



CULT OF ALAN-GHO'A AND THE UNIQUE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CHINGGISID DYNASTIES

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ÖZ

ALAN-GOA KÜLTÜ VE MOĞOL HANEDANLIKLARINDA KADININ ÖZGÜN KONUMU

Moğollarda soylu kadınları her zaman siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal hayatta önemli roller oynamışlardır. Ayrıca, kadının soyu kocasının ve çocuklarının siyasi ve askeri kariyerleri için hayati bir öneme sahip idi. Daha da önemlisi, bu gelenek, Moğol İmparatorluğu yıkıldıktan sonra Orta Asya ve Hindistan'da kurulan devlet ve imparatorluklarda yüzyıllarca devam etmiştir. 14. yüzyılda Moğol hanedanlıkları yıkıldıktan sonra, özellikle Cengiz Han'ın *Altın Soyundan* gelen kadınlar ile evlilik, hükümdar olmak isteyen emirler için en önemli meşruiyet kaynaklarından biri olmuştur. Türk devlet sistemi içinde de soylu kadınlar çok önemli olmasına rağmen, bu durum en azından Moğollarda olduğu gibi süreklilik arz etmemiştir. Türkler ile karşılaştırma yapıldığında, Moğollarda ana soyu her zaman daha önemli olmuş ve kadınların siyasi olarak daha aktif olmuşlardır. Türkler ve Moğollar aynı coğrafyada, benzer sosyal ortamda benzer politik ve ekonomik yapılara sahip olmalarına rağmen, kadının konumu neden farklılıklar gösteriyor? Bu makalede bu soruya cevap bulabilmek amacı ile başta Cengiz Han'ın Altın soyunu dayandırdığı Alan-Goa hikâyesi ve Türk hanedanlıklarının soylarını dayandırdıkları Oğuz Kağan destanları karşılaştırmalı incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alan- Goa, Oğuz Kağan, Orta Asya, Türkler ve Moğollar, Moğol Kadını

ABSTRACT

The Mongol noble women played very important roles in political, economical, and social lives in their societies. Moreover, women's noble lineage had crucial importance for their husbands' and children's political and military careers. Furthermore, this tradition continued among post-Chinggisid dynasties in Central Asia and India for centuries. After the fall of the Chinggisid dynasties about 14th century, especially marrying with women from the Chinggisid Golden Lineage *Altan Urugh* was one of the most important tool of legitimization for the *amırs* (tribal leaders) who wanted to be the ruler. From this perspective, although noble women were also very important in the Turkish state systems, it was not continuous as it was in the Mongols. For the Mongols matriline was more important and women had higher positions when it is compared with the Turks who established states and empires. The Turks and Mongols lived in the same geographical and social conditions and had similar political systems. Then, why the position of women shows differences? In order to answer this question, comparison will be made between the narrative Alan-Ghoa who was accepted as Chinggis Khan's ancestress and the legend of Oghuz Khan who was accepted as a legendary ancestor of the Turkish dynasties.

Keywords: Alan Gho'a, Oghuz Khan, Central Asia, Turks and Mongols, Mongol women

Introduction

The noble Mongolian women, well respected members of their societies, had always taken active part in political, social, and cultural affairs of their societies throughout history in the Mongolian and Turco-Mongolian dynasties. "Matriline had

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crucial importance in the society. Women's nobility determined their husbands' and children's political and military career. Maybe because of this understanding, a noble Mongol woman not only as a mother of a ruler but also as a daughter or even childless wife of a ruler became very effective in politics and society. This understanding continued among the post-Chinggisid dynasties after the fall of the Mongol Empire and even among the non-Chinggisid dynasties in the Central Asia like Timurids and Baburids in India.¹ Giving such a high importance to the women's lineage or matriline was a distinguishing character of the Mongolian dynastic tradition. Such kind of matrilineal tradition probably became effective in softening power of patriarchy and strengthening power of matrilineity in the Mongol state system.

How this unique position of the Mongolian noble women can be explained? If we try to explain this as an outcome of nomadic way of life, how can we explain different position of the Turkish noble women? Basically, the Turkish noble women were also active and prestigious in the political and social arena. As a mother or wife of a ruler, women's lineage was important for a ruler to legitimize his rule. Nevertheless, among the Turkish societies that founded states, patriarchy and masculine values had been more and more important from the ancient times onwards. As it is well known, the Ottoman Turkish rulers abandoned marrying women from noble origins and accepted concubine marriage officially from 14th century onwards (Peirce 1993) Furthermore, importance of matriline, and social and political position of Turkish women in all of the Turkish dynasties were not the same throughout history (Dalkesen 2007).

When we compare the Mongolian and Turkish societies, they consisted from the people of the same land and had similar way of life as well as social, economical and cultural characteristics. What was the underlying reason in this difference? It appears like; the cult of Alan-Gho'a was the key element in this unique position of the Mongol women. This cult became a part of the Chinggisid imperial ideology, because through this cult, golden lineage of the Chinggisid house was constructed. In this paper, the cult of the Alan-Gho'a, as an ancestress of the Chinggisid golden lineage (*Altan Urugh*), will be compared with the Oghuz Khan, the ancestor of the Turkish ruling clans from the Oghuz tribes, in order to figure out the role of the cult of Alan-Gho'a in the high position of the Mongolian elite women.

The Turks and the Mongols

The Inner Asian Turkish and Mongolian nomadic and semi-nomadic societies showed great similarities in respect to their social, political, cultural, and geographical conditions; economic structures; and ideological understandings. Furthermore, from tribes to empires, they followed similar experiences, even; the terminology of "Turco-Mongolian States/Empires" is used in the literature. According to Golden, the process of super stratification is typical of the nomadic system of state building. The imperial traditions of the early Turks derived from earlier Xiongnu and Rouruan practices. This became the standard form of organization for successor states in the east and the west: Khazars, Bulgars, Uighurs, Kitan, Karahanids and others, including the Chinggisid realms. Distant echoes of these practices could also be found among the

¹ My forthcoming article "Women in the Baburid Dynasty."

Saljuks and even the Ottomans (Golden 1991:47) Similarly, Fletcher also stated that from the rise of the Xiongnu at the end of the 3rd century B.C., the East Asian steppe tribal confederations had shown a growing trend toward empire, and the Mongols were its culmination (Fletcher 1986: 21)

While the Turks experienced state formations in the same geographical areas many centuries before, Mongols did with Chinggis Khan in the 12th century. Chinggis Khan benefited from pre-existing Inner Asian state traditions and created his distinctive imperial ideology and traditions. According to Jagchid and Hyer, the Mongolian Empire was born in the Inner Asian state tradition according to which a heavenly supreme lineage united clans, lineages, sublineages, tribal groups, and ruled all over them. Chinggis Khan brought new contributions to this system. He confirmed himself and his successors as the center and superseded the old clan-lineage system with a new, farther reaching and united social order (Sechin & Hyer 1979: 264-267; Togan 193:137). In this way, he attempted to monopolize the power of people whose traditions had been shaped by power-sharing.² So, Chinggis Khan's policies can be evaluated within the nomadic state formation patterns (Sechin & Hyer 1979: 260). It is clear that Chinggis Khan tried to establish more long-lasting and more centralized empire comparing to the previous empires and states.

Legends and Narratives

During these political and social formations, Turkish and Mongolian societies invented or created their own narratives of origin through history. These legends shaped state ideologies, political understandings, and social structures of these newly established states and empires. About this matter Bruce Lincoln said the following words:

In descent-based segmentary systems, it is not enough to observe blandly that the various groups and subgroups are defined by reference to apical ancestors. Rather, they are constructed, literally *called into being* by ancestral invocation-understanding within this term not only certain formal and ceremonial speech acts, but all of the means whereby persons remind themselves and others of the ancestral figures around whom their groups take shape: allusions, gestures, narratives, displays of emblematic objects or design, and so forth (Lincoln 1986: 20).

These legends and narratives could reflect cultural codes, way of life, perception of gender, and political ideologies or even political aims of these societies. In these narratives, women and/or female figures with male beings and/or man mentioned together and women or female being played crucial roles in these formation periods, and certainly they were very effective in their future in the new social and

² According to İsenbike Togan, redistributive power ensures sharing and restriction of the political power which is supposed to be given and sanctioned by the God. In this sense "limitation of political power" will be referred to as "power-sharing." Togan 1998, 5; Fletcher explained this power sharing in a different way. He said that "the tribes' obedience could not be held indefinitely by force. It had to be bought. To buy the obedience of the tribes, he who would a ruler must be given them something that they could not obtain by themselves." Joseph, Fletcher, "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives," *HJAS* 46 (1986): 15. See also Golden 1987/91.

political system. Since, “narratives of origin incorporate classificatory schemes that describe the order of things as well as the relations between things and between different kinds of people. And these origin stories are a prime locus for a society’s notion of itself-its identity, its worldview and social organization.” (Yanagoski & Delaney 1995:2). During formations of these new identities, these narratives were like a bridge between the past and the present. Old beliefs, traditions, culture, way of life merged into new ideologies, social, and political structures. And these old values were re-shaped or reformulated according to the new ideologies. According to Karl Reichl, the old and new cultural values were mixed in these legends or narratives, and this can be explained as “formations of layers”. (Reichl 200:177-178).

These social and political transformations were mostly from egalitarian to hierarchical social structures. About this matter Peter Golden said:

The nomadic state, once achieved, did not resolve the internal conflicts of that society. The tribesmen, although submitting, in varying degrees, to the discipline and order demanded by the Xan or qagan (rather limited in the Saldjuq example, very highly developed in the Mongol system), never really come to terms with their new status as subjects. Moreover, state-formation, as it involved conquest and the influx of new wealth (which was unevenly distributed), furthered the process of social differentiation. The core tribes were superior to the tribes that had submitted later. Those that had to be conquered were often on a still lower level (unless internal politics dictated otherwise). Even within the core tribes, some clans and families or factions became clearly more privileged than others. The state brought an end to egalitarianism. It also elevated the ruler and his clan to a very new and special status (Golden 1987/91: 77)³.

“End of egalitarianism” brought with the gender inequality (Muller 1977; Ortner 1978; Lerner 1986; Wallby 1992). More egalitarian gender relations were replaced by more hierarchical and more patriarchal understandings. Probably, before state formations, Turkic and Mongolian societies had had similar egalitarian gender relations, and after the state formations old understanding emerged in the new one through these narratives. These narratives shaped and re-shaped according to new ideological understandings (Jacobson 1993: 180; Kubarev 1997: 239-246; Pustogaçev 1997: 283-306). Parallel to the social and political similarities, creation narratives or legends had great similarities. Some basic symbols or events in the narratives show great similarities. According to the genealogy of Chinggis Khan, “By the mandate of Heaven, Börte-Chino’a, with his wife Gho’a-maral, crossed the Tenggis Sea [legendary] and came to the Burkhan mountain at the head waters of the Onon river, at which place Bata-chaghan was given birth” (Rachewiltz 2004:1). With this legend in the *Secret History* Börte-chino’a and Gho’a-maral were common legendary ancestors of Chinggis Khan and his people. *Chino’a* (*chino*) means “wolf” and *Börte* “spotted”; the compound therefore may mean “spotted wolf”. Maral means a “doe” or “female deer” (Sechin & Hyer 1979: 245-246). This common ancestor was accepted or invented in the 12th

³ About this matter see also Peter Golden’s another article “Nomads and Their Sedentary Neighbors,” *Essays on Global and Comparative History*, American Historical Association, Washington, 2001, 25.

century. This myth incorporates with the earlier ones such as she and he wolves in the mythology of the early Turks. According to Fuzuli Bayat, the “sacred wolf” figure was accepted as their ancestor by the Chinggisids, Börte Chino’a (spotted wolf) and Alongoa became pregnant from a blue light from the sky, which according to the writer was a wolf. (Bayat 2006:176) According to Togan, in the 6th and 8th centuries, there were no individuals but groups in the state formation. These groups were called *buluo* in Chinese; they gathered around charismatic leaders and provided them with a basis of support. The nomadic people who contributed to the state formation were not organized as kinship based tribes, but consisted of composite groups. As we have seen in these tribal societies, clans, lineages, sublineages, and *buluo/irgen* “people” united under the certain lineages. *Ashina* among the early Turks, *Altın Urugh* (Golden lineage) among the Chinggisids were such lineages. They were both chosen and appointed by the Heaven (Togan 1998: 10; Sechin & Hyer 1979: 245-271). The Turks lived this experience during 6th century and the Mongols about six hundred years later under the leadership of Chinggis Khan.

Besides these legendary common ancestral figures like wolf or she-wolf, the portrait of “khan and khatun”, i.e. the emperor and the empress, were the common characteristics of the both societies. Generally, the portraits of “khan and khatun” have been seen as a symbol of equality between men and women during pre-Islamic Central Asia. Actually, the figure of “khan and khatun” reflected women’s active participation to politics and social affairs, but did not mean “equality”. For example, in the Orkhun inscriptions, when ascendance to the throne was described, *khan* and *khatun* were mentioned equally because it was believed that both of them were assigned by God. On the other hand, Bumin Khan and Istemi Khan’s domination (in the 1st state) of the world is narrated but the khatun is not mentioned. Roux evaluated this as equality of khan and khatun in front of their national gods (Roux 1989:200-204; Eröz 1998:118). In fact, khatun among the Turkish dynasties was not passive at all. She had her own autonomous area and authority. She had her own *otagh*, male and female slaves; she took part in the state affairs beside her husband, but not in equal terms (İzgi 1973-75, 24-25). It seems that the khan was identified with his wife, whose powerful presence served authority and legitimacy of the khan. Maybe because of this when one person defeated a khan, he could not proclaim his victory unless he captured or killed the wife of the khan. (Roux 1989, 205) The khatun with her high and noble origin and personality legitimized and empowered the khan, in other words the patriarch. Such kinds of relations between rulers and their wives can be seen in the world history, too. According to Susan Fischler, wife of ruler or hero goddess was a potent and popular combination, resulting in some very powerful representations of divine empress (Fischler 1998:174).

On a basic level, the image of the mother goddess was a natural addition to imperial iconography, not because it was *de rigueur* that these women be honored, but because their inclusion in the cult completed the image of the patriarchal emperor. It was more a part of the discourse about masculine power and patriarchal ideal, than about an individual woman’s power within the imperial state... Thus the portrayal of his womenfolk enhanced the image of the emperor as

masculine leader, one who could be sure of exercising control over an immortal household and, by extension, the empire (Fischler 1998:178).

Fischler's approach partly reflected the basic ideological understandings behind khan and khatun figures. In the Orkhun inscriptions, for khan "Tengriteg" like God and Umayteg, like Umay were used. Khan and khatun were identified with God and Goddess, in this way they were blessed and legitimated. In other words, God and Goddess were at the Heaven and khan and khatun on earth. Khatun completed the khan. This was continuation of old cultural values in the new system. Shortly, it can be said that in the Turkic societies during the establishment periods, women figure played a crucial role, completed and empowered the ruler's power and prestige, but this did not mean gender equality, on the other hand. Furthermore, for the Turks patriline was much more important than matriline for legitimizing power of ruler or status of elite men in the state system and society (Dalkesen 2007). In this frame, when it is compared with the Mongols, in a time matriline became less and less important and during the time of Ottomans matriline⁴ lost its importance completely.

While Turkish noble women's lineage became less important and generally less active in political and social affairs after centuries later, the Mongolian women's lineage and presence preserved its importance in their societies even among the non-Chinggisid dynasties. For example, in the Chinggisid dynasties, or even dynasties that were not Chinggisid but accepted themselves as heirs of the Chinggisid House, like Timurids (Dalkesen 2007) noble women continued to play crucial roles and especially women from the Chinggisid line had much more power and prestige than other noble women.

Here, it seems that the cult of Alan-Ghoa, female ancestor of the Chingisid Golden Lineage ensured consolidation of high position of women, which originated from ancient times. Alan-Ghoa was pregnant with a heavenly men and she became ancestress of the Chinggisid House. On the other hand, in the Turkish creation or re-creation legends or narratives, except for she wolf (Ashina) (Sinor 1982: 223-225), visible ancestors of the Turkish societies were men; while women (or female beings) were spiritual. Oghuz Khan who was accepted as the ancestor of the Turkic dynasties, Oghuz Khan had boys from supernatural beautiful female beings who were sent by God (Ögel 2003). It might be said that these unifications empowered and legitimized power of Oghuz Khan and his descendants, in other words patriline. According to Eireann Marshall masculinity was constructed through these *hierogamous* (sacred marriage) marriages (Marshall 1998: 100). Apollo's marriage to Goddess Kyrene served to the consolidation of patriarchy in Athens (Marshall 1998: 100).

The Turkish history had many creation or re-creation legends, which can be evaluated with regards to the Marshall's hierogamous marriage patterns. The Oghuz Khan legend shows similarities with Apollo in respect to making hierogamic marriages to establish men centered patrilineal society: In the *Oghuz Khan* legend, the hero (Oghuz Khan) married the daughter of Sky who was very beautiful,⁵ and they had three

⁴ Only the daughters of the Ottoman family as a "sultan" were important, but their nobility from their fathers not from their concubine origin mothers.

⁵ *Oğuz Kağan bir yerde, Tanrıya yalvarırken*

sons whose name are *Gün* (Day), *Ay* (Moon), and *Yıldız* (Star) (Ögel 2003:117). Then he married beautiful daughter of the Earth (Ögel 118).⁶ They had three sons *Gök* (Sky), *Dağ* (Mountain), and *Deniz* (Sea) (Ögel 2003:118). These women or spiritual female beings were disappeared after giving birth of these sons. In this way Oghuz and his line were blessed by God/Gods. This legend is very similar to Uighur creation legends. Böğü Qa'an who was the most powerful ruler of the Uighurs, united with the "Sacred Girl" who came from the sky, at "Ak-Tag" (White Mountain) (Ögel 2003:87). Ögel assumed that in the Turkish mythologies, wives of heroes are sent by God. Because in the Turkish mythology, men are in a form of human being, women appeared in the form of spiritual being (Ögel 2003: 87). He perceives Oghuz Khan Legend as an example of one high cosmogony. Actually, Oghuz Khan Legend is the legend of the Turks who founded a great world empire (Ögel 2003:432). At the first glance, it seems that here we have a unification of patrilineal and matrilineal powers. But in the long run, this unification legitimizes and empowers men's rule from these lineages.

In the *Secret History*, there are two creation legends that gave heavenly authority and charisma to the Chinggisid golden lineage. In this genealogy, the *Secret Börte-Chino'a* (spotted wolf) and *Gho'a-maral* (female deer) are original *History* notes that the great-grandson of Börte Chino'a was Dobun-mergen. After his death, his wife, Alan-Gho'a gave birth to three sons as a result of being impregnated "by a divine light penetrating from the yurt door" (Rachewiltz 2004:§21). The common ancestor (Börte-Chino'a and Gho'a-maral) representing both male and female became an important uniting factor for the Mongol societies and made them *ulus*.⁷ On the other hand, it gave equal legitimacy to the rival lineages. But, by the second legend, Chinggisids gained superiority over other rival lineages. In both of these patrilineal genealogies, matrilineality was very important (Jagchid and Hyer 1979:246). Alan-Gho'a, the ancestress was impregnated by the light of heavenly man and gave birth to three sons.

According to *Secret History*, Alan-gho'a addressed her sons that every night, a resplendent yellow man entered by the light of the smoke- hole or the door to of the tent, he rubbed my belly and his radiance penetrated my womb. When he departed, he crept out on a moonbeam or a ray of sun in the guise of a yellow dog. How can you speak so harshly? When one understands that, the sign is clear: They are the sons of Heaven. How can you speak, comparing them the *ordinary* black-headed men? When they became the rulers of all, then the common people will understand! (Rachewiltz 2004:§21).

*Karanlık bastı birden, bir ışık düştü gökten!
Öyle bir ışık indi, parlak aydan güneşten! (Orda Kızı görür)
Bir ben vardı başında, ateş gibi ışığı,
Çok güzel bir kızdı bu, sanki Kutu yıldızı!
Öyle güzel bir kızdı ki, gülse gök güle durur.*

..... Ögel 2003, 117.

⁶ *Ağacın kovuğunda, bir kız oturuyordu,
Gözü gökten daha gök, bu bir Tanrı kızıydı,
Irmak dalgası gibi saçları dalgalıydı.
Bir inci idi dişi, ağzında parlayan,*

..... Ögel 2003, 117.

⁷ For the discussion of *ulus* meant confederation or nation see Jagchid and Hyer 1979, 260-61.

Here, “female being” was real, but “male being” was spiritual. In fact, after this unification the Chinggisid lineage, i.e. men’s lineage gained power and legitimacy for ruling, but through a female ancestor. In contrast to the other Inner Asian dynasties, in this new dynastic system matrilineal descent played a crucial role. As we have seen, union with supernatural beings was an element strengthening the matriline or patriline; if the unification is between a man and supernatural female being, this unification empowers and legitimates the patriline; if it is between a woman and a supernatural male being, matriline and feminine values preserve their importance within a patrilineal society. In the *Secret History*, the Chinggisid lineage comes from the unification of Alan Gho’a and a light (resplendent yellow man). This may be because the Mongol society gave great value to matrilineality and matrilineal values and *Temüjin* shaped his ideology and policies according to these values. Furthermore, Chinggis Khan’s *Altan Urugh*, the Golden Lineage, married daughters from the *Qongrath* tribe (Togan 2004). This matrilineal tradition continued more than one century, at least until the end of Yuan Dynasty. In this way, there was apparently a long tradition of both matrilineal and patrilineal marriage exchange between these two clan-lineages (Sechin & Hyer 1979: 92, 248). In the new patriarchal system matriline had gained a very strong position, which lasted through all the Chinggisid and post-Chinggisid dynasties.

Besides above mentioned cultural factors, political background of the Chinggisid Empire probably became very effective in formations and transformations of these matrilineal values: Under the leadership of the Temujin, the Mongol society experienced radical transformation from tribal organization to the empire for the first time in 13th century (Togan 1998, 124-150). So, they transformed their ancient cultural values, which gave great importance to matriline, into new imperial system. In this new system, Chinggis Khan’s *Altan Urugh*, the Golden Lineage, was at the center and it took its legitimacy from woman Alan Gho’a. Thanks to the *Secret History* of the Mongols, importance of matriline and vitality of women’s role in family, society, and state mentioned very often and transformed this tradition to the next generations for centuries. Throughout the book, being son of a same father wasn’t emphasized but being son of a same mother was seen very important for the brothers. Below mentioned example from the *Secret History* is a good example in this respect:

Further, Alan Qo’a addressed these words of admonition to her five sons: ‘You, my five sons, were born of one womb. If, like the five arrow-shafts just now, each of you keeps to himself, then, like those single arrow-shafts, anybody will easily break you. If, like the bound arrow shafts, you remain together and of one mind, how can anyone deal with you so easily?’ Some time went by and their mother Alan Qo’a died (Rachewiltz 2004:22).

In this example, Alan-Gho’a emphasized the importance of being born from a same mother, father was less important even he was a heavenly male being. Through the book similar examples can be seen. In this example, similarly matriline was seen very important:

When Qorči came he said, ‘As we were born from the same woman captured and taken as wife by the august Bodončar,

We are from the same womb,

We are from the one womb water (Rachewiltz 2004:121).

The most striking example in the *Secret History* is about *Cochi*, the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. He had chosen his four sons from his wife Borte from Qongrat tribe, as his successors. His second son *Chaghatai* argued against his father's decision and said "What do you, *Coči*, say? Speak up!" But before *Coči*, could utter a sound, Ča'adai said, 'When you say, *Coči*, speak up!', do you mean *by that* that you will appoint *Coči*, as your successor? How can we let ourselves be ruled by this bastard offspring of the Merkit?'(Rachewiltz 2004:§254). Most probably, Chinggis Khan was not Cochi's father because when Borte was captured by Merkits, she had been pregnant to Cochi when she was rescued by her husband. While Chinggis Khan did not show any reaction to his son's objection, old men replied Chaghatai with the following words,

"You speak so as to harden the butter of your mother's affection, so as to sour the milk of *that* august lady's heart.

From the warm *womb*, coming forth

Suddenly, were you *two*

Not born from the same belly?" (Rachewiltz 2004:§254).

Cochi was not Chinggis' own child, but he was born from his high-born wife Borte from Qongrat tribe (Togan 2006), and this made Cochi successor of Chinggis Khan. Chinggis Khan sent him farthest part of his empire where he established empire of the "Golden Horde". These historical events were transferred from generation to generation through the *Secret History*. This was also very effective transferring traditional understanding of the Mongols about women and matriline from generation to generation.

In conclusion, it can be said that sometimes, cultural characteristics of societies could be more effective than social and political elements in determining gender relations. Turks and Mongols had similar political and social structures, but different gender understandings. The Cult of Alan-Gho'a and transformation of "matrilineal traditions" by the *Secret History of the Mongols* from generation to generation made "matriline" and "values related to women" very important in political culture of the Mongolian political and social system.

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