Women in Mongol Iran

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Published by Edinburgh University Press

de Nicola, Bruno.
Women in Mongol Iran: The Kahtuns, 1206-1335.
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Women in Mongol Iran

military campaigns in the Mamluk territories in Syria and Palestine in 1260 yielded substantial riches, some of which were distributed among the family members and some sent back to the court of Möngke in Mongolia. There is evidence that at least part of this booty accumulated during Hulegu’s conquests was set aside for the women’s personal treasuries in their ordos. When the first Ilkhan died in 1265, his successor Abaqa informed his widows of his passing. Among these ladies was one of his principal wives (Qutui Khatun), who had been on her way from Mongolia to Iran to meet her husband. When she arrived, Abaqa received her and ‘enriched with money and goods’ the wife of his father. In addition, a concubine of Hulegu called Arighan was included among the ‘items’ reserved for the newly arrived Qutui Khatun to become one of her attendants. Her actual role in the court of the Ilkhan is made clear when Rashid al-Din mentions that ‘Qutui Khatun’s share of booty and plunder had been turned over to her [Arighan]. She had accumulated vast amounts of valuable items and property, so when Qutui Khātūn arrived in the ordu she found it well stocked with all sorts of things’. This story shows firstly that women still had a share in the revenues produced by conquest during the invasion of Iran and after the establishment of the Ilkhanate. Secondly, it underlines once again the difference between the status of wife and concubine among the khātūns, since the properties belonged to the chief consort of the Ilkhan while the concubine played a role in accumulating and administering the khātūn’s revenues.

In addition to a direct accumulation of wealth made by women from the booty obtained in military campaigns, resources were distributed among members of the royal family through other channels. For example, different types of gifts were exchanged among important personalities across the empire, playing an important role in maintaining alliances between factions and territories. Whenever a new Ilkhan ascended the throne, the ladies of the court would receive gifts. Hulegu gave to his sisters, sons and generals immediately after appointing a man in charge of the treasury in Iran. His two immediate successors, Abaqa and Tegüder, also made gifts to the khātūns when they took the throne. Similarly, Geikhatu and especially Ghazan Khan, whose generosity was remarked upon by Rashid al-Din, gave money to the women on several occasions. It is not easy to be precise about the quantity of riches transferred from the treasury to the ladies’ ordos. Such gifts generally included money and luxury goods such as goblets, jewels and especially expensive textiles. In turn, the women bestowed gifts of money on local nobles and religious leaders, contributing in this way to a further distribution of wealth.

These personal gifts and presents need to be distinguished from the
other sources of income which noble women had in Iran. In the Ilkhanate, there was a larger sedentary population than among other regions of the empire such as the Golden Horde or the Chaghataid Khanate. The taxation of Mongol Iran is confusing and has generated a considerable amount of literature. Generally speaking, the Ilkhanate functioned with a dual administration system which maintained the existing Islamic-Persian system and incorporated mainly three new fiscal measures of Mongol origin.\[^{155}\]

The difference in the Mongol taxation system appears to rest on the fact that it was irregular in its timetable and based on the census to determine the amounts to be paid. On the other hand, the Islamic-Persian system was based on land productivity. This difference between the two systems allowed for their coexistence, but also doubled the financial pressure on the conquered population.\[^{156}\]

Three new taxes were introduced by the Mongols with the clear purpose of generating income for the royal family. The first was called the \textit{qubchur}, which, according to Juvayni, was introduced in Iran as part of the reforms carried out by Möngke in the early 1250s.\[^{157}\] It seems to have been a tax of nomadic origin designed to exact cattle and soldiers; subsequently, it was transformed into a poll tax to adapt to the sedentary subjects of Iran.\[^{158}\] The second tax is generally referred to as the \textit{qalān} in Persian sources, but not much is known about it; it is presumed to be a generic term referring to a group of nomadic exaction taxes which were adapted to the financial needs of the conquerors.\[^{159}\] Finally, there was a tax called the \textit{tamghā}, which is agreed to have been a tax on trade and commercial transactions, which, as we will see below, continued to play an important role in the Ilkhanate. In turn, the fiscal burden over the local population became too high, meaning that this dual taxation system could not be maintained for long. The deteriorating economy in the second half of the thirteenth century, together with the progressive incorporation of local administrators into the court, were the driving forces behind the important economic reforms carried out by Ghazan Khan at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries.

The taxation system helped the Ilkhanate to accumulate resources that were distributed, as we have seen, among the influential Mongol women of Iran. In addition, noble women participated more directly in the Ilkhanate economy through ‘estate taxes’ which were divided between those lands under the supervision of the \textit{dīvān} and those which were the direct property of the royal family (\textit{khāṣṣa} and \textit{injū}).\[^{160}\] The former was land confiscated by the Mongols from the conquered Persian nobility, and its revenues were used for the maintenance of the Khan, the \textit{khātūns}, the offspring of the royal family and members of the \textit{ordos}.\[^{161}\] Interestingly,
the Mongol concept of the *ordo* is similar to the *injū*, which includes produce from a particular piece of land, revenues from taxes (both Persian and Mongol) and people who inhabit the place.\(^{162}\) Consequently, when we find references in the sources to Mongol women in Iran being allocated land to hold in usufruct, we should not understand that they governed such land, but that they enjoyed its productivity.\(^{163}\)

In Iran, the practice of allotting land to women took place from the very beginning. Abaqa distributed the resources of sedentary populations among the *khātūns*, giving a portion of Mayyafariqin [in Syria] to Qutui Khatun, part of Diyarbekir and the province of Jazīra [Iraq] to Oljäi Khatun, Salmas [north-western Iran] to Jumghur’s wife Tolun Khatun and his sons Jūshkab and Kingshū. He also gave some territories to his sons and concubines.\(^{164}\)

However, from the end of Abaqa’s reign, it appears that the allocation of estate taxes for *khātūns’ ordos* was replaced by a system whereby the allocated region had to pay a fixed tax that a women’s servant collected from the assigned territories.\(^{165}\) According to Rashid al-Din, funds were squandered and corruption among the servants of the ladies and the governors of the provinces led to an ever-increasing loss of revenue, culminating in the financial chaos of Geikhatu’s reign (r. 1291–5). This situation prepared the way for the Persian vizier to justify the reforms of his patron Ghazan Khan when he assumed control of the realm. It is said that trials were held to punish corrupt servants and provincial deputies, whilst the administration of the ladies’ *ordos* was reformed, which included restricting their autonomy. Despite the corruption and possible impoverishment of the *khātūns’ ordos* during this period of financial chaos, women retained control over property, attested to by the fact that Ghazan Khan gained the support of many women’s *injūs* to finance his claim to the throne in 1294–5.\(^{166}\) Further, women having land revenues under their command seems to have persisted up to the reign of Abu Saʿīd (r. 1317–35). When speaking of Baghdad Khatun, Ibn Battuta mentions that ‘each khātūn possesses several towns and districts and vast revenues, and when she travels with the sultan she has her own separate camp’.\(^{167}\)

Finally, it is worth mentioning that in the Ilkhanate trade continued to be a pivotal part of the Mongol economy, even acquiring a global dimension, as it was strategically located on the trade routes that connected Europe, India and the Far East.\(^{168}\) Opening trade routes had been a clear policy from the time of Möngke and this remained so under Hülegü.\(^{169}\) The immense booty gained by the conquest of Alamut and the sacking of Baghdad might have acted like a magnet, drawing merchants to the
Ilkhanate. Rashid al-Din laments the fact that once Ghazan had come to the throne, ‘the treasures Hülegü Khan had brought from Baghdad, the infidels’ territories, and other places … had been stolen by the guards over time, and bars of gold and jewels were being sold to merchants’. The Mongol rulers’ interest in keeping commerce flowing in Iran can be seen from the very beginning. When Hülegü occupied Baghdad after defeating the last Abbasid caliph, he sent two of his commanders to begin the reconstruction of the city. The Ilkhan commanded that, once the dead had been buried, the markets of the city were to be restored as quickly as possible. There are other examples of this determination to restore trade after military conflict. During Ghazan Khan’s campaign to repel the Golden Horde’s incursion into Azerbaijan, the area was ‘obliterated’, according to Rashid al-Din, but the merchants returned to the region of Tabriz to continue trading.

In the first period of the Ilkhanate, Mongol women in Iran appear to have managed to maintain their lifestyle with the revenues produced in their ordos. With booty, land revenues and gifts pouring in from the Khan and the amirs, the khatūns seem to have been well provided for. In this period of plenty, Rashid al-Din notes, merchants were a common feature in female camps, where they moved goods to benefit the khatūns and were depositaries of the ladies’ revenues. Marco Polo observed that Mongol women were constantly involved in trading activities, selling and buying all that they and their dependants needed. These women, who belonged to the highest strata of the Ilkhanid nobility, shared their connexion with the great commercial companies and with big wholesale and transit trade. They invested a part of their income in the companies of the great wholesale merchants, called usually urtaq (ortaq) … who returned the feudal lords [or ladies] their share of the profit in goods, mostly textiles.

However, the growing dependence of the nobility upon the merchant community led to corruption and financial speculation, and the manipulation of the currency to the benefit of the merchants themselves, which inevitably led to the draining of treasuries and to economic instability.

One of the areas where trade became especially profitable in the Ilkhanate was the Persian Gulf and the provinces of southern Iran that connected the Arabian Peninsula, the Levant and India. These regions were ruled in the first half of the Ilkhanate by different women of the Salghurid and Qutlugkhanid dynasties. The Salghurids, an autonomous entity under Mongol rule, controlled the Persian Gulf and the revenues from trade in that region. As we have seen, Abesh Khatun, the ruler of Fars, struggled to impose her authority and to protect the treasuries of the
province against the ever more controlling central Mongol court. After her death, Rashid al-Din says, the dynasty ceased to have any real control over the region. He mentions that, ‘although the office of malik of Shiraz is now performed by ortags and merchants, the drums are still beaten at the gates of the atabegs’ palace and the Great Divān is still held there’.

However, by the fourteenth century, Hormuz, according to Shabankara’i, was under the control of a woman called Bibi Maryam, who also controlled the Gulf and the lucrative trade of the area.

To summarise, female economic activity in the Ilkhanate went through different phases. Initially, women continued to benefit from the distribution of wealth carried out by the rulers, with the resources coming from the conquest of Iran and the appropriation of the treasuries of the caliph and Alamut. Much of this came in the form of presents, which helped to maintain the always unstable political alliances of the Mongol ulus, whilst at the same time enabling these women to create demands that dynamised the economy. Gradually, the sedentary nature of larger parts of Iran and Möngke’s new approach to the land made way for women to be allocated a share of the dual taxation system, especially in taxes from those lands confiscated from the Persian nobles who had not joined the Mongols as they advanced westwards into the Middle East. The constant interest of the Mongol nobility in trade and commercial exchange allowed women to invest at least part of their income with the merchants of their camps in order to finance the increasing demands of their lifestyle. This encouraged speculation and corruption, which the Ilkhans tried to counteract by the imposition of taxes on the sedentary population of the provinces, particularly in southern Iran. This culminated with the reforms of Ghazan Khan and his vizier Rashid al-Din, who sought to put an end to uncontrolled exaction.

**The Economic Autonomy of Mongol Women in the Ilkhanate: From Transmission to Appropriation of Wealth**

Despite the risk of being oversimplistic, the period of Mongol domination in Iran can be divided into two different scenarios for methodological purposes. The first corresponds to a period when, despite Tegüder Ahmad’s short reign, there was continuity in the line of succession from Hülegü (d. 1265) through the descendants of Abaqa (d. 1282), his son Arghun (d. 1291) and then Geikhatu (d. 1295). The second period begins with the struggle for power between Baidu (d. 1295) and Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304), and the latter’s conversion to Islam. These two periods influenced in different ways the transmission practices of female properties, conditioning their economic autonomy and modifying the way in
which property had passed from woman to woman in previous periods. Despite influential women having a say over who the new recipient of an ordo should be, it needs to be stressed that the sources clearly mention that the allocation of women’s ordos after a khatūn’s death always rested with the male ruler of Iran or male members of the royal family. So, even if the administration of resources belonged to women, the ownership of the ordos remained a masculine monopoly. In this section, we are mostly concerned with exploring how the custom of men controlling the passage of property from woman to woman became a direct appropriation of the khatūns’ property by men, thus betraying the tradition of women’s administration of these resources.

**The Transmission of the Khātuns’ Property in Iran Before Ghazan’s Reforms**

Although information regarding the transmission practices of khātuns’ ordos is generally incomplete for most regions of the Mongol Empire, in the case of the Ilkhanate it is fairly abundant. This might be due to the direct involvement of Rashid al-Din in the reforms carried out by Ghazan Khan. The need for the Persian vizier to account for women’s property in order to reconstitute the Ilkhanate economy might have been the reason for the detailed information his account generally provides about these women. The considerable accumulation of wealth from looting, trade and confiscation by the Mongols in the early Ilkhanid period might have created a surplus which led to the economic autonomy of the khātuns’ ordos.

References to the transmission of property among Hülegü’s wives start to emerge at the time of his death in 1265. It is at this moment that his son and heir Abaqa began to redistribute female properties among the women in his family. Hülegü had distributed the ordos of his wives to different parts of the empire when he had conquered Iran. Among them was one of his major wives, Güyük Khatun, who died in Mongolia before the departure of her husband to the west. According to Banakati, her camp was given to a certain woman called Arzani, about whom we have no further information. However, Rashid al-Din clearly mentions that when Güyük Khatun died, Hülegü married Qutui Khatun and gave her the ordo of the deceased khatun. Qutui brought with her the ordo of Güyük Khatun to Iran and united it with the properties that were kept aside for her in the Ilkhanate until her arrival.

The ordos of Hülegü’s other wives remained in their hands while they were alive. This was so with the properties of Öljei Khatun, who was the
sister of Güyük Khatun by another mother. Because she lived longer than her husband, Abaqa married her and kept her ordo intact. As we have seen, she used her prestige and economic autonomy in the political struggles of the Ilkhanate by supporting Arghun against Tegüder Ahmad and hosting her daughter-in-law Abesh Khatun at her ordo. In general, if the wife of the father was still alive, the Mongols in this period married these women to ensure that their property and people would be on their side in the event of a conflict. Yet some complicated cases appear, for example with the ordo of Doquz Khatun (d. 1265), who died shortly after her husband Hüllegü and had no children. This meant that her properties were left without a head, posing a challenge to successive Ilkhans on how to deal with the wealth and people of this lady. The fact that she is not mentioned among the official wives of Hüllegü has raised further suspicion over her possible role in securing legitimacy for the Ilkhanate and the Hüllegüid line of succession. Possibly this role as legitimiser of a line of succession helps to explain the fact that the transmission of her ordo is the only one that can clearly be traced into the fourteenth century as being held exclusively by women, even beyond the economic reforms carried out by Ghazan Khan.

When Doquz died in 1265 Abaqa married Tuqtani Khatun, a former concubine of his father’s, in order to promote her to principal khātūn and put her in charge of Doquz’s ordo. So now the ordo was not only still under the authority of a woman, but a woman of the same tribal origin and Christian faith as Doquz Khatun. Arguably, this move might have helped Abaqa maintain the alliances forged by his father with that community. Tuqtani died on 21 February 1292 (on the last day of Safar 691) during the reign of Geikhatu. However, as a sign of times to come, the new receiver of the ordo was not married by the present Khan of Iran but by his nephew Ghazan. Doquz Khatun’s ordo was then given to Kokachin Khatun, a lady from the family of Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ who became famous among historians for being the lady that travelled from China with Marco Polo on the Venetian merchant’s return to Europe. It is noteworthy to mention that the incorporation of this khātūn’s ordo into Ghazan’s sphere of influence occurred only a few years before he ascended the throne, just in time for the contingent of people belonging to this camp and the legitimacy that came with it to help Ghazan in his struggle against Baidu. See Figure 4.2 for some more examples of the transmission of khātūns’ ordos.

Kokachin Khatun died only four years after arriving in Iran in 1296, when her husband Ghazan had already been crowned ruler of the Ilkhanate and converted to Islam. Unlike with other khātūns’ ordos
in this later period, Ghazan decided to place a woman in charge of it after his wife’s death, keeping this set of properties under the control of women. He gave the camp to a woman called Karamun after marrying her in 1299 and receiving a sizeable dowry. Not much is known about this woman beyond the fact that she was the daughter of Abatay Noyan and the cousin of Bulughan Khatun ‘Moʿazzama’, the wife of Arghun and Ghazan. She passed away on 21 January 1304 (12 Jumada II 703). According to Rashid al-Din, Ghazan was deeply affected by her death and her body was carried to Tabriz to be buried. After that, ‘he [Ghazan] went into her ordu and wept much. He ordered that whatever arrangements and ceremony she deserved should be carried out. After her coffin was taken away, tears welled up in his imperial eyes every time he thought of her’. The ordo, however, was not left empty and when Öljeitü was crowned later that year he placed his new wife Qutlughshah Khatun in charge of it.

There are two interesting elements here. First, it seems that the ordo originally belonging to Doquz Khatun had a certain symbolic value, possibly functioning as a source of legitimacy for the Mongol rulers of Iran. Further, although Rashid al-Din finished his chronicle in the reign of Ghazan, he includes in his account the fact that the ordo belonged to a wife of Öljeitü, a singularity that does not appear in relation to other ordos. Second, looking at the receiver of the ordo, another interesting element emerges. Qutlughshah Khatun was the daughter of Amir Irinjin, a powerful amir who had rebelled against Abu Saʿid in 1319. Amir Irinjin, according to some sources, was not only a relative of Doquz Khatun, but also a Christian. Therefore, the transmission of this ordo into this Christian family and its maintenance into the fourteenth century might suggest a possible connection between it and the Christian community of the Ilkhanate, an association originally used by Hülegü and Abaqa almost sixty years previous.

Some women in charge of ordos were replaced by other women when they died. However, a number of ladies’ ordos seem to have been created from scratch by rulers at the time of their enthronement. Yesünjin, Abaqa’s mother, was one of Hülegü’s secondary wives and belonged to the Suldus people in attendance at the ordo of the above-mentioned Güyük Khatun. When she came to Iran with Qutui Khatun, Abaqa’s mother was given an ordo and her status was upgraded to ‘Mother of the Khan’. Her camp is interesting because, after her death in 1272, it passed to Padshah Khatun, a Muslim non-Mongol woman who became the first ‘native’ Turco-Iranian to become a khātūn and official wife of a Mongol Ilkhan. Her status was upgraded from secondary wife to Khatun after her arrival in Iran. This
also suggests that Yesünjin’s ordo was newly created, since she had been in the Güyük ordo, which she did not inherit because it passed to Qutui, who was still alive and administering the camp.200 In the case of Abaqa’s wives, the first woman he married. We do not know much about her, but, after her death, Abaqa replaced her with a Tatar woman called Nuqdan, who eventually mothered Geikhatu Ilkhan.201 Nuqdan died and Abaqa put in her place El-Tuzmish Khatun, a woman of the Qonqirat people, related to the Chaghatayids through her mother.202 Despite not having a clear sense of its origin, this ordo’s importance resides in the fact that it belonged to the chief wife of Abaqa. In addition, El-Tuzmish Khatun married three successive Mongol Ilkhans, which might be an indication of the symbolic and economic value that holding this encampment provided to this lady.203 Further, this ordo continued functioning into the early fourteenth century under the reign of Ghazan Khan, when we find descriptions of the khātūn travelling around Iran, guarding Mongol princes in her camp and giving banquets for the Khan and the ladies of the court.204 Similarly, the ordo of Martai Khatun, Abaqa’s second wife, seems to have been of a new type. Martai was of a prestigious lineage since she (and her well-known brother Musa) were grandchildren of Chinggis Khan by his daughter Tümälün.205 She lived into the reign of Arghun and was replaced by Tödai Khatun, a former wife (or possibly originally a concubine) of Abaqa who played an important role in the struggle between Arghun and Tegüder Ahmad.206 This last woman (Tödai) only became a khātūn after Arghun placed her in charge of Martai’s ordo in about 1287, and she continued to hold it at least until 1295 when her camp was the setting for a peace treaty.207 Interestingly, Tegüder Ahmad was incapable of taking any women from his father Hülegü and only one from his brother Jumghur.208 In fact, when he tried to claim Tödai after the death of Abaqa, he was firmly opposed by Arghun. This lady became a major conflict between Arghun and Tegüder Ahmad during the civil war that confronted these two Ilkhans. Eventually, Arghun married Tödai only after Ahmad’s death, making her a khātūn and providing her with an ordo and the economic autonomy to influence the political life of the Ilkhanate. Tegüder Ahmad’s attempts to seize these properties, and Arghun’s resistance to them, suggest that the patrimony initially secured by Abaqa by marrying his father’s wives helped to secure, through Mongol patrilineality, the legitimacy and economic strength of Abaqa’s descendants. This conflict for a woman’s ordo is an indication of the economic background to the political struggle for succession in the Ilkhanate between the traditional elective system of rulers and the lineal descent from Hülegü that would ultimately be imposed.
Finally, there is one ordo that illustrates the transition from this early period to the reforms carried out by Ghazan Khan. Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ was a woman of the Baya’ut people who first married Abaqa and, like Dorji and Martai, received an ordo for herself. However, ‘because he [Abaqa] loved her very much, he seated her above Martai and Täspina (Despina) Khätún’. She bore only a daughter by Abaqa and when he died Arghun married her and the rest of Abaqa’s wives. Her ordo was instrumental in Arghun’s escape when Tegüder Ahmad imprisoned him for rebellion. When Bulughan died in 1286 her body was taken to Shujas near the city of Sultaniya where, presumably, Arghun was buried later on. Following the usual pattern when the holder of a khätün’s ordo had died, Arghun married another woman called Bulughan Khatun (‘Moʿazzama’) from the Eljigin branch of the Qonqirat people. We will further explore the singularity of this ordo in relation to Ghazan Khan’s rise to power in the next section, but would like to stress at this point that the ordo of the ‘Bulughan ladies’ was a new allocation of properties created by Abaqa Khan, maintained thereafter by Arghun and then by Geikhatu and Ghazan into the early fourteenth century.

In this period, the khätüns’ ordos that had originally been created in Mongolia were maintained and the new ones were created by the Ilkhans of Iran. The allocation to women of property from different sources and its storage in their ordos certainly provided women of the noble strata with an important degree of economic autonomy. Their role in the political development of the Ilkhanate is illustrated by the importance of female camps in promoting diplomatic encounters, protecting fugitives and even planning rescue missions. Furthermore, the attention that Mongol male rulers paid to securing the passing on of these ordos as integral units might have encouraged the growth of wealth in these camps. So, two elements, namely the increasing value of the ladies’ ordos and the increasing involvement of women in politics, appear to have made these camps economic and political bases that might sometimes have held the balance of power when there was disagreement over the election of a new ruler of the Ilkhanate. In relation to this, when the Ilkhanate suffered a deep economic crisis after the reign of Geikhatu (1291–5), it is not surprising that Ghazan, with the help and possible influence of local administrators, decided to implement a series of economic reforms across his territories. Women’s ordos were of primary importance in these reforms and, as we see below, the limitation and appropriation of the khätüns’ property and autonomy was one of the targets.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordo Number</th>
<th>First known owner</th>
<th>Assigner</th>
<th>Receiver of the ordo</th>
<th>Assigner</th>
<th>Receiver of the ordo</th>
<th>Assigner</th>
<th>Receiver of the ordo</th>
<th>Assigner</th>
<th>Receiver of the ordo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Doquz Khatun</td>
<td>Abaqa Ilkhan</td>
<td>Tuqtani Khatun</td>
<td>Geikhatu or Ghazan Ilkhan</td>
<td>Kokachin Khatun</td>
<td>Ghazan Ilkhan</td>
<td>Karamu Khatun</td>
<td>Öljëitü Ilkhan</td>
<td>Qutlughshah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gûyük Khatun</td>
<td>Abaqa Ilkhan</td>
<td>Qutui Khatun</td>
<td>Appropriated by Arghun after the succession struggle with Aḥmad Tegüder.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yesünjin Khatun</td>
<td>Abaqa Ilkhan</td>
<td>Padshah Khatun</td>
<td>No track of the ordo after her death. Possibly appropriated during Ghazan Kahn’s reign.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Doji Khatun</td>
<td>Abaqa Ilkhan</td>
<td>Nuqdan Khatun</td>
<td>Aboqa Ilkhan</td>
<td>El-Tuzmish Khatun (survived into the 14th century)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Martai Khatun</td>
<td>Arghun Ilkhan</td>
<td>Tödai Khatun (Disputed by Aḥmad Tegüder). Ordo kept by Ghazan?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bulughan Khatun Bozorg</td>
<td>Arghun Ilkhan</td>
<td>Bulughan Khatun ‘Mo’azzama’ (Disputed by Geikhatu Ilkhan). Finally appropriated by Ghazan Ilkhan during the civil war against Baidu.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Figure 4.2** The evolution of the *khātūns’ ordos* in Ilkhanid Iran.
Women and the Economy of the Mongol Empire

THE APPROPRIATION OF LADIES’ WEALTH: GHAZAN KHAN’S RISE TO POWER AND ECONOMIC REFORMS

Most of what we know regarding women’s ordos and their economic activity is provided by Rashid al-Din, who, writing in the reign of Ghazan Khan, had a personal interest in underlining the role that these camps played in the economy of the Ilkhanate. Since he was responsible for designing and implementing the economic reforms of his patron, some information provided in his chronicle appears to be an attempt to justify some of Ghazan’s actions when he was on the path to becoming Ilkhan. Among these is the claim that the ordo of Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ was in reality given to Ghazan by his grandfather Abaqa. According to Rashid al-Din, this happened at the same time that the young Ghazan was entrusted to Bulughan for his education and the lady kept the ordo and the future Ilkhan Ghazan throughout Tegüder Ahmad’s reign (1282–4). Abaqa died in 1282 and Bulughan married Arghun by the levirate system. The relevance of this ordo can be seen in the fact that, when the Persian vizier describes Bulughan’s death in 1286, he offers an unusual description of the property held in the ordo.

When he [Arghun] inventoried the storehouse of the deceased Bulughan Khatun, he took a few items of clothing and gold and silver utensils for himself. As for the rest, he said, ‘These stores, yurt, and ordu belong to Ghazan by order of Abaqa Khan. They are to be sealed.’ Those who had seen the storehouse reported that no one had ever possessed its like, for there were more jewels, utensils, and precious pearls therein than could be described. The reason for this is that, because Abaqa Khan loved Bulughan Khatun excessively, every time he went into the treasury he picked up a precious jewel and gave it to her in secret. When the treasurers pilfered things after Bulughan Khatun’s death, Ghazan found out about it and was constantly asking for an investigation, but the treasury remained sealed.

Rashid al-Din insists several times that when Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ died her ordo should be given to Ghazan Khan, and he suggests that this particular ordo included extensive properties, wealth and presumably people. Consequently, although Arghun married another woman of the same name (Bulughan ‘Mo‘azzama’) immediately after Bulughan ‘Bozorg’ had died, the property was not transferred to the new wife, but allegedly its treasures were sealed, reserved for Ghazan Khan and stored in Khurasan. If this was the case, the practice of replacing the female head of an ordo with another woman was flouted and, though the new wife was made a khātūn, she received none of the riches. In the narrative, this anomaly is somehow justified by claiming that these properties
were treated differently because Abaqa foresaw in his grandson Ghazan a
 glorious fate as a ruler of Iran. Yet, when one looks at the rise of Ghazan
 Khan, other elements emerge that might explain not only Rashid’s narra-
tive about this camp but also the story itself as a means of justifying some
of the economic reforms designed by the vizier.

When Geikhatu took control of the realm in 1291, he hurried to seize
control of his father’s female ordos, just as his predecessors had done
before him. He married Padshah Khatun and El-Tuzmish Khatun from his
father’s appanage, but also took two wives from his brother and predeces-
sor Arghun Khan. One was the Christian Örüg Khatun and the second one
was Bulughan ‘Moʿazzama’. As we have seen, the first two held important
ordos belonging previously to the mother of Abaqa and to Doquz Khatun
respectively, which lent extra legitimacy to his claim to the throne. While
the acquisition of these two camps seems to have been straightforward, the
matter of Bulughan Moʿazzama’s ordo led to friction between the Ilkhan
and his nephew Ghazan Khan. A son marrying his dead father’s wives –
and taking control of their ordos – was not a matter of great conflict among
the Mongols of Iran. However, when a new ruler claimed the wives of his
brothers and predecessors, the transmission of property from woman to
woman may have threatened to undermine the financial basis of any future
claim of those sons to the throne. Hence, the above-mentioned dispute
between Tegüder and Arghun over Abaqa’s wife Todai Khatun was to
be repeated between Geikhatu and Ghazan over Bulughan ‘Moʿazzama’.

Geikhatu hurried to marry the disputed lady in July/August 1292
(Shaʿban 691), which must have seemed like a setback for Ghazan Khan’s
aspirations to the throne. It is suggested in the account that Geikhatu’s
underlying strategy was to incorporate this ordo into his own appanage
and for that reason he ‘refused to let Ghazan go to her’. Immediately,
Ghazan went back to Khurasan, ensuring in this way that his uncle did not
claim the properties of Bulughan ‘Bozorg’ left in that region. However,
in the narrative, Rashid al-Din tries to portray Geikhatu’s actions as ille-
gitimate and contrary to his father’s (Abaqa’s) will. This impression is
given when it is said that the marriage between Geikhatu and Bulughan
took place ‘against her will’, indicative of the new Ilkhan’s wrongdo-
ing. By contrast, Ghazan is praised for his patience in bearing his lot and
waiting until the time comes to consummate his marriage to his father’s
wife. This last statement, however, seems counterfactual. Rashid,
writing a few years after the event, knew the outcome of the story. Instead
of waiting, Ghazan had hurried to marry Kokechin Khatun, who had come
from China accompanied by Marco Polo and was placed in the prestigious
ordo of Doquz Khatun. By marrying this woman whom his father Arghun
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had asked Qubilai to send from China (a woman of the same family as Bulughan ‘Bozorg’). Ghazan had secured his claim to the ordo.\textsuperscript{224}

The unfortunate economic measures carried out in Geikhatu’s reign left the Ilkhanate in jeopardy after his death in 1295 when his cousin Baidu rebelled, killed him, and had himself crowned Ilkhan on 8 Jumada II 694 (25 April 1295).\textsuperscript{225} At this point, Ghazan saw the opportunity he had been waiting for and marched from Khurasan into Tabriz to claim the throne. On the way, he added powerful amirs and princes to his cause and also, presumably, locals because he converted to Islam en route.\textsuperscript{226} At a gathering of his growing band of allies, he complained about the support promised by Baidu, giving this as a reason to begin hostilities against his cousin. He claimed he was not receiving ‘the camps, and the women, and the concubines of my father which he promised’, suggesting that Baidu was trying to take control of the women and their camps and thus contravene the customary rules.\textsuperscript{227} In order to avoid a civil war, the noyans of each side met at the ordo of the already mentioned Tödai Khatun and agreed on the distribution of territories and people. Under Ghazan’s control were placed some members of the royal family and the revenues (injü) produced in east and south Iran. Although negotiations seemed to advance towards a peaceful resolution, the arrival of reinforcements from Baghdad for Baidu’s army led to negotiations failing and Ghazan’s noyans had to withdraw.\textsuperscript{228}

The rearranged power balance that followed has been examined elsewhere; various amirs changed sides until Ghazan was powerful enough to overcome his cousin.\textsuperscript{229} For the purposes of this book, though, it is important to recognise that, within this exchange of people and revenues, the khātūns’ ordos appear to have played an important role. Rashid al-Din seems to find it important to mention the wealthy ordo of Bulughan again, stating that among those who deserted Baidu and joined Ghazan were the lady’s pages (ev-oghans), and that the amirs decided to send to Prince Ghazan the ordus of Arghun Khan, the great lady Bulughan, Örug Khätün, and Prince Kharbanda along with the other princes and to turn over his possessions and treasury. Furthermore, from the side of the Sapedrod [Safid-rud], Persia, Khurasan, Qumis, and Mazandaran would be Ghazan’s, along with half of the region of Fars and the entirety of the enchüs there.\textsuperscript{230}

Thus, Rashid al-Din’s narrative turns again to the khātūn’s ordo to show that Ghazan’s patience eventually paid off and that the revenues, servants and soldiers left by his grandfather came back into his possession to support his rise to the throne. The first action taken by the new ruler
after defeating his rival was to officially marry – in the Muslim fashion – Bulughan Khatun ‘Moʿazzama’, thus closing the circle by gaining both the ordo and the ‘replacement’ wife of his father. Ghazan’s use of female resources in his struggle with Baidu might have made him aware – if he was not so already – of the wealth at the khātūns’ disposal. Persian viziers like Rashid al-Din at the court of Ghazan might also have taken note. So, with the Ilkhanate submerged in financial problems in 1295, it is not surprising that the architects of the political and economic changes regarded the ordos of the khātūns as a crucial economic resource in need of reform.

In one section of Rashid al-Din’s *Jamiʿ al-tawarikh*, he explains the reforms of the khātūns’ ordos. This is not an extensive section, but provides some useful information. It starts by describing the anarchy among the khātūns’ servants, who were accusing each other of corruption and stealing from the treasuries and revenues. After putting all the servants and administrators of his predecessors on trial for corruption, Ghazan issued an order by which the revenues and maintenance of the ladies’ ordos would fall under the jurisdiction and administration of the ṣāḥib dīvān. This man would be responsible for setting the levels of tax to be paid to the khātūns and for allocating the revenues of a specific district to a particular khātūn’s ordo. The aim was to avoid the imposition of excessive taxation and the duplication of tax collectors (from different ordos) in the same region. Under the supervision of the ṣāḥib dīvān, revenues were to be used only for maintaining the supply of horses, camels, cloth and food for the khātūn, and, in the event of a surplus, the money was to be sealed in the khātūn’s treasury to be used only ‘in case of an emergency’. The law had the clear goal of rationalising taxation and expenditure simultaneously, by placing them under the control of the ṣāḥib dīvān, which involved imposing limits on female economic power.

Apart from curbing the khātūns’ economic autonomy, these measures seem to have been an attempt to reform the traditional manner in which ladies’ ordos were passed on. Reporting measures to rectify problems in the transmission of ladies’ ordos after the death of the ruler (of the kind that occurred with the accessions of Tegüder Ahmad and Geikhatu mentioned above), Rashid mentions that Ghazan ‘endowed them [the properties of a khātūn’s ordo] to their male offspring, not the females. Those enchu (Injū) properties will henceforth be the enchu and property of the sons of that lady’. In addition, if the lady did not have sons – as was the case with Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ – the property would belong to the son of the deceased man by another of his wives. Now, if we examine these regulations closely, we find a description of Ghazan’s relationship with the ordo
of Bulughan Khatun ‘Bozorg’ and a validation of the rights of the new ruler over the extensive properties of the khātūn. The reforms expounded in Rashid al-Din’s narrative validate the right of the chronicler’s patron to take control of the revenues of his father’s wives. It is difficult to estimate the proper scope of these reforms and to determine to what extent they were implemented in the Ilkhanate; there is general agreement, though, that they must have had an impact on the economy. According to Rashid al-Din himself, in his time all the policies to control female revenues were implemented and all the responsibility rested with the office of the ṣāḥib dīvān. Rashid illustrates the organisation of the revenues and the usufruct of the khātuns’ property by the court when he recounts that,

recently, when there was a need for more funds for army supplies, he [Ghazan] ordered them to give a thousand-thousand dinars to the army from their [the ladies’] treasuries. In this way it was paid, and the army was greatly helped. Never in any era has there been such an arrangement.

To a certain degree, the appropriation of resources from Mongol ladies by the central government did not stop with Ghazan, but continued into the reign of Abu Saʿid (r. 1317–35), when Mustawfi mentions that the regent Amir Chopan imposed fines directly on Qutlughshah Khatun. This is not to say that women’s ordos disappeared from the Ilkhanate in the fourteenth century or that noble women did not retain some degree of economic independence.

What we have attempted to examine here is the extent to which Ghazan Khan and his viziers, commanded by Rashid al-Din, were successful in limiting the nature of women’s involvement in the economy of that region. They did this primarily through changing the way in which the khātūns’ ordos were passed on. This transformation in the economic status of the khātūns was an element in the process of centralisation that occurred in the Ilkhanate from the last decade of the thirteenth century onwards. There is, I would suggest, a relationship between this limiting of female economic power and the disappearance of the toleration of female regency in southern areas of the Mongol domains. This diminution of women’s economic and political influence was part of the drive to centralise government and resources in order to create greater political, economic and religious unity in Mongol Iran.

Notes

2. My aim in this chapter is to explore the ordo as an economic entity. The
ongoing debate about the ‘tribal model’ and the connotations that this term had (and still has) in European historiography on Central Asia is not looked at here. See D. Sneath, *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society, and Misrepresentations of Nomadic Inner Asia* (New York, 2007), pp. 118–19.


7. For example, Juvayni mentions that, at the time of Chinggis Khan’s death, ‘each man left his ordu and set out for the quriltai’ that would elect the new Khan. See *TJG*, I, p. 144/Boyle, p. 183.


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16. See, for example, the case of Malik Temür (son of Ariq Böke), who benefited from capturing an ordo of one of his father’s wives to obtain enough resources to be considered a powerful ally by Qaidu, a rival Mongol lord of Qubilai Khan. See M. Biran, Qaidu and the Rise of an Independent Mongol State in Central Asia (Richmond, 1997), p. 41.
20. Precedents of women being in charge of property have been identified among other Inner Asian societies such as the Liao-Khitan; see K. A. Wittfogel and J. Feng, History of Chinese Society: Liao (907–1225) (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 199; G. Vernadsky, ‘The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan’s Yasa’, Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 3:3/4 (December, 1938), p. 357. The standard number of principal wives among the Mongols was four, although this number was not fixed across the empire. See S. Shir, ‘The “Chief Wife” at the Courts of the Mongol Khans during the Mongol World Empire (1206–1260)’ [in Hebrew], MA dissertation (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006).
22. This especially applies to concubines. See A. Lambton, Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia: Aspects of Administrative, Economic and Social History (New York, 1988), p. 293.
23. Krader, *Social Organization*, p. 188.
24. Krader, *Social Organization*, p. 188.
27. Although the figures might be relative, the *SH* mentions that she received 10,000 people including the share of Chinggis Khan’s youngest brother Otchigin; see *SH*, §242. Rashid al-Din mentions that she received 8,000, of which only 3,000 belonged to her and the rest to her youngest son; see *JT*, I, p. 611 / Thackston, p. 281.
28. *SH*, § 242. It is mentioned, however, that she ‘did not complain’ about this.
35. IB, p. 486.
36. IB, pp. 486–9.
38. See Chapter 2.
39. *JT*, I, p. 631/*Successors*, p. 27. Interestingly, Banakati comments that the mother of Qadam Oghul was called Qubayi (قوبایی). Maybe due to a mistake in the edition of the manuscript, she is not mentioned as a main wife; however, this might also suggest that, despite the confusion about the name, this son of Ögetei did not come from a chief khātūn. The name of the four khātūns according to Banakati are Buraqjin (بوراقجین), Turkina (تورکینه), Muka (موکا) and Jajin (جاجین). *TB*, p. 282.
40. There is a difference here between the two Persian editions of the *Jamiʿ al-tawarih*. While Rashid al-Din Tabib, *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*, ed. B. Karimi, 2
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vols (Tehran, 1367/1988–9) (hereafter, *JTK*) mentions that Chaghatai had eight sons (I, p. 533), the *JT* mentions only six (II, p. 751), omitting Qadaqai and Baiju. Their descriptions are also omitted from the *JT* edition.

41. The first one being the cousin of Chaghatai’s mother Börte, whilst the second married him after the death of Yesülün. See *JT*, I, p. 752/Successors, p. 135.

42. *JTK*, I, p. 534/Successors, p. 136. In the *JT* (I, p. 759), the order of Chaghatai’s sons is reversed and Mochi Yebe appears as the second instead of the first as in *JTK*.


46. Both Yesülün and Tögen had sons with Chaghatai, the former was the mother of ‘all his chief sons’, while the latter was the mother of Chaghatai’s seventh son Qadaqai. See *JT*, I, p. 540/Successors, p. 144.


51. Her name was Malikeh. See *JT*, II, p. 1057/Thackston, p. 516.


53. Abaqa favoured Bulughan above Martai Khatun and Despina Khatun. Neither of them bore him a son and only the former gave the Ilkhan a daughter called Nujin. See *JT*, II, p. 1056/Thackston, pp. 515–16.

54. *JT*, II, p. 1212. The Mongols did not have problems with accepting the adoption of children by members of the royal family. See, for example, the adoption of Shigi Qutuqu by Chinggis Khan and Börte in *SH* §203 and the comments in *SH*, p. 769. See also P. Ratchnevsky, ‘Šigi-Qutuqu, ein Mongolische Gefolgsmann im 12.–13. Jahrhundert’, *Central Asiatic Journal* 10 (1965), pp. 87–120; I. de Rachewiltz et al. (eds), *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol–Yüan Period (1200–1300)* (Wiesbaden, 1993), pp. 76–9.


58. About her, we know that she was the sister of Mubarakshah, the son of Orghina Khatun from the Chaghataid Khanate. See JT, II, p. 1215/Thackston, p. 593.

59. JT, II, p. 1215/Thackston, p. 593. Her name was Bulughan ‘Mo‘azzama’ and a short biography can be found in C. Melville, ‘Bologān (Būlūgān) Kātun’, Elr.

60. At least fifteen are mentioned in the TU, pp. 7–8, if we include Qutlughshah Khatun. It needs to be acknowledged here that reduced life expectancy suffered by the Mongols in Iran during the fourteenth century was another cause for the decrease in the number of Mongol royal family members. See J. M. Smith, ‘Dietary Decadence and Dynastic Decline in the Mongol Empire’, Journal of Asian History 34:1 (2000), pp. 35–52.


64. While the ownership of livestock was private in nomadic societies, the pastures remained communal property. See A. M. Khazanov, Nomads and the Outside World, trans. J. Crookenden (Madison, 1994), pp. 123–6.


67. Nasir al-Din ʿAli Malik was given the tūmen of Nishapur, Tus, Isfahan, Qom and Kashan; Siragh al-Din was named šāhib dīwān with Baha al-Din Juvayni, and Itfihar al-Din was put in charge of the region of Qazvin. See Aubin, Émirs mongols, p. 19.

68. JT, II, p. 895/Successors, p. 265. There is also a reference to the marriage of Arghun Aqa to a daughter of an amir from the ordo of Yesü Möngke in Central Asia. See TJG, II, p. 250/Boyle, p. 513.


70. See, for example, JT, I, p. 72/Thackston, p. 41.

71. See the execution of Esen Temür and his amīr ordo after their rebellion against Ghazan in 1296. JT, II, p. 1294/Thackston, p. 631.


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74. Khātūns in Iran sometimes protected fugitives and dissidents. Some amīr ordos did this too; see JT, II, p. 1170/Thackston, p. 570; Lambton, Continuity and Change, p. 291. Also Amir Injil, who was the amīr ordo of Bulughan Khurasani (wife of Ghazan Khan), protected Toghan until the wrath of the Ilkhan against him had decreased; see JTK, II, p. 929/Thackston, p. 637.

75. TU, p. 7.

76. MP, I, p. 356.

77. IB, p. 484.

78. IB, p. 484.

79. IB, p. 485.

80. The process of selecting women to act as advisors and administrators can be observed in the appointment of Fatima Khatun by Töregene during her regency. See Chapter 2.

81. Interestingly, It Kujujuk’s ordo was separate from that of her father. It is not clear, however, whether the camp belonged to her or her husband (Isa Bek), who was the grand vizier of the Golden Horde. It seems that she commanded the ordo’s dependants. Ibn Battuta mentions that, when the lady called for her staff, the jurists, the qadis, and the sayyid and sharif Ibn ʿAbd al-Hamid all came. See IB, p. 489. Chamberlains were noted in the ordo of Bayalun Khatun (a Byzantine princess and third wife of Uzbek Khan); see IB, p. 488.


83. Notice here the fact that concubines were in attendance to the chief wives. See Lambton, Continuity and Change, p. 293.

84. See references to justice administration in ladies’ ordos in TJG, II, p. 241/Boyle, p. 504; see also P. Ratchnevsky, ‘La condition de la femme mongole au 12e/13e siècle’, in G. Doerfer et al. (eds), Tractata Altaica: Denis Sînor sexagenario optime de rebus altaicis merito dedicate (Wiesbaden, 1976), p. 519.


87. Allsen, Commodity and Exchange, p. 27.

88. It is mentioned that he gave to the Suldus Taqai the Jirgin branch of the Kerait people; SH, §186
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89. These women are Ibaqa Beki and Sorghaghtani Beki respectively.
90. *SH*, §187. Similar examples can be observed during the defeat of other steppe factions such as the Merkits; see *SH*, §198. On the ‘Tatars’ extermination and the influence of women in saving some of their relatives, see *JT*, I, p. 83/Thackston, pp. 46–7.
91. Another appropriation of women by the victorious side after a battle occurred when the Mongols defeated the Tumat people, see *SH*, §241.
92. *SH*, §242; *JT*, I, p. 611/Thackston, p. 281. Just as the Khan distributed people, so he had the right to take them back. One such occasion involved Chinggis’s brother Qasar, who was a potential rival to the Great Khanate. See *SH*, §244, and comments on p. 877.
97. See A. F. Broadbridge, ‘Marriage, Family and Politics: The Ilkhanid-Oirat Connection’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26:1–2 (2016), p. 123. There is a famous reference in Juvayni to a daughter of Chinggis Khan (Tümälün) entering the city of Nishapur after the Mongol conquest; after massacring the majority of the prisoners, she took 400 of them for their craftsmanship and brought them to Turkestan. See *TJG*, I, pp. 139–40/Boyle, I, p. 177. On the veracity and the confusion generated in the sources about this event, see the commentary in Boyle’s translation on pp. 174–5, fn. 1; De Nicola, ‘Women’s Role and Participation’, pp. 101–2.
98. Her case is also mentioned in Sneath, *Headless State*, p. 175.
99. *JT*, I, p. 197/Thackston, p. 104. Jagambo was the father of Ibaqa Beki and the brother of the Ong Khan of the Kerait. He was pardoned when Chinggis Khan conquered his people, but he later rebelled and was destroyed. See *SH*, §208.
100. *SH*, §208.
102. The *SH* specifies that she did not lose her rank as chief wife of the Khan despite her being married to another man. This was a special privilege given to her which allowed her to maintain her hereditary rights. See *SH*, p. 791.
104. See, for example, the present given by Chotan (mother of Börte) to Chinggis
Khan’s mother when the marriage between their children was arranged, in SH, §96.


106. IB, pp. 485–6. Textiles were another product for which there was a high demand among Mongol women; see Allsen, Commodity and Exchange, p. 16.


108. Khazanov distinguishes between two different kinds of trade among pastoral societies: one in which there is direct exchange of goods between nomadic and sedentary people and another in which the nomads act as mediators in exchanges between sedentary societies. See Khazanov, Nomads and the Outside World, p. 202.


112. Allsen, ‘Mongolian Princes’, p. 88. He refers to Juvayni in TJG, I, p. 60/Boyle, p. 78, but in this account only the sons (پسران), the noyans (نوینان) and the amirs (امرا) are mentioned, and no specific reference to women is made. The khātūn is mentioned in Rashid al-Din’s version; see JT, I, p. 473/Thackston, p. 234.


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123. This is the interpretation given by the Persian sources, which are generally more sympathetic to the Toluid branch of the Chinggisid family.


127. Sorghaghtani specifically asked Ögetei to give her a merchant, but the Khan was opposed. She used the name of her husband to change his mind. See *JT*, I, p. 789/*Successors*, p. 168.


129. The Angara River is nowadays in Russia and is the only river flowing out of the Baikal Lake to join the Yensei River into the Kara Sea, which is part of the Arctic Ocean.


134. Allsen, ‘Mongolian Princes’, p. 111. Juvayni reckons the imperial debt to the merchants at the time of Möngke’s coronation in 1250 was 500,000 ingots. See *TJG*, III, p. 85/Boyle, II, p. 604.

135. There is evidence in Chinese sources of the ruin of the peasantry in Northern China due to the speculation of these courtly merchants. Farmers had to sell their property and even their wives and children to pay their debts to the ortaqs. See E. Endicott-West, ‘Merchant Association in Yüan China: The Ortoy’, *Asia Major* 2:2 (1989), p.149.


138. For trading conditions prior to the reign of Möngke Khan, see Allsen, ‘Mongolian Princes’, pp. 104–5.


140. *JT*, II, p. 861/*Successors*, p. 236. These merchants were mostly Christian;
the clerics were more trusting of their coreligionists like the Byzantines or Ruthenians. See Allsen, ‘Mongolian Princes’, pp. 108–9.


143. While Rashid al-Din tends to exaggerate the benefits of Ghazan’s reforms, Vassaf and Mustawfi, for example, are more cautious in their description of the benefits of the new economic policies. See P. Petrushevsky, ‘The Socio-Economic Condition of Iran under the Il-Khans’, in J. A. Boyle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. V (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 494–500; Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 92.


147. See *JT*, II, pp. 967–8, 1051–2/Thackston, pp. 474, 514.


150. ZM, p. 17.


154. See, for example, the money given by Konchak Khatun, wife of Amir Irinjin, to the Nestorian church in the early fourteenth century. See
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156. Lambton, *Continuity and Change*, p. 84.


159. For a discussion of the term, see Smith, ‘Mongol and Nomadic Taxation’, pp. 46–85.


161. The revenues produced from the implementation of these taxes varied and are difficult to assess; for an interpretation of the numbers, see Petrushevsky, ‘Socio-Economic Condition’, p. 499.


163. For the allocation of lands and shares across the Mongol Empire, see T. T. Allsen, ‘Sharing out the Empire: Apportioned Lands under the Mongols’, in A. M. Khazanov and A. Wink (eds), *Nomads in the Sedentary World* (Richmond, 2001), pp. 172–90.


166. Aubin, *Émirs mongols*, p. 58. According to Mustawfī, Ghazan’s reforms maintained the economic wellbeing of the *khātūns* by rearranging the *injū* system. See *ZM*, p. 429.


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169. Mustawfi suggests that one of the reasons why Möngke sent Hülegü against the Ismailis was because they were cutting the trading routes between Persia and Mongolia. See ZM, pp. 12–13.


173. From Rashid al-Din we can interpret that gifts and cattle were included among the resources that women invested in trade through the mediation of merchants. See JT, II, p. 1507/Thackston, p. 745.


175. Petrushevsky, ‘Socio-Economic Condition’, pp. 509–10. Also among these nobles was Rashid al-Din himself; he owned an impressive fortune and used to invest in trade, as did his Persian and Mongol counterparts. See Rashid al-Din Tabib, Kitāb-i mukātibāt-i Rashīdī, ed. M. Abarquhi and M. Shafi (Lahore, 1947), letter 36, pp. 220–40, or letter 34, pp. 183–207. Although there has been debate about the authenticity of these letters, it seems to me that either Rashid al-Din traded with the goods mentioned in the book or those who produced the letters in the Timurid period considered the participation of these personalities in trading activities a common practice. On the debate, see A. H. Morton, ‘The Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn: Ilkhanid Fact or Timurid Fiction?’ in R. Amitai and D. O. Morgan (eds), The Mongol Empire and its Legacy (Leiden, 1999), pp. 155–99; A. Soudavar, ‘In Defense of Rashid-Od-Din and his Letters’, Studia Iranica 32 (2003), pp. 77–122.


178. TV, p. 100.


180. Shabankaraʾi, Majmaʿ al-ansāb, ed. H. Muhaddith (Tehran, 1363/1984) (hereafter, MA), pp. 215–16. It is not clear if this is the same Bibi Maryam who had a mausoleum built in the Omani city of Qalhat; see IB, p. 396.
181. Both Hülegü and Güyük Khatun were grandchildren of Chinggis Khan. For an explanation of marriage practices between cousins among the Chinggisids, see Broadbridge, ‘Marriage, Family and Politics’, pp. 122–3.

182. *TB*, pp. 411–2. As far as I am aware, she is not mentioned by Rashid al-Din or Mustawfi.


184. See Figure 4.2.


187. *JT*, II, p. 1055/Thackston, p. 515. Her name was Tuqtani Khatun of the Kerait people and she was the daughter of the Ong Khan’s sister and a resident of Doquz’s ordo. See *JT*, I, p. 119/Thackston, p. 65. On her, see also P. Pelliot, ‘Le vrai nom de “Seroctan”’, *T’oung Pao* 29:1/3 (1932), p. 49.

188. Rashid refers to Tuqtani observing the same customs and rituals (رسوم همان داشت و آین نگاه می داشت) as Doquz, from which we can infer that she also was a Christian. See *JT*, II, p. 963/Thackston, p. 472.


190. The amount was 600,000, but the currency is unidentified. The sources mention the word عواجل and عوایل. See *JT*, II, p. 1289/Thackston, p. 644, fn. 1; *JTK*, II, pp. 937–8.


196. BS, p. 257.


198. The specific mention in Rashid al-Din’s work that Güyük Khatun’s ordo was given to Qutui suggest that Yesünjin’s ordo was created ad hoc for her by her son Abaqa when she arrived in Iran. The sources are not clear in this respect. See *JT*, II, p. 964/Thackston, p. 472.

199. *JT*, II, pp. 1055, 1098/Thackston, pp. 515, 536; Nasir al-Din Munshi Kirmani, *Simṭ al-ulā lil-Ḥaẓrat al-ʿulyā dar ‘Tārīkh-i Qarā-khitā’iyān-i Kirmān*, ed. A. Iqbal (Tehran, 1362/1983–4), p. 71; *TV*, p. 165. All these sources mention that Padshah was an official wife and that she became a chief khatūn. The only exception is *MA*, p. 200, as has been noted by N. Dalkesen, ‘Gender Roles and Women’s Status in Central Asia and

200. This is a suggestion; we cannot be certain about the origin of these women’s ordos.

201. JT, I, p. 88/Thackston, p. 49.

202. TU, p. 7; JT, II, p. 1055/Thackston, p. 515. Her name appears in different forms: Thackston transcribes it as Eltuzmish, while Boyle gives El Tutmish from Rashid’s (إلتوزميش). In the TU, it appears as Leternish (لترميش).

203. On her, see TU, p. 7.


205. Rashid mentions that she was the sister of Musa because they shared the same father, but it is not clear whether Martai was also the daughter of Chinggis Khan’s daughter Tümälün. See JT, II, p. 1056/Thackston, p. 515.

206. According to Rashid, one of the disputes between the two rivals was the desire of Tegüder Ahmad to marry Tödai Khatun, which clashed with Arghun’s right to marry his father’s wives. See JT, II, pp. 1139–48/Thackston, pp. 556–9.


208. She was El-Qutlugh, a concubine of Jumghur’s, whom Ahmad had made an official wife; see JT, II, p. 1122/Thackston, p. 547.


210. JT, I, p. 188/Thackston, p. 97; on her daughter Malika, see JT, II, p. 1057/Thackston, p. 516.


214. On Bulughan Khatun ‘Moʿazzama’, see Figure 4.2; TU, p. 89.

215. See, for example, how a general of Tegüder Ahmad plundered the ordo of Arghun’s chief wife, Qutlugh Khatun, when he knew of his rebellion. See JT, II, p. 1140/Thackston, p. 556. Similarly, the ordo of Qutui Khatun was sacked by Arghun after defeating Tegüder Ahmad. JT, II, pp. 1147–8/Thackston, p. 559.


220. It is interesting that Ghazan complained about robberies from this treasury performed by those in charge of the *ordo* after the death of Bulughan ‘Bozorg’. See JT, I, p. 1213/Thackston, p. 593.
221. JT, II, pp. 1212–14/Thackston, pp. 592–3. She even gave him a son, Ching Pulad; see TB, p. 447.
222. It is in this period that Ghazan forged his alliance with Amir Nawruz. See the different versions of the episode in JT, II, pp. 1236–44/JTK, II, pp. 867–78/Thackston, pp. 605–13.
223. JT, II, p. 1214/Thackston, p. 593.
228. Aubin, Émirs mongols, p. 58.
231. Ghazan had a son (Alchu) and a daughter (Oljay Qutlugh) by her, who eventually became the chief wife of Abu Sa’id. See TU, p. 82; Kamal al-Din ʿAbd al-Razzaq Samarqandi, *Matla’-i sa’dayn va majma‘-i bahrayn*, ed. A. Nava’i (Tehran, 1372/1993), p. 54; Melville, ‘Bologān (Būlūgān) Kātun’.
232. On the state of the economy and the problems of the court in exacting revenues from the provinces, see Aubin, Émirs mongols, pp. 62–3. According to Petrushevsky, ‘Socio-Economic Condition’, pp. 491–4, one of the reasons for the economic crisis in this period was the conflict between a ‘nomadic’ and a ‘Persian’ understanding of administration.
235. Interesting in this is the anecdote narrated by Rashid al-Din in which gangs in the markets threatened wealthy merchants and nobles, demanding money. He points out that some of these groups were connected to *khātūns*,

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suggesting a thirst for money in the Mongol ordos prior to Ghazan Khan. See JT, II, p. 1538/Thackston, p. 761.


241. Attested to by the endurance of some ordos like those of El-Tuzmish, Qutlughshah Khatun and Baghdad Khatun, mentioned above. Toghanchuq (also Toghan), who was Abaqa’s daughter and Amir Nawruz’s wife, had an ordo which played an important role in diplomacy and in the redistribution of wealth in Khurasan. See JT, II, p. 1243/Thackston, p. 612.