
HERALDIC WOMEN IN THE INTERNAL POLICY OF THE GREAT SELJUK STATE

BÜYÜK SELÇUKLU DEVLETİ'NİN İÇ POLİTİKASINDA HANEDAN KADINLARI

ЖЕНЩИНЫ ИЗ ПРАВЯЩЕЙ ДИНАСТИИ ВО ВНУТРЕННЕЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ ВЕЛИКОГО СЕЛДЖУКСКОГО ГОСУДАРСТВА

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ABSTRACT

Women have had a very important position in Turkish society since the earliest Turkish states. Turkish women, who play a very active role in social life, have been the subject of many epics such as the Epic of Creation, and in these epics, women are placed in a more important place than men. Turkish women have been very influential in the functioning of the state as well as in social life. Almost no work has been done without women in Turkish society. Especially, women who are members of the dynasty reach the power that can affect the fate of the state, sign inter-state agreements, mention their names in orders and decrees, have their own armies, go to war with this army when necessary, have their own treasures and iqta regions. are the clearest indicators. After the adoption of Islam, Turkish women preserved the same importance and value in social life and state life. When we look at the position of women in the Great Seljuk State, one of the important Turkish-Islamic States, we see that women, especially the wives of the rulers, had an important place in the social life and state functioning, as in the pre-Islamic Turkish History. Having an army and treasure of their own, Seljuk dynasty women played important roles in the domestic policy of the state as well as in foreign policy. They have always played a leading role in many important issues that determine the fate of the state, such as determining the heirs, choosing viziers, preparing orders and decrees. As in the example of Altuncan Hatun, the women of the Seljuk dynasty, who from time to time took part in the suppression of internal rebellions, acted as the absolute regent of the ruler in their power. These powers of the women of the dynasty sometimes caused troublesome processes in the state. In this study, the effects and roles of the women of the dynasty in the state's internal politics in the Great Seljuk State will be examined.

Key Words: Turks, Women, Terken Hatun, Seljuk State.

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ÖZ

En eski Türk devletlerinden itibaren Türk toplumunda kadınlar oldukça önemli bir konuma sahip olmuşlardır. Toplumsal hayatta oldukça etkin bir rol oynayan Türk kadını, Yararatılış Destanı gibi birçok destana da konu olmuş ve bu destanlarda kadın erkekten daha önemli bir yere oturtulmuştur. Türk kadını toplumsal hayatta olduğu kadar devletin işleyişinde de oldukça etkili olmuşlardır. Türk toplumunda neredeyse kadınsız hiçbir iş yapılmamıştır. Özellikle hanedana mensup olan kadınların devletin kaderine etki edebilecek güce erişmeleri, devletlerarası anlaşmalara imza atmaları, emirname ve fermanlarda isimlerinin anılması, kendilerine ait ordularının olması, gerektiğinde bu orduyla savaşa gidebilmeleri, kendilerine ait hazineleri ve iktâ bölgelerinin bulunması Türk toplumunda kadının ne kadar önemli bir konumda olduğunu en net göstergeleridir. İslamiyet'in kabulü sonrasında da Türk kadını toplumsal hayatta ve devlet hayatında aynı önemini ve değerini muhafaza etmiştir. Önemli Türk-İslam Devletleri'nden birisi olan Büyük Selçuklu Devleti'nde kadının konumuna baktığımızda, İslamiyet öncesi Türk Tarihinde olduğu gibi, özellikle hükümdar eşleri başta olmak üzere kadınların toplum hayatında ve devlet işleyişinde önemli bir yere sahip olduklarını görmekteyiz. Kendilerine ait bir orduya ve hazineye sahip olan Selçuklu hanedan kadınları, dış politikada olduğu kadar devletin iç politikasında da önemli roller üstlenmişlerdir. Veliatların belirlenmesi, vezirlerin seçilmesi, emirname ve fermanların hazırlanması gibi devletin kaderini tayin eden birçok önemli meselede hep başrolde olmuşlardır. Altuncan Hatun örneğinde olduğu gibi zaman zaman iç isyanların bastırılmasında görev alan Selçuklu hanedan kadınları, kendilerine verilen iktâlarında hükümdarın mutlak naibi olarak davranmışlardır. Hanedan kadınlarının bu güçleri bazen devlette sıkıntılı süreçlerin yaşanmasına da sebebiyet vermiştir. Bu çalışmada Büyük Selçuklu Devleti'ndeki hanedan kadınlarının devletin iç politikasındaki etkileri ve rolleri incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkler, Kadın, Terken Hatun, Selçuklu Devleti.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Начиная из самых древних турецких государств женщины занимали очень важное положение в турецком обществе. Турчанка, играющая активную роль в общественной жизни, была предметом многих эпосов, к примеру такого как „эпос Творения“. Надо отметить, что в этих эпосах женщинам отводится более важное место, чем мужчинам. Турецкие женщины сыграли очень важную роль в деле функционирования государства и общественной жизни. В турецком обществе почти не одно дело не обходилась без женщин. Тот факт, что женщины из правящей династии имели власть влиять на судьбу государства, подписывали межгосударственные соглашения, упоминали свои имена в приказах и указах, имели свою собственную армию, при необходимости воевали, имели свое собственное казначейство и регионы с условиями икта (надел), указывает на то, насколько важное место имели женщины в турецком обществе. После принятия ислама турецкие женщины сохранили прежнее значение и достоинство в общественной и государственной жизни. При сравнении положения женщин в обществе Великих сельджуков, в одном из важных турецко-исламских государств, по сравнению до исламского периода, становится очевидным, что женщины, особенно жёны правителей, занимают важное место в жизни общества и функционировании государства. Женщины из династии сельджуков, имевшие собственную армию и казну, играли важную роль как во внутренней, так и во внешней политике государства. Они всегда играли ведущую роль во многих важных вопросах, влияющих на судьбу государства, таких как определение наследников, назначение

визирей, подготовка приказов и указов. Пример Алтунджана Хатун показывает, что женщины из династии Сельджуков, которые время от времени принимали участие в подавлении внутренних восстаний, выступали в качестве абсолютных регентов правителя икты (надгла). Эти полномочия женщин из династии иногда вызывали в государстве неприятные процессы. В нижеследующем исследовании будут изучены влияние и роль женщин из правящей династии во внутренней политике государства Великих Сельджуков.

Ключевые слова: турки, женщины, Теркен-Хатун, Сельджукское государство

Introduction

Turks, who have established many states throughout history, have always allocated a special place for women. It will be easier to understand the place of Turkish women when compared to the situation of women in contemporary societies. Although Turks have established names under different names the status of women have not changed significantly. Since the oldest eras of Turkish history women have always been at the highest class. For example, according to the Epic of Creation, one of the pre-Islamic Turkish epics, it is the image of a woman of light that inspires God to create the universe. This woman is named Ak-Ana. Ak Ana is a woman creator and lives at the seventeenth floor of the sky. In Turkish mythology women are considered spritual beings, men on the other hand are human. Oguz Khan's first wife is born from a blue light, and his second wife is from a holy tree (Ögel, 1993: I, 419-493, İnan, 1934: IV, 274, Sevinç, 1980: II, 18, Küçük, 2013, 119).

Women have always been beside men in almost all Turkish epics. One of the most obvious indicators of this is Dede Korkut Stories. The most typical feature of heroes in Dede Korkut Stories is bravery. This feature is not just attributed to men. In the stories, while the same characteristics are attributed to women, some women are praised for these characteristics. Women in Dede Korkut Stories are wives, mothers but heroins and warriors at the same time. Men look for combativeness in the woman they are going to marry. Bamsı Beyrek and Banu Çiçek, Deli Dumrul and his wife can be given as examples for these. (Çandarlıoğlu, 1966: 22, Ergin, 1958: 24, Gündüz, 2012: 133).

Turks have a patriarchial family structure and are mostly monogamist marriages. Turkish women are quite comfortable among the society. However, Turkish women have always known to be virtous. The same importance is seen to be given to woman in Turkish law too. Women comes after the husband in the family. After the death of her husband, both the inheritance and the guardian of the children belong to the women. For instance, after the death of Kutluk Khan, we see Bilge Hatun as the guardian of her children. Great importance was given to moral rules among the society. Adultery was a great crime in Turkish society, and according to customary rules, it was sentenced with death. (Ögel, 1988: 237, Kafesoğlu, 1995: 216, Turan, 1969: 131, Yakut, 2002: 416, Can, 2008: 33-34).

Women had a very important role in Turkish state administration too. Since women were considered to be complementary to men, no work was carried out without women. For example, Mete's wife signed the first deal with China. If the

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orders were issued only as a command of Khan, this was not accepted by the society. All the decrees issued included the wife along with the ruler. During the acceptance of the ambassadors Khan and the wife acted together. The same situation continued in Göktürk and Uighurs. After the death of Bilge Khan in the Göktürk State, Po-fu Hatun, Bilge Khan's wife, took over the administration because his sons were still young. Uighurs, however, before they became a state because the head of this tribe was engaged in wars, his mother Uluğ Hatun ruled the cases and disputes and gave direction to the justice system in the society. As Tuğ-şad was too young in the face of the Arab invasion, his mother Hatun ruled Bukhara. This lady remained on the throne for 15 years and ruled the state. (Sevinç, 1980: 29, Taşağıl, 2004: 56).

In addition to serving in the state center, the wives of the Khan were also involved in wars when the time came. Boğarık who is the wife and the successor of Balak, the ruler of Sabar, commanded the Sabar army and forced the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I to make an agreement. Furthermore in Uighurs, it can be seen that Böğü Khan's wife has joined him during the Chinese expedition (Çandarlıoğlu, 1961: 22, Sevinç, 1980: 31).

This active role of the women in the society in Turks continued after the acceptance of Islam and women had maintained having efficient roles in social and political life. In fact, both in the Christian world and in the Muslim world, the importance given to women by the Turks and this effective role played by women was hardly seen. This situation is related to the survival of the old Turkish tradition that does not consider woman lower than man and sees it as a friend and companion of the man. (Üçok, 2011: 9-11).

The Role of Women in the Great Seljuk State Government

It can be observed that women play an important role both in social life and in the functioning of the state in Seljuk states too. As in the pre-Islamic Turkish history, especially the spouses of the sovereigns actively participate in the state governance. There was a small administrative organization, a special treasury, a special vizier and other officials at the wives command, whether or not they lived with the sultan. When the need arose, the wives could leave their place and go to the sultan's help with the forces in their retinue. For example, when the Great Seljuk Sultan Tuğrul Bey was besieged in Hamedan by his half brother İbrahim Yinal, his wife Altuncan Hatun ran to the aid of her husband with the help of Oğuz forces in his retinue and rescued him from the difficult situation he was in. These ladies known with the title Terken¹ have had influential roles in the governing of

¹ Known as the oldest Turkish dictionary, Kaşgarlı Mahmud's "Divanü Lûgat-it-Türk", describes the term Tengri, and mentions the term "*Tengriken*". "*Non-Muslim Turks call any wise person as tengriken*," says Kaşgarlı. In other words, it must mean "*worshipping God, scholar, religious, forward-looking*". However, the terken title may have a meaning similar to the title of "*bögü*". Furthermore when Kaşgarlı Mahmud explains the word "terken" states that "It is the name of the city of Şaş, Its real name is Tashkent. It means the Stone City", and in different parts of his work he explains it as "*sultan, hakan, one who is obeyed*

the state. These wives, act as significant stakeholders in both domestic and foreign policies of the state. (Gündüz, 2012: 140).

The wives are very effective within the state especially in the election of the heir. Within the Great Seljuk State, the heirs were sometimes determined by the influence of the wife and sometimes they became stronger with the support of the wife. For example, Tuğrul Bey married Çağrı Bey's wife after his death. Before his death, Tuğrul Bey requested that Suleiman, his wife's son, succeeded him to the throne. Whereas, Alparslan, from another wife of Tuğrul Bey, is in a stronger position than Suleiman and is the most powerful candidate for the throne. However, the fact that Tugrul Bey depicts Suleiman as his successor shows the effectiveness of women on the sovereign. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016, VIII, 362, Sıbt İbnü'l Cevzi, 2011: 121, Turan, 2012: 115).

After the death of Tuğrul Bey, Suleiman ascended the throne by his will. However, shortly after Suleiman ascended the throne, an uprising was launched by Kutalmış, and Alparslan took action from Merv and suppressed this uprising and became the ruler of the throne. Alparslan's wife, Seferiye Hatun, was influential in his appointment of Sultan Alparslan as the crown prince. Melikshah told his wife and Nizamülmülk before the Battle of Malazgirt: *"I am walking against the enemy. If I survive, it is God's grace, if I become a martyr, mercy is from him. My son is Melikshah the one who will replace me."* The utmost reason for Alparslan to act in this way is to ensure that his wife supports Melikshah in case of his death. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016, VIII, 362, Sıbt İbnü'l Cevzi, 2011: 126, Hüseyini, 1999: 28).

All these disputes were provoked by Terken Hatun and her vizier Tacülmülk. Despite all these disagreements, Melikshah still liked Siyasetname, written by Nizamülmülk. On 5 October 1092, Melikshah set out for Baghdad while he was in disagreement with Nizamülmülk. Nizamülmülk also set out after him. When they arrived in Nihavend, a Batmi from Deylem, killed Nizamülmülk as a result of the incentives of Tacülmülk. Sources provide different information about the death of Nizamülmülk. According to some historians, Terken Hatun's vizier Tacülmülk was involved in Nizamülmülk's death. However, some historians state that Nizamülmülk was killed by Sultan Melikshah himself. (Turan, 2012: 216, İbn Kesir, 2000: XI, 281, İbnü'l Esir, 2016: X, 219).

Nizamülmülk was killed, but the only problem for Terken Hatun to reach her ambition was not Nizamülmülk. Sultan Melikshah was also a major obstacle for Terken Hatun's goals. Because Melikshah declared Berkyaruk as crown prince instead of Mahmud, the son of Terken. For this, Melikshah too, had to be destroyed as soon as possible. When Sultan Melikshah was in Baghdad on 28 October 1092, he asked his grandson Jafar to be declared as his heir to the caliph, but when the caliph refused to do so, he asked Caliph Muktedi to leave Baghdad. The Caliph asked him to give him ten days. And during this ten days Melikshah lost his life.

to". Yusuf Has Hacib associates this word with the "authority of reign". R.Genç, in the article titled "*Terken*" holds; "At the beginning it was used only for rulers, but later it was given to the wives, like the sultan's title in the Ottomans. In other words, there is a transition from tengriken to the terken. (Gömeç, 2010, 110-111).

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The cause of Melikshah's death was poisoning. The death of Melikshah who died at the age of 38 was a great loss for the Turkish-Islamic world. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: X, 219).

There are different information in the sources related to the death of Melikshah. İbnü'l Esir conveys that Melikshah was poisoned during a hunt he went on shortly after he was brought to the vassal office of Tacülmülk. The author explains this as follows: "*Sultan Melikshah went to Baghdad after the massacre of Nizamülmülk. He arrived at the city on 28 October 1092. The Sultan's caliph's vizier Amüdüddeve b. Cüheyr greeted him. Taculmulk proved that he possessed great ability. The Sultan ordered the preparation of vizier clerics for Tacülmülk. He was the one who denounced Nizamülmülk. When his craft was prepared, there was nothing left but to wear them and get to the office of the vizier. Just then, the Sultan went hunting and returned on 6 November 1092 in a sick condition. Death had visited him too. The wideness of his country and the large number of his soldiers did not prevent his death. The reason for the disease was that: Sultan ate game meat, caught fever and gave blood. But enough blood was not taken and the disease was aggravated. The disease was the febrile fever. He passed away on Friday night, November 19th.*" (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: X, 219).

In Gregory Abû'l Farac the case is explained as: "*in 485/1092 the Sultan came from Khorasan to Baghdad. The sultan had a disagreement with the caliph because he wanted his grandson to be proclaimed the crown prince and the caliphate passed on to him. When the caliph rejected the Sultan's offer the Sultan asked him to leave Baghdad then and the caliph obeyed his command however asked for him to give him some time. The Sultan gave him 10 days. However the Sultan died on the 9th day in a severe and burning fever.*" (Gregory Abû'l Farac, 1945: I, 334). We can deduce from Abû'l Farac's sentences that the Sultan was poisoned to death by the caliph.

Urfalı Mateos on the other hand talks about this event as: "*The great Sultan Melikshah who is a fathers to everyone and a merciful and liberated for all people died in 541. He was betrayed to death in Baghdad by his wife, the daughter of the Samarkand sultan. He made this magnificent person drink poison and took the life of this great ruler.*" (Urfalı Mateos, 1987: 178).

After Melikshah's death, Terken Hatun had collected a great number of followers around her so that her son Mahmud could be reigned. Indeed, above all Terken Hatun was a descendant of the sultans. She had also dominated the state affairs and treasury from the time of Malikshah's health. For this reason, she has graced the soldiers many times. Terken had a special military unit of 12,000 on her behalf. After the death of Meliksah, 20,000,000 gold dinars were shared among the members of the army, thus she attracted them to her side. (Hüseyni, 1999: 52, Bundarî, 1999: 83, Gregory Abû'l Farac, 1945: I, 34, Ahmed b. Mahmud, 1977: II, 30-31).

Terken Hatun, has reached an agreement on this issue with the caliph too. The Caliph has put forward certain conditions that the Sultanate will belong to Mahmud, the administration of the country and the people will be undertaken by

Emir Üner and the sermon will be read on behalf of the caliph. Although Terken Hatun did not want to accept them at the beginning, he accepted these conditions with the intervention of both the great scholar of the era, Ghazali and the other state elders, and went to an agreement with the caliph. Following this agreement, the Caliph sent Mahmud a caftan and made his name read in the sermons thereby six days after the death of Malikshah, Terken Hatun had reached her goals. (Ravendî, 1957: 136, Ahmed b. Mahmud, 1977: II, 30-31, Reşidüddin Fazlullah, 2010: 139).

Meanwhile, Berkyaruk's mother Zübeyde Hatun, although not as prominent as Terken Hatun, struggled to protect her son during the fights of the throne. Zübeyde Hatun is the daughter of Yakuti, the son of Çağrı Bey. Zübeyde Hatun, aware of what Terken Hatun can do to get her son to the throne, is afraid of her own son's future. She is right to think so. Because Terken Hatun had Berkyaruk arrested in İsfahan. However, the only thing that Zübeyde Hatun feel relieved in this case was that Nizamülmülk's men supported Berkyaruk and expelled her from İsfahan. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: VIII, 484, Urfalı Mateos, 1987: 179, Münecimbaşı, 2000: 73, Ravendî, 1957: 136, Gregory Abû'l Farac, 1945: I, 334). As a result of all these events, Terken Hatun and his son died and the control of the state was completely passed on to Berkyaruk. However, during these fights of the throne, the state was also weakened.

We see that women have an important power in the appointment of the vizier in Seljuk state operation as well as in the appointment of the heir. As in all other Turkish-Islamic states, the Grand Seljuk State has the viziers at the head of the government organization. The vizier is the most influential person to rule the state after the sultan, so whether the country is good or not depends on whether the vizier is good or bad. In the Great Seljuk State, he was only attached to the ruler because of his vizier actions. The viziers, whom we see as having such a great power over the state, sometimes came across chicks that were quite effective on the rulers. (Alican, 2014: 2, Taneri, 1967: 97-98).

The most obvious example of the power struggle between Hatun and the vizier is that of Melikshah's wife Terken Hatun and Nizamülmülk, as we explained above. Terken Hatun's ambition to bring his own son to the head of the state first caused a conflict between Nizamülmülk and Melikshah, followed by the murder of Nizamülmülk and then Melikshah. Nizamülmülk complains about the fact that Terken Hatun is so effective in the state in his work Siyasetname: *"The sultan should not bring the subordinates to the top. In particular, the women with veils who do not have perfect minds..."* (İbnü'l Adim, 1982: 55).

Similarly, during the reign of Sultan Berkyaruk there was a struggle between Berkyaruk's mother Zübeyde Hatun and the vizier Müeyyidülmülk. After taking over, Berkyaruk appointed Müeyyidülmülk as the vizier. Berkyaruk, who triumphed over the struggle between Berkyaruk and Tutuş, wanted to bring his mother in İsfahan to Rey, but the vizier Müeyyidülmülk did not lean to this. Then Berkyaruk said: *"I want the sultanate only for him and because he is with me,"* to Müeyyidülmülk. The aim of the vizier is to protect her own power by keeping Zübeyde Hatun away from the ruler. When Zübeyde Hatun came to Rey, she

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became aware of the attitude of the vizier about herself. Müeyyidülmülk opponents took this opportunity to imprison him and appointed his brother Fahrülmülk to the vizier office instead of him. (Bundarı, 1999: 86).

Another occasion in which women are influential in domestic politics is that they act together with the ruler in issuing orders and edicts. As it is known, before Islam, in Turkish society, men and women always had equal rights, and the rulers' spouses stood at the left side of the hakan in the congresses and feasts, and at the same time, the name of the hakan was not mentioned only in the edicts, but the edicts began as the "*hakan and hatun commands...*" This practice also continued after the acceptance of Islam. However, the vizier Nizamülmülk who is from Persian culture expresses how objectionable this situation is in his work called *Siyasetname* with the following words. "If the sultans' wives are edicts, they always command the announcements of the grudge holders, and they will issue edicts according to the words of their assistants such as their own lady or servant. Therefore, the edicts do not reflect the truth. In all states, when the sultan is haunted by the wife of the sultan, disgrace, evil, sedition arose." (Kurt, 2002: 399).

It is seen that the spouses of the sovereigns exercised their legislative powers as the absolute deputy of the sovereign in their own administrative regions and *ıqdas* within the state. There are many examples of this. For example, when Tuğrul Bey was besieged by his brother İbrahim Yinal in Hemedan, he asked his wife Altuncan Hatun and his vizier Amidülmülk for help. Altuncan Hatun immediately started preparing to go to help her husband, but the caliph and the vizier opposed it. Despite this, Altuncan Hatun went to help her husband and even arrested her vizier and son, who tried to prevent him from doing so. (Bundarı, 1999: 12, İbnü'l Esir, 2016: VIII, 341, Sıbt İbnü'l Cevzi, 2011: 47-51).

Another example for this was seen during the reign of Sultan Alparslan. After the death of Tuğrul Bey, the Grand Vizier Amidülmülk Kündiri had sermons in the name of Çağrı Bey's son Suleiman and distributed a lot of money from the treasury among the members of the army in favor of Suleiman. He also sent a letter to Alparslan and threatened him. However, when the situation started to reverse, he seemed to be with Alparslan this time, and even had the sermon read in his name. However, as soon as Alparslan ascended the throne, Nizamülmülk was appointed and Amidülmülk was arrested first and then killed. During this period, Amidülmülk went to Nişabur where Alparslan's wife named Ümmü Hıfçak and his child and asked her to be the intercessor between the sultan and himself. Ümmü Hıfçak accepted this and made attempts with the sultan for Amidülmülk, but these attempts did not reach a result and Amidülmülk was killed. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: VIII, 364). Although the result was negative, this is an indication that Alparslan's wife had an initiative in state affairs.

Likewise, it is seen that state issues can be at the disposal of Terken Hatun. For example, after the death of Melikshah, Terken Hatun sent the Mosul Emir Kıvamüddövlé and Kürboğa to İsfahan with Sultan's seal. Kurboga told the castle guard to surrender the city, and said that this was the order of Melikshah, and in this way he captured İsfahan. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: VIII, 482).

Mohammed Tapar's wife, Gevher Hatun, also had her own territory. When Kemâlülmülk, who made Gevher Hatun stand out in the affairs of the state, was requested by Emir Amid to be dismissed, Gevher Hatun threatened him saying that if necessary she would order his dismissal. She even protected Kemâlülmülk by expressing that there could be an attempt against his life (Can, 2008: 87).

In the Great Seljuk State, land was offered to women belonging to the dynasty. The ladies would manage these lands either by themselves or by their agents. These lands show an example of a small state structure due to the organization established within them. After the marriage, women belonging to the Seljuk family assumed a number of administrative roles in the countries where they lived. For example, after Hatice Arslan went to the caliphate palace as a bride, when she heard that Abu Mansur b. Nasir al-Siyari who worked as a constabulary, controlled the accounts of debit owners and confiscated their possessions and made humiliating actions in the society, she banned him from these practices.(Can, 2008: 87).

Terken Hatun was a person who has an excessive reputation and has the right to speak in the sultan's palace. Terken Hatun had a vizier, a council under her, civil servants, financial and administrative organization. She also had an army of 12,000 at her disposal. Gevher Hatun, the wife of Muhammad Tapar, had similar powers in this context. Gevher Hatun changed viziers 3 times. This shows how effective she is in the administrative field. Also Gevher Hatun consulted her father Ismail b. Yakuti about the fact that the Azerbaijani soldiers should be loyal to him because of his rights in Azerbaijan, and the sultan confirmed this with a special certificate. (İbnü'l Esir, 2016: VIII, 490, Gregory Abû'l Farac, 1945: I, 334, Bundarî, 1999: 102).

The fact that the Seljuk women had such a wide range of authorities and iqtas enabled them to open many charitable institutions. As a matter of fact, even today, there are many foundations remaining from the spouses of the Seljuk rulers. Hatice Arslan Hatun, the daughter of Çağrı Bey, who was also the wife of Abbasid Caliph Qim Biemrillah, had many mosques, madrasas and lodge hospitals built. Hatice Arslan Hatun had her second marriage with Alaüddevele Ali and started to live in Yazd. She continued her charity work in Yazd, which she had started in Baghdad and other Islamic countries. For example, she built a mosque and minaret in Durda district, which is known to be the first minaret in Yazd. (Güner, 2001: I, 368).

There are also many charitable works built by Terken Hatun. For example, the Terken Hatun Mosque built in Baghdad between 1075-1094 is one of the most important works in this area. It is known that this mosque was destroyed by a flood in Baghdad. In addition to this mosque, Terken Hatun had a madrasa built in Baghdad with her name. This structure is the third largest madrasa built by the Seljuks for Hanefis. Today only the names of these works remain. (Cunbur, 1996: 593).

Also, we occasionally see women from the Seljuk dynasty in internal revolts. Altuncan Hatun is among the most obvious examples of this, as we have

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already mentioned. She is the one who saved her husband Tugrul Bey from the Ibrahim Yinal siege. Likewise, we see that Alparslan's sister Gevher Hatun has a connection with the Kavurt rebellion. During the Kavurt rebellion, Elbasan, spouse of Gevher Hatun, also supported him. In this struggle, Gevher Hatun fought alongside her husband Elbasan and Kavurt. Even after Elbasan's death, she continued to support Kavurt. Gevher Hatun had lost her life as a result of these events. (Hüseyni, 1999: 14, Bundarı, 1999: 13).

Conclusion

From the oldest known Turkish states, women have always had a different importance in Turkish society. We can clearly see the value given to women from Turkish epics. For example, in the Epic of Creation, the creature who inspired the creation of the universe is a woman named Ak Ana, and this woman is on the seventh floor of the sky. According to the epic, a woman is a spiritual being, while a man is a human being. In another Turkish epic, Dede Korkut, we come across many statements that praise the woman and emphasize her holiness. In Turkish states, women have never fallen behind men, and have fought with men at every stage of life.

In Turkish states, especially women belonging to the dynasty played a very active role in both social and political life. When necessary, they contributed to the state administration, fought at the head of the army and signed interstate agreements. When the Hakan wanted to make an agreement with a state, it was not enough for him to sign on his own, and any agreement without the signature of the hatun was not considered valid. Once again in the decrees and edicts, the name of the chick was mentioned along with the Sultan. When we compare this value given to women in Turkish society with contemporary states, we are faced with unpleasant scenes. While in many societies, women are considered as a commodity to be bought and sold, and in some societies such as China, women are not even given names, Turkish women's being with men in every moment of the functioning of life, society, and the state is admirable.

Old Turkish customs and traditions continued after the adoption of Islam. Especially the behaviors of the Prophet to his wives and the expressions that valued women enough to see heaven under the feet of mothers increased the value of women in Turkish society. As it is in all other Turkish-Islamic states, women have special importance in the Great Seljuk State too. Particularly women belonging to the Seljuk dynasty have attained the power to affect even the fate of the state. Altuncan Hatun, the wife of Tuğrul Bey and Terken Hatun, the wife of Melikşah are two best examples of this. Women belonging to the dynasty, with their own treasures, viziers, iqtas and armies, took their important place in Turkish history with the roles they played in the election of the heir, the selection of the crown prince, the relations of the viziers with the rulers, administrative dispositions, and the issuance of orders and edicts.

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