seem to have been confined to being transmitters of a legitimacy to rule, bestowed on them by virtue of their place in the kinship structure of the royal family. The case of Sati Beg is the exception that confirms the rule and it represents the last attempt by a political faction that in trying to gain control of the Ilkhanate, revives a Mongol custom of female rule that had no precedent in Mongol Iran. Establishing a woman as ruler appears as a graphic representation of a distinctive Mongol-nomadic phenomenon that, by the end of the fourth decade of the fourteenth century, seems to have lost the ‘identity battle’ with the Muslim-Persian native population, at least with regard to female rule.97

**Women’s Rule in the Ilkhanid Provinces**

If in the eighty years of Mongol rule in Iran only one woman acquired nominal recognition as head of state under very particular circumstances,
ruling women did not entirely disappear from the Ilkhanate. The regions south of the Iranian plateau, Anatolia and the Caucasus were governed by local dynasties of Turkic origin (the Qutlughkhanids, the Salghurids and the Saljuqs of Rum) that were subject to the Mongols. In these areas, the political status of women followed different paths from the centre of power located in north-western Iran. In certain provinces, women ruled as legitimate heads of state in similar ways to women during the united Mongol Empire and Central Asia in the 1250s, but in all of them they maintained their active participation in the political scene. This section focuses on three specific regions under Ilkhanid rule. First, we explore the particularities of female rule in the province of Kerman under the Qutlughkhanid dynasty (r. 1222–1306). Second, we pay attention to the province of Fars and the rule of Abesh Khatun, a woman of the Salghurid dynasty connected to the Mongols that ruled south-western Iran in the thirteenth century. Finally, we look at some cases of influential women in Anatolia and the Caucasus, where proximity to the royal centre of power might have had an influence on the development of female rule in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

**The Qutlughkhanids of Kerman**

The founder of this local dynasty was Baraq Hajib (d. 1234–5) an amir of the Qarakhitai dynasty in Central Asia who saw the opportunity to seize the province of Kerman in 1222. In order to secure his position, he married one of his daughters to Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah and another to Chinggis Khan’s son Chaghatai, thus securing the favour of the two forces that were at the time battling for Central Asia and Khurasan. The Qarakhitaiid origin of the dynasty is a key element in understanding the continuity of the institution of female regency in Kerman, as shown in Chapter 2. Similar to the succession process seen among the Western Liao or the cases of Töregene and Oghul Qaimish, it was after the death of a male ruler, Qutb al-Din Muhammad in 1257, that a woman assumed control of the province of Kerman. Terken Qutlugh Khatun (d. 1282/3) ruled the kingdom of Kerman for twenty-six years – a period considered to be the ‘golden age’ of the region of Kerman – as the legitimate ruler of the kingdom despite the fact that a son of her husband, Hijaj Sultan, was still alive.

The sources report a seemingly straightforward succession, with the arrival of a woman on the throne depicted as a natural and common occurrence. Terken’s first political moves followed a similar pattern to those of the former Mongol empresses. According to Vassaf, she took control of
the affairs of state and began to send gifts in order to gain recognition of her right to rule.\textsuperscript{103} There is confusion in the sources regarding the relationship between Terken and the two possible male heirs of Kerman. Some accounts say that Hijaj was her stepson and others consider him to be her biological son.\textsuperscript{104} If the first construction is correct, the circumstance of Terken’s enthronement was different from that of her predecessors in the sense that Mongol women usually assumed regency on behalf of their biological sons. However, most sources do represent Hijaj as her son and say that she went to Hülegü when her husband had died to ask for a \textit{yarlıgh} confirming her regency over Kerman. The process appears to have been straightforward, with no indication that the Mongol ruler hesitated to grant her the throne.\textsuperscript{105} This attitude is not surprising when one considers the Mongol Empire as a whole. Beyond the Qarakhitai origin of Terken’s dynasty, within the still united Mongol Empire, the reign of Terken was contemporaneous with that of Orghina Khatun in Central Asia, the woman acknowledged as ruler by the Great Khan Möngke, and the \textit{khâtûn} who had welcomed Hülegü on his way to Iran.\textsuperscript{106}

Terken’s strong determination to secure her political position as regent of Kerman can be seen in the way she played her cards in the Ilkhanate political arena. The \textit{yarlıgh} from Hülegü apparently left the army outside the queen’s control and was assigned to her son-in-law by her eldest daughter Bibi Terken.\textsuperscript{107} She contested the decision and ‘set out for the \textit{ordu} [of Hülegü], accompanied by the great men of Kirman. There she obtained a new \textit{yarlıgh} entrusting all the affairs of the province, civil and military, to her’.\textsuperscript{108} Furthermore, she masterminded the political alliances between Kerman and the Mongol \textit{ulus} of Iran, which marked the political development of the region in the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{109} She did this in a number of ways. First, she secured the marriage previously arranged by her husband between Sultan Hijaj and a daughter of the powerful amir Arghun Aqa (Beki Khatun), and it took place during an expedition of the amir in Georgia. The lady was brought to Kerman in 1264.\textsuperscript{110} Second, she made an important move when, some years later, she succeeded in marrying her daughter Padshah Khatun to Abaqa Ilkhan, who became the new ruler of Iran in 1265.\textsuperscript{111} Her political affiliation to the Ilkhans went beyond marriage alliances: she mobilised the Kerman troops to aid Abaqa’s military expedition against the Chaghataid Khanate in 1271–2, putting Sultan Hijaj in command.\textsuperscript{112} This campaign had two consequences for Terken’s reign: (1) it honoured with the military support of the Qutlugkhans the marriage between the Ilkhan and Padshah Khatun; (2) the prestigious victory gave a now adolescent Hijaj the political momentum he needed to challenge Terken and try to seize control of the realm.\textsuperscript{113}
The chronicles treat somewhat poetically the opposition that Hijaj, encouraged by the success of the military campaign, began to formulate against Terken’s rule. It is mentioned that in a public meeting he recited the following verses to her:

پیرند چرخ و اختر و بخت تونوجوان ان به که پیر نوبت خویید با جوان دهد
Young are your destiny and star, but old is your fortune; the one that is old should make way for the young.

Her son’s offensive words seem to have disturbed Terken to the point of finding her way to Abaqa’s ordo to ask for a second yarligh confirming her right to rule Kerman. According to Rashid al-Din, because of the marriage of her daughter to the Ilkhan, ‘she used to go to Court every two or three years and to return loaded with honours’. Despite the confirmation, tension between mother and son grew until in 1279–80 Hijaj finally made an attempt to take control of Kerman and remove his mother from power. He was unsuccessful and the young prince was forced into exile in Delhi, where he died more than ten years later.

It seems that Terken managed to resist this attempted coup thanks not only to the powerful alliances she had forged with the Mongol court, but also to the strong support she received from Kerman itself. Accounts of her reign generally point out the fairness of her decision-making and the order she was able to keep in the region. She seems to have been officially recognised as ruler of the realm, with some sources reporting that her name was mentioned in the khuṭba. However, the political situation in the Ilkhanate changed when Abaqa died in 1282 and Tegüder Ahmad ascended the throne. The favour Terken had enjoyed under the previous Ilkhan (her son-in-law) was undermined by a new concept of the Ilkhanate that the now Muslim-Mongol Ilkhan put into practice. The short rule of Ahmad undermined the stability of Iran, giving Terken’s stepson Soyurghatmish the opportunity to carry out what his brother Hejaj had failed to accomplish a few years earlier. Obtaining a yarligh from Tegüder that granted him the right to rule Kerman, he displaced Terken from the position she had occupied for twenty-six years.

In the upheavals that occurred in the royal ordo during Tegüder’s reign, the political agenda of influential women clashed. As we have seen above, during the two years of this Muslim Ilkhan, responsibility for the affairs of state was in the hands of his mother Qutui Khatun. It is mentioned that the Ilkhan’s mother was fundamental in supporting Soyurghatmish’s claim against Terken by blocking the latter’s return to Kerman, thus preventing a possible alliance between her and the prince Arghun, who was in charge of Khurasan. Qutui’s political strategy was to cut off all the support
that Terken had built up over the years with the royal ordo of Abaqa. The ordo was now led by Arghun, who had become the most important rival to Tegüder for the succession. Faced with this situation, Terken turned her hopes towards the ṣāḥib divān Shams al-Din Juvayni, and went to Tabriz to meet him. Unfortunately for her, she was not successful in her attempt to use this political channel to regain her kingdom, and she died in that city of north-western Iran in 1282.

The dynastic history of the Ilkhanate in this period is marked by a struggle between those who were supporters of the line of Hülegü through his son Abaqa and those who were pushing for a broader legitimising of kingship, with rulers being drawn from amongst the descendants of the founder of the Ilkhanate. This succession instability seems to have mitigated against Terken Khatun’s aspirations to maintain control over Kerman, but it was exactly this ‘pendulum politics’ of the Ilkhanate that would return female rule to Kerman shortly after Terken’s reign had ended. Initially, Soyurghatmish remained in charge of Kerman for two years, but, when Arghun became Ilkhan in 1284, Soyurghatmish was summoned to court to be questioned about his support for Tegüder; additionally, a decision had to be made about what should happen to the region. Soyurghatmish is recorded as going ‘with fear and trembling’ to the court, where he was awaited by Terken’s daughters, Padshah Khatun and Bibi Terken, who had both opposed his claim to the throne of Kerman. Bibi Terken, together with her son Nusrat al-Din Yuluk-Shah, challenged Soyurghatmish in front of the Ilkhan, who initially ordered that Kerman be ruled by Padshah Khatun and Soyurghatmish together. However, Padshah was not satisfied with this agreement. She complained about its terms and expressed her disappointment with regard to the agreement reached by one of her representatives who was a supporter of Bibi Terken. This caused division amongst the women. Soyurghatmish capitalised on the situation and found an opportunity to gain political support by marrying Kurdujin Khatun, a Mongol princess granddaughter of Hülegü by Möngke Temür and Abesh Katun. The marriage secured Soyurghatmish’s claim to Kerman. Arghun reversed his decision and ordered that Soyurghatmish be the sole ruler of the region.

However, it is noteworthy that Hijaj’s estates (injü), which were left in Kerman after his exile, were not given to the new ruler but put under the command of Bibi Terken’s son Nusrat al-Din Yuluk-Shah. Of further note is the fact that the Mongols seemed to control Kerman through a political manoeuvre which resembles the strategy used by the Yuan dynasty of China to control dependent territories such as that of the Koryo dynasty of Korea, a strategy that consisted of marrying Mongol
royal princesses to local rulers and by this means achieving close control over their subjects. No doubt this was possible and effective due to the strong character of Mongol women and to the status accorded them in political matters. In this way, in order to minimise the enmity between the daughters and the sons of Qutb al-Din Qutlughkhanid, Padshah Khatun was given in marriage to Arghun’s brother Geikhatu and was ordered to accompany him to the territories of Rum (Anatolia). She waited there while her half-brother ruled Kerman for a total of nine years, probably realising that the pendulum would swing back sooner or later and that her chance to seize the governorship of Kerman would eventually come. When Arghun died, a quick move by his widow Örüg Katun ensured the election of Geikhatu to the throne (r. 1291–5). One of the first measures taken by the new ruler was to give Kerman back to Padshah Khatun, who hastened towards her birthplace to revenge herself against the man who had removed her mother from the throne. When she arrived, her half-brother Soyurghatmish escaped and went to Geikhatu seeking asylum. The Mongol Ilkhan ‘sent him to Padshāh khâtūn … [she] held him in custody for several days and then put him to death’. With the opposition eliminated, she secured for herself the role of queen of Kerman, following the tradition of female rule started by her mother in the region and by her Qarakhitai female ancestors in Central Asia.

In the same way that political developments in the Mongol court were fundamental to Padshah’s enthronement, a new succession struggle brought about her decline. After the death of Geikhatu (d. 1295), the two conflicting notions of kingship clashed again. The rivals this time were Baidu (grandson of Hülegü by his son Taraghay) and Ghazan (son of Arghun and grandson of Abaqa). The former tried to seize the throne in 1291 on the death of Arghun, but was prevented by the political strategising of Örüg Khatun. At first it was Baidu who achieved short-lived success against Ghazan, and during this period women were once more the main protagonists in deciding the political future of Kerman. We need to take into account that Baidu was married to a daughter of Soyurghatmish called Shah ʿAlam, who, immediately after her father started to make his political and military moves towards Baidu, had contacted Kurdujin Khatun in Kerman for help in overthrowing Padshah Khatun. The former gathered the support of her loyal amirs and surrounded Kerman, forcing Padshah Khatun to surrender. While under siege, the queen of Kerman sent messengers to Ghazan’s ordo to seek an alliance with him, but, despite his agreement, she was captured and taken by Kurdujin to the court of Baidu. It seems that she attended the quriltai that elected the new ruler in 1295 and immediately afterwards Shah ʿAlam persuaded her husband to grant
his approval for a group of men to enter Padshah’s tent and assassinate her.\textsuperscript{138}

Although she won the struggle, Kurdujin Khatun does not seem to have been officially proclaimed queen of Kerman and is not considered by the sources to have been a ruler of the region. The fact that Ghazan quickly overthrew Baidu and made himself Ilkhan might have prevented this woman from continuing the ‘tradition’ of female rule in Kerman. The Ilkhan Ghazan decided to bring the female line to an end and elevate a son of the exiled Hijaj instead.\textsuperscript{139} The same pattern was followed by Öljietü when he gave the kingdom to a son of Soyurghatmish, but the son was accused of misgovernment and the province was placed under the direct control of the Ilkhan.\textsuperscript{140} Consequently, female rule in Kerman vanished after Padshah Khatun’s reign had come to an end, but the women of the Qutlughkhanid dynasty represent the continuation of an institution that had survived since the time of its Qarakhitai origins in Central Asia, through the Mongol Empire and into southern Iran. It is remarkable that the end of this practice in Kerman coincided chronologically with a decrease in the incidence of women publicly acting as kingmakers in the Ilkhanate. The evidence, once again, seems to indicate a change in the perception of female rule during the reign of Ghazan Khan (1295–1304).

\textbf{THE SALGHURIDS OF FARS AND THE REIGN OF ABESH KHATUN (R. 1263–84)}

The south-western province of Fars, continually linked to developments in Kerman, seems to have been influenced by the view that women might be openly recognised as rulers with the power to direct affairs of state in the region.\textsuperscript{141} Female rule emerged in the area in 1261, during the reign of Hülegü, when the Salghurid ruler Saʿd II had died on his way to Shiraz to assume control after the death of his father Abu Bakr.\textsuperscript{142} These were the circumstances in which Turkan Khatun,\textsuperscript{143} a wife of Saʿd originally from Yazd, received a \textit{yarligh} from Hülegü to rule in Fars as regent on behalf of her twelve-year-old son Muhammad.\textsuperscript{144} Consequently, at this point in the history of the Ilkhanate the Mongol rulers had granted permission for the south of Iran to be ruled by both Terken Qutlugh Khatun in Kerman and Turkan Khatun in Fars. But, compared with her Kermani counterpart, Turkan was not as successful in, nor as capable of, maintaining her position as the supreme authority in the region. It seems that the local amirs had more influence in the Shirazi court than in Kerman; at least they seem to have had more influence on the queen’s decisions. It is specifically mentioned in the sources that she relied on the support of Nizam al-Din Abu Bakr and Shams al-Din for the administration of the affairs of state and,
when her son died only one year and seven months after she had received the *yarlıgh* from Hülegü, her status as mother-regent could no longer be maintained.\textsuperscript{145}

In the following years, Turkan Khatun nevertheless played a fundamental part in the succession struggles that took place in Fars. There is disagreement in the sources about the details, but it seems that, after the death of her son, Turkan Khatun’s son-in-law Muhammad Shah, the nephew of the *atabeg* Abu Bakr, was on the throne for a short time.\textsuperscript{146} But only a few months later, Turkan Khatun, plotting with a group of Shul people and Turkmen amirs, accused Muhammad Shah of ‘not being fit to rule’ and sent him to the Ilkhan to be judged.\textsuperscript{147} In his place they installed his brother Saljuq Shah, whom Turkan hastened to marry.\textsuperscript{148} The support of the Turkmen people might suggest that in Fars the struggle between two ideas of kingship was taking place. It seems that the nomadic groups were, characteristically, keener to have a woman as their representative in the succession struggle, while the sedentary population of Shiraz might have looked more favourably on the appointment of a male descendant of the Salghurid dynasty to rule the kingdom. This context of internal opposition might help to explain why eventually a marriage between Turkan and Saljuq Shah was arranged in an attempt to resolve this conflict of interest. Yet, it might also help us to better understand Turkan’s death in 1264 and the different versions about her decease present in the sources.\textsuperscript{149} Her time as ruler of Fars is not regarded as a ‘golden age’ in the same way as the reign of her contemporary Terken Qutlugh of Kerman. Some scholars have interpreted Turkan’s political agenda as ‘*désastreuse*’. This, together with the incompetence of her subordinates and the internal divisions in the province, created the instability which justified the Mongols taking closer control of the province.\textsuperscript{150}

However, the Mongol removal of Saljuq Shah in 1264 did provide the chance for another woman to claim the throne of Fars.\textsuperscript{151} Turkan’s daughter, Abesh Khatun, was appointed ruler of the realm by the Mongols the same year as her mother’s passing, even though she was only four or five years old.\textsuperscript{152} The alliances already secured by her mother had made her a perfect candidate for the throne. Since Abesh had been betrothed to Möngke Temür, the son of Hülegü Ilkhan, Hülegü saw the chance to increase his control over the region whilst at the same time maintaining the support of the local nomadic tribes.\textsuperscript{153} Even though she was a puppet ruler in the service of the Mongols, Abesh was officially recognised as ruler of the dynasty and her name was mentioned in the *khuṭba*.\textsuperscript{154} The Mongols increasingly limited the autonomy of the province: once in 1265, when some supporters of Abesh rebelled against the Mongols, and another time
when problems regarding the collection of revenues in the province arose under the reign of Abaqa Ilkhan in 1271. In 1273, Abesh was taken to the Ilkhanid court for her marriage to be solemnised and so she became the chief wife of Möngke Temür. The marriage is generally regarded as an example of the Mongol political strategy of marrying the daughters and female relatives of the ruling families of dependent kingdoms, the intention being eventually to inherit such realms and make them part of the Mongol royal family. Fars seems to have been under the tutelage of Möngke Temür and governed by local amirs while Abesh spent time in her husband’s ordo in the company of Hülegü’s influential wife, Öljeyi Khatun. When Tegüder Ahmad became Ilkhan in 1282, he sent Möngke Temür to be governor of Shiraz while Abesh seems to have remained at the Mongol court. However, Möngke Temür died shortly after his appointment and Abesh was then summoned to become the governor of Shiraz holding full legitimacy from the Mongols and the local Salghurids of the region.

Abesh’s arrival in Shiraz was received with delight by a population that ornamented the streets of the city with flowers to welcome their new governor. However, her time in office was marked by constant conflict with the Ilkhanid court regarding tribute payments and the appropriation of estates. The fact that Abesh was granted Shiraz by Tegüder seems to have been a factor in the direct intervention that Arghun attempted in the region. The new Ilkhan decided to send ʿImad al-Din to Shiraz as governor of the region under orders to bring the queen back to the ordo. By this means, Arghun was able to fulfil a twofold purpose: he was rewarding ʿImad for his services in the war against Tegüder and at the same time he was appointing someone he had confidence in to strengthen centralised control over the region. Conflict arose between the new governor and the princess and shortly afterwards some of Abesh’s followers organised a plot to kill ʿImad al-Din. Arghun was furious and immediately sent the nephew of the murdered governor to investigate. Interestingly, at this point Arghun asked for permission from, and justified his proposed actions to, Abesh’s mother-in-law, Öljeyi Khatun. Then, he sent for the queen of Fars to be brought to his court. At first the young Abesh refused to comply and instead sent presents to certain highly esteemed Mongol and Persian nobles in a diplomatic offensive resembling the strategies of Töregene and Sorghaghtani Beki. But Abesh could not withstand the new attack launched by the Ilkhan and she was finally captured and sent to the royal ordo in Tabriz to be put to trial together with some of her dignitaries. They were found guilty and, whilst some of her relatives were executed, others were simply fined and had their estates confiscated and the property given to the poor and orphans.

Abesh’s life was spared, but the reason for the mercy shown by the
Ilkhan in the face of such subversion appears to have been brought about, not by any soft-heartedness on his part, but by the intervention of some of the influential women of the court. As we have seen above, Arghun counted on the support of Öljei Khatun in his struggle with Tegüider, so when he wanted to execute Abesh, the old lady interceded successfully in favour of her daughter-in-law. When Abesh returned to Shiraz, the person in charge of the kingdom was Jalal al-Din, ʻImad’s nephew. Within a few days of her return in 1286–7, he avenged his uncle and killed the twenty-six-year-old Abesh by ‘cutting her to pieces’.

The rise and fall of Abesh is complex and many of the accounts are contradictory. However, the general picture seems to be of a woman who was firstly nominally recognised as ruler of Shiraz when a child and who then acquired the capacity to rule properly as she got older. However, it seems that she struggled to push her own political agenda for the region because Shiraz had been targeted by the Mongols since the time of Hülegü as a territory to be brought under their direct control. The memory of Abesh Khatun’s reign and the destiny of the Salghurid dynasty was expressed by the historian Mustawfi, writing a few decades after the events, in the following terms:

[Abesh] reigned for a year over Fars, after which she was given in marriage to Möngke Temür the son of Hülegü Khan and Fars passed directly under the control of the Mongols, though Ābesh continued to be the nominal ruler for nearly 20 years.

During the reign of Geikhatu, the abovementioned Kurdujin, the daughter of Abesh, was appointed queen of Shiraz but denied control of the province of Fars. It seems that this was a strategy to maintain the apparentes extérieurs of Salghurid power whilst putting taxes and the revenues of the province under the direct control of Mongol representatives. At the same time, Kurdujin’s appointment could have served the new Ilkhan as a way of keeping her away from the struggle that Padshah Khatun was having in Kerman with Kurdujin’s husband Soyurghatmish. Finally, after the revolt of the amirs in 1319, the Ilkhan Abu Saʻid appointed Kurdujin once again in Shiraz and she was succeeded by her niece Sultan Khatun shortly after her death. However, their political power was limited to the city and their rule seems to have been more symbolic than political in character. Thus, after Abesh, the institution of female regency in Fars ceased to exist and female descendants of these women remained influential without being recognised as named rulers beyond the city of Shiraz. The process of acculturation among the Mongols with regard to female rule seems to have spread in a north–south direction and, as the more southerly provinces fell
under their control the Mongol rulers became increasingly dependent on their Persian subordinates. Sporadic reactions against this tendency seem to have occurred in the fourteenth century in highly nomadic areas of Iran such as Luristan, but, as was the case with Sati Beg, they were short-lived and encountered direct opposition from the post-1295 royal ordo.173

**Political intervention in Anatolia and the Caucasus**

Apart from southern and south-western Iran, other regions of the Middle East became subject to Mongol rule after the arrival of Hülegü in Iran. Prior to the Mongol conquest, Anatolia had close political, diplomatic and economic relationships with the Christian kingdoms of the southern Caucasus.174 The kingdom of Georgia, like the Ayyubid dynasty in Syria and Egypt, saw the rise of female rule in the period between the two Mongol invasions of the Middle East. Queen Rusudan (r. 1223–45) seems to have been a courageous woman who assumed control of the realm when her brother died and her nephew was still a minor.175 She ruled for a long period but at a very early stage in her reign had to deal with the invasion of Sultan Jalal al-Din of Khwarazm who, under pressure from the Mongols in the east, was being forced westwards.176 After the Mongol conquest, both Armenia and Georgia continued to play a role in the political balance of the Middle East. However, the importance of these two Christian kingdoms progressively declined and no further women assumed control of these realms. Nevertheless, some cases of political intermarriage between Armenian women and Persian notables under Mongol rule have been recorded, although their intervention in state affairs is not documented as it is in the case of Turko-Mongol women.177

At this time, Anatolia was under the rule of a local Saljuq dynasty that had progressively expanded its control over Anatolia from the late twelfth century and reached its peak in the first half of the thirteenth century under the rule of Sultan ʿAlaʾ al-Din Kayqubad I (r. 1220–37). Unfortunately for Saljuq aspirations, the region was invaded in 1243 when the Mongols defeated the Sultan at the battle of Kōse Dagh and ultimately incorporated the peninsula into the Mongol area of influence.178 A Mongol noyan from the Jochid (Golden Horde) branch of the Mongol royal family named Baiju was placed in charge of the area in 1255.179 Disagreements rapidly grew between the Mongols of the Ilkhanate and those of the Golden Horde over the control of Anatolia when Hülegü assumed control of the Ilkhanate in 1260. Baiju’s affiliation with the Mongols of Russia made him an unreliable commander in Hülegü’s eyes. After his participation in the sacking of Baghdad and the campaign in Syria in 1260, Baiju was eliminated and
many of the Golden Horde Mongols were forced to leave Anatolia and seek refuge in Mamluk Egypt. A puppet sultanate was established in the region, which was constantly under surveillance by various Mongol generals. Typically, the Ilkhan would control the succession of Saljuq sultans in Anatolia, not without turmoil and upheaval, until the Saljuqs vanished into thin air in 1308.

Ever since the Mongols had defeated the Saljuqs of Rum at the Battle of Köge Dagh in 1243, and especially since Hülegü’s advance into Iran in the 1250s, Anatolia had become an area of dispute between the Jochid Mongols (of the Golden Horde) and the Ilkhanids of Iran. The Mongols of the Golden Horde had maintained a strong interest and influence in the region throughout the thirteenth century, with Saljuq sultans such as ‘Izz al-Din Kaykaus II (d. 1280) being exiled to Mongol-dominated Crimea and marrying a Mongol khātūn of the Golden Horde. This woman, named Urbay Khatun, was the daughter of Berke Khan (d. 1266) and the marriage served to consolidate the support of the Mongols of Russia for ‘Izz al-Din’s line of succession among the unstable Saljuq dynasty of Rum in the second half of the thirteenth century. However, following the establishment of the Ilkhanate in 1260, the Saljuq domains were integrated into the Ilkhanid area of influence and, from this moment onwards, intervention by Mongol women into the affairs of Anatolia began to emerge. One particular story is mentioned by Rashid al-Din, who claims that Sultan Rukn al-Din (r. 1248–65) was taken to Hülegü’s court to respond to questions about the ‘inattention’ paid by his predecessor to the Mongol general Baiju. The Turkic sultan paid homage to the Mongol Ilkhan, but was pardoned only after Doquz Khatun interceded with her husband and extended her protection to the local ruler of Anatolia. While Saljuq sultans were brought to Iran to submit to the Ilkhans and were being protected by the khātūns, Mongol men and women had also been migrating to the Anatolian peninsula since the establishment of the Ilkhanate for a variety of reasons. For example, in 1271, Ajai, son of Hülegü, was sent by Abaqa with 3,000 troops to suppress a rebellion and another brother of the Ilkhan, Qonqurtai, followed some time later with the same purpose. Generally speaking, there was an increase in Mongol control over Anatolia during Abaqa’s reign in order to counteract the influence of the Golden Horde and the Mamluks in the region.

Among the Saljuqs of Rum, Turkic women had their own share of political authority and influenced the decision-making of the male rulers in different periods of Mongol-dominated Anatolia. For example, after the death of her husband, the wife of Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw III (d. 1284) convinced the new Ilkhan that he should newly divide the Sultanate of Rum among her young children. The episode occurred in the context
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of the accession of Arghun to the throne after the Ilkhanid civil war between him and his uncle Tegüder Ahmad. Arghun tried to implement a policy of ‘divide and rule’ to obtain a more direct involvement in Anatolia. The intervention of this Turkish woman is in line with patterns of political intervention seen commonly among Mongol women. She had to face the opposition of Masʿud and for that reason she sought the support of the Turkomans, who were in constant rebellion against both Mongol and Saljuq authority. The political gamble backfired on the princess, who had to face opposition in Konya with regard to this ‘dangerous’ alliance. Masʿud had not given up his aspirations to the throne and the woman decided to go to the Mongol camp in Iran to reassert her position. She died only a few days after leaving for Konya to take her sons out of the Sultan’s control.

Thus, the plan of Kaykhusraw’s wife was short-lived. In order to tighten control over the region, Arghun sent his brother Geikhatu to Anatolia where he acted as Mongol governor in the company of his wife Padshah Khatun. Masʿud was appointed Sultan of Rum under the patronage of the Mongols in c. 1285. In order to tighten their control over the region, the Mongols arranged the usual marriage alliances between Mongol women and local leaders. Therefore, Arghun sent the same Urbay Khatun, daughter of Berke, to marry Masʿud and by this means ensured that there were ‘trustful eyes’ watching over the Turkish sultan. In the new succession crisis that followed Arghun’s death in 1291, conflict arose between Geikhatu and Baidu. Anatolian subjects of the Mongols supported the former, while the latter secured the support of the eastern provinces of the Ilkhanate. Although the new Ilkhan was received with joy in the region, his military campaign against Konya and the subsequent political turmoil that the realm underwent under Geikhatu changed the relationship between the Sultanate of Rum and the Mongol central government. After Geikhatu (d. 1295), Anatolia’s relationship with the Mongols changed, although its economic and symbolic importance did not diminish. With the accession of Ghazan Khan there was greater central control over the peninsula, triggered by some years of rebellion that lasted until 1298. It is interesting that during this period the local dynasties of Kerman, Yazd and, to some extent, Fars, were brought to an end around 1304, and from then on the Mongols exercised more direct rule over the provinces. Once again, the period coincided with the disappearance of direct female intervention in political affairs, and information about the province is limited to lists of names that succeeded to the throne with restricted influence over the wider political scene of Mongol Iran. Finally, under Abu Saʿid, there was a new division of the territory as part of the reorganisation carried out by the Ilkhan after the revolt of the amirs in 1319.
There is not much information regarding Mongol women intervening in the political life of Anatolia during the Ilkhanid domination. Nor did Anatolian women acquire the same significance in the politics of the Ilkhanate as the women from Fars or Kerman had done. Rather, it appears that Mongol women were more prominent in other areas of Anatolian life such as religion and patronage of buildings, as we see in Chapter 5. Despite this, Saljuq women had a prominent role in the politics of the peninsula and its political development. Perhaps this is not the place to go deeper into this subject, but only to acknowledge the fact that many of the features of female intervention into politics among the Mongols could be also observed in the court of the Saljuqs of Rum, such as their occasional role as kingmakers, their influence in the succession to the crown and their role as advisors of male rulers. Yet, no woman was ever enthroned in Anatolia or acted as regent for the Sultans of Rum, who seem to have reserved the legitimation of rule solely for the hands of men.

Notes


18. See Chapter 5 for information about Doquz’s involvement in religious affairs.


25. The name appears in Persian sources in different forms such as قوتی or قوتی. In order to avoid confusion, we will follow Boyle’s transliteration of the name as ‘Qutui’.


29. Mother of Möngke Temür, son of Hülegü.

30. Mubarak Shah, youngest son of the caliph, was given to her and she sent him to Nasir al-Din Tusi in Maragha, where he married a Mongol woman and had two sons. *JT*, II, p. 1018/Thackston, p. 499. She was also in close contact with the ṣāḥib dīvān in Hülegü’s court, whom ‘she rescued from disaster’. See *JT*, II, p. 1113/Thackston, p. 543.

31. According to Broadbridge there is an element of tribal rivalry in this struggle between members of the Qonqirat and Oyrat people, whose interests in the Ilkhanate would be respectively represented by Qutui Khatun and Öljei Khatun. See A. F. Broadbridge, ‘Marriage, Family and Politics: The Ilkhanid-Oirat Connection’ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26:1–2 (2016), pp. 127–32.

32. A much more straightforward explanation is given by Vassaf, who does not explain the disagreement, but claims that all the amirs and nobles (امرا و شاهزاد) agreed to place Tegüder on the throne. See *TV*, p. 68.

33. *JT*, II, p. 1125/Thackston, p. 548. It is interesting that Rashid should say that at this point Qutui was in favour of Arghun in his bid for the throne, a claim that would seem to contradict the role she played as ḥātūn during Tegüder’s reign. *JT*, II, p. 1125/Thackston, p. 548.

34. *JT*, II, p. 1126/Thackston, p. 549; *TV*, p. 68.

42. Son of Abaqa and a concubine called Qaitmish Egachi, about whom we know little.
44. *JT*, II, p. 1127/Thackston, p. 549. By receiving a daughter of Tegüder (Kuchuk), the Kerait Alinaq replaced Qonqurtai as Tegüder’s ‘right hand’. See *JT*, II, p. 1134/Thackston, p. 553.
46. For example, Lagzi, son of the influential amir Arghun Aqa, his wife Baba Khatun, daughter of Hülegü and Öljei Khatun and one of Arghun Aqa’s wives. *JT*, II, p. 1140/Thackston, p. 556. It is interesting that Baba Khatun (also Mama Khatun) was the daughter of Öljei and Hülegü and therefore was forced to join her husband against the interests of her mother. On her, see *JT*, II, p. 972/Thackston, p. 476. On her family connections up to the reign of Abu Sa’id, see Abu al-Qasim ʿAbd Allah ibn ʿAli Kashani, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, ed. M. Hambly (Tehran, 1384/2005) (hereafter, *TU*), p. 7.
49. See *JT*, I, p. 181/Thackston, p. 97. This lady was also highly appreciated by
Tegüder Ahmad, which suggests that her influence went beyond the supporters of her husband; see TV, p. 77. On the name itself, see C. Melville, ‘Bologān (Būlūgān) Kātūn’, EIr.

50. Since Bulughan was a former wife of Abaqa, that might have granted her enough prestige to be considered to accompany her new husband Arghun to Tegüder’s court and to be in charge of the banquet. On the relevance of this woman in military affairs, see B. De Nicola, ‘Women’s Role and Participation in Warfare in the Mongol Empire’, in K. Latzel, S. Satjukow and F. Maubach (eds), Soldatinnen: Gewalt und Geschlecht im Krieg vom Mittelalter bis Heute (Paderborn, 2010), pp. 95–112.


53. The Qara’unas were a Mongol group that dwelt in Afghanistan and Central Asia and were close to the Chaghataids in this period. For the term ‘Qara’una’ and its use in the sources, see P. Jackson, The Delhi Sultanate: a Political and Military History (Cambridge, 1999), p. 328; JT, II, p. 1147/Thackston, p. 559. Todai and Armini were both of the Qonqirat people and wives of Tegüder Ahmad. Their execution suggests a potential threat that powerful women represented for rival factions. Armini Khatun seems to have been another influential woman during Tegüder’s reign. She is mentioned as giving refuge and protection to the Persian sahib Shams al-Din during this period. See JT, II, p. 1127/Thackston, p. 549.

56. JT, II, p. 1237/Thackston, p. 606. She died in 1296, and is also famous because she is the Mongol princess that Marco Polo accompanied from China on his way back to Europe in the thirteenth century. See M. Polo, The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian: Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East, trans. H. Yule, 2 vols (London, 1903), I, p. 32.

57. For example, Padshah Khatun, who will be referred to later in this chapter.


67. See, for example, the case of Qutlughshah Khatun in *ZM*, pp. 637–8. Abu Saʿid was the son of Haji Khatun; see *TU*, p. 44.


71. C. Melville, ‘Čobān’, *EIr*.


74. The best study of the conflict between Chopan and the opposing amirs can be found in C. Melville, *The Fall of Amir Chupan and the Decline of the Il-Khanate, 1327–1337: A Decade of Discord in Mongol Iran* (Bloomington, 1999).

75. Mustawfi dedicates an entire chapter of his *Zafarnamah* to Abu Saʿid’s obsession with Chopan’s daughter, Baghdad Khatun. *ZM*, pp. 648–9. See also HA, p. 117/HAB, p. 91.

76. Abu Saʿid quoted the *yasa* to claim Baghdad Khatun and annul her marriage to Shaykh Hasan; see HAB, p. 117. It is interesting that this appeal to Mongol traditional law should come at this late stage in the history of the Mongols in Iran. It highlights on the one hand that, despite their Muslim names, Mongol rulers still felt ‘Mongol’, but that, on the other hand, Chopan’s disregard for this law denotes a high degree of acculturation, with the *yasa* having lost most of its sacred status among Mongol members of the government such as Chopan. See the reaction of Chopan in *ZM*, p. 649. For the story, see Boyle, ‘Dynastic and Political History’, p. 410.
77. Melville, *Fall of Amir Chupan*, p. 29.
79. HA, p. 142/HAB, p. 108.
80. See Melville, *Fall of Amir Chupan*, p. 24. Melville found the story not only mentioned in HA p. 131/HAB, p. 103, but also in other Mamluk sources.
81. HA, p. 142/HAB, p. 108. The event is also mentioned in *ZM*, p. 669.
82. *ZM*, p. 666.
83. HA, p. 144/HAB, p. 110.
84. Aubin, *Émirs mongols*, p. 85
87. HA, p. 147/HAB, p. 113; *MA*, p. 299. Shabankara’i gives an account of Arpa being approached by Amir Sharaf al-Din Mahmud Shah together with Abu Sa‘id’s mother (Haji) and sister (Sati Beg). They propose that he, Arpa, assume the throne. This same amir is considered a liar by Shabankara’i, who accuses him of saying that Abu Sa‘id had named Arpa as successor when, according to Shabankara’i, the sultan had never said this. *MA*, pp. 293–4.
88. According to some accounts, ʿAli Padshah started to present himself as a fervent Muslim to gain the support of the Oyrat amirs of the ‘Arab countries’ for a revolt against Arpa. See HA, p. 148/HAB, p. 115.
90. Shaykh Hasan ‘Bozorg’ was the son of Amir Husain Jalayir and Oljatay Khatun (daughter of Arghun Ilkhan). He was the founder of the Jalayir dynasty of Iran and Iraq, which ruled for the period 336–1356. See *JT*, p. 1153/Thackston, p. 562; *TU*, p. 8; H. R. Roemer, ‘The Jalayirids, Muzaffarids and Sabardārs’, in P. Jackson and L. Lockhart (eds), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. VI, (Cambridge, 1986), p. 5. His new antagonist was another shaykh, Hasan Kuchek, the son of Temür-Tash and the grandson of Chopan. He was also the stepson of Sati Beg. He died in 1343 when ‘two or three women killed him by squeezing his tes-
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91. She was the daughter of Öljeitü, the sister of Abu Saʿid, and was married to Amir Chopan. See TU, p. 7/HA, p. 71/HAB, p. 50/DA, p. 6.

92. Mamluk sources mention that ʿAli Padshah gave shelter to the pregnant wife of Abu Saʿid called Dilshad Khatun and proclaimed that her child ‘would be Sultan, whether it turned out to be male or female’. See Melville, Fall of Amir Chupan, p. 46.

93. The reference to the coins, which read السلطانة العادلة ساتی بک خان خلدلله ملکها, and to her name being pronounced in the khuṭba can be found in B. Üçok, Femmes turques souveraines et regents dans les états islamiques, trans. A. Çamali (n. d.), p. 116. See also F. Mernissi, Forgotten Queens of Islam (Cambridge, 1993), p. 105; S. Album, ‘Studies in Ilkhanid History and Numismatics II: A Late Ilkhanid Hoard (741/1340)’, Studia Iranica 14:1 (1985), pp. 43–76.

94. For example, the ‘History of Shaikh Uwais’ dedicates a section to her reign, but she is not credited with participating in any of the events narrated. See Abu Bakr al-Qutbi Ahri, Taʾrikh-i Shaikh Uwais (History of Shaikh Uwais) an Important Source for the History of Adharbaijān in the Fourteenth Century, trans. J. B. van Loon (The Hague, 1954), pp. 67–8, 166–7.


96. THS, III, p. 228/Khwandamir, p. 131; HA, p. 162/HAB, p. 130.

97. It is worth mentioning here that in other aspects of Mongol life in Iran, Persianisation seems to have been less significant. See, for example, the analysis on the Keshig (Imperial Guard) in C. Melville, ‘The Keshig in Iran: The Survival of the Royal Mongol Household’, in L. Komaroff (ed.), Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan (Leiden, 2006), pp. 135–64.


100. For an account of Baraq Hajeb’s daughters, see MA, p. 196.


103. TV, p. 165.

104. Üçok regards Hejaj as a stepson (beau-fils) of Terken; see Üçok, Femmes


106. See above.

107. *TSQ*, pp. 106–7; see also *SU*, p. 38.


109. For example, by marrying her daughter Padshah Khatun to the Ilkhan Abaqa, see below.


111. The marriage seems to have taken place in 1271–2; see Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, p. 281; *TSQ*, pp. 139–40; Üçok, *Femmes turques*, p. 73.


118. According to *MA*, p. 199, he died ten years after exile; other authors mention that he remained in India for fifteen years. See *JT*, II, p. 934/Successors, p. 305; *TG*, I, p. 531; *TG*, II, p. 133; *THS*, III, p. 269/Khwandamir, p. 155; *TSQ*, p. 315.

119. *JT*, II, pp. 934–5/Successors, pp. 305–6. A very flattering account of her life is the *TSQ* in which her sense of justice is praised several times. See, for example, *TSQ*, p. 96, which opens its account of Terken by mentioning that she was called the ‘lawful khātūn’ (خاتون حلال).

120. *SU*, p. 51.


122. *TSQ*, pp. 57–8, from the introduction. See also Üçok, *Femmes turques*, p. 68; *MA*, p. 200.


125. She probably died in June or July of that year. See Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran*, p. 154. She was buried in Tabriz but then brought to Kerman by her daughter Bibi Terken to be buried in a mosque; *THS*, III, p. 269/ Khwandamir, p. 155.
126. The issue would not be solved until 1295 when Ghazan Khan was appointed Ilkhan. See this chapter’s final remarks.

127. A small account of Bibi Terken’s life can be found in Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, pp. 283–5; *THS*, III, p. 269/Khwandamir, p. 155.

128. In *MA*, p. 200, it is mentioned that Padshah Khatun tried to kill Soyurghatmish.

129. Möngke Temür was the son of Öljei Khatun, who was the woman who opposed Qutui during Tegüder’s reign.


131. On *injū*, see Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, p. 78; this seems to have been a diplomatic success for Bibi Terken; it also helped Arghun to balance Soyurghatmish’s power in the region; Aubin, *Émirs mongols*, p. 41.


134. According to Rashid al-Din, the enthronement of Geikhatu was planned by Örüg Khatun (wife of Arghun and Geikhatu) to prevent Baidu’s accession to the throne in 1291. See *JT*, II, pp. 1182–4/Thackston, p. 576.


139. His name was Muzaffar al-Din Muhammad, who died in 1303–4. See *TG*, I, pp. 533–5.


141. Several marriages are documented between the Qutlugh dynasty of Kerman and the Salghurid dynasty of Fars. For example, Lambton mentions the case of an attempt to marry Jahan Khatun bint Abu Bakr of Fars and Rukn al-Din, third ruler of Kerman. See Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, p. 277. On the Salghurid dynasty, see B. Spuler, ‘Atābakān-e Fārs’, *Elr*.


143. The sister of ʿAlah al-Dawla, the *atabeg* of Yazd (see Abu ʿAbbas Zarkub Shirazi, *Shirāz-nāma*, ed. I. V. Javadi (Tehran, 1350/1972) (hereafter, *SRN*), p. 62), and niece of Terken Qutlugh Khatun (see *JT*, II, p. 936). I will refer to her as Turkan as a transliteration of her name, instead of Terken as she is commonly known, to avoid confusion between her and Terken Qutlugh Khatun of Kerman. It should be noted that both are generally referred as *ترکان* in Persian sources.

144. *TV*, p. 105.


149. On the one hand, TG, I, pp. 508–9, explains that Saljuq Shah killed Turkan, which led to her brother, the atabeg of Yazd, asking Hülegü for help against Saljuq Shah. The Ilkhan sent an army which eventually took Shiraz and put its ruler to death in 663/1264–5. SRN (p. 63) agrees, accusing Saljuq of the murder, but Lambton observes that he killed her while drunk. See Lambton, Continuity and Change, p. 272; Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 119.
150. Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 118.
152. See B. Spuler, ‘ʿĀbeš Kāṭūn’, EIr. Also Lambton, Continuity and Change, p. 272, fn. 88.
153. TV, p. 113; Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 123.
154. SRN, p. 64.
155. Also Lambton, Continuity and Change, p. 272.
156. TV, p. 113.
157. Üçok, Femmes turques, p. 96.
158. Probably to keep him away from central power after the opposition to Tegüder from her mother.
159. TV, p. 124. The appointment of Abesh was 1283–4, so Möngke Temür’s death should have happened some time before that date when women were deciding the election of the new Ilkhan. According to Spuler (‘Ābeš Kāṭūn’, EIr), Möngke Temür died in April 1282. In JT, the death of Möngke Temūr is mentioned in the context of Tegüder’s coronation in 1282. See JT, II, p. 1125/Thackston, p. 548.
160. SRN, p. 68.
162. SRN, p. 70; TV, p 121. Vassaf mentions that the position was given as remuneration for ʿImad al-Din’s victory over Buqa, one of Tegüder’s allies.
163. TV, p. 122; Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 133.
164. This is another indication of the role played by women in the central ordo prior to 1294. Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 134.
165. TV, p. 122; Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 134.
167. TV, p. 124.
168. SRN, pp. 70–1; TV, p. 125. She was buried in the Mongol fashion and her properties divided between her daughters by Möngke Temūr (Kurdjūn Khatun and Alghachi), her servants and a son of Möngke Temūr by another woman. See Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 135.
170. Aigle, Le Fars sous la domination mongole, p. 144.

172. The role of Kurdujin Khatun, daughter of Abesh Khatun, in the history of Kerman has been mentioned in the section dealing with the Qutlughkhanids of Kerman.


175. She seriously considered leading a crusade when the Pope demanded it. In the end it was not carried out. See C. Toumanoff, ‘Armenia and Georgia’, in J. M. Hussey (ed.), *The Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge, 1966), p. 625.


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186. Cahen, La Turquie pré-ottomane, p. 276.


189. Cahen, La Turquie pré-ottomane, p. 278.


191. JT, II. p. 1155.


