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### Politics and Gender in the Last Period of the Ilkhāns: The Case of Bagdād Khatun

İlhanlıların Son Döneminde Siyaset ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet: Bağdat Hatun Örneği

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#### Abstract

The life of Baghdād Khatun, a member of the senior ruling class of the Ilkhānid state, was greatly influenced by the political events of the time. The Ilkhānid ruler Abū Sa'īd declared his intention to marry Baghdād Khatun, the daughter of Amīr Chupan and the wife of Shaikh Hasan Jalāyer, on the basis of the authority granted to him by Chinggis Khan's Yasa (*Yasa-yi Bozorg*). This was undoubtedly part of Abū Sa'īd's plan to use his authority to control and/or eliminate the Chupanids, who overshadowed him economically and politically. The power struggle between the Chupan family and Abū Sa'īd took place in the private sphere and was based on yasa, particularly concerning the Baghdād Khatun incident. This request touched on private life and family honour, triggering important political and military events. It tested the obedience and loyalty of the Chupan family, who controlled almost the entire country. This article examines the role of yasa in Mongol political thought, and how the Ilkhānids implemented it alongside sharī'a, despite also being Muslim. Thus, an attempt is made to assess the various dimensions of the relationship between the rulers and the amīrs within the framework of gender roles.

#### Öz

İlhanlı devletinin üst düzey yönetici sınıfının bir üyesi olan Bağdat Hatun'un hayatı, dönemin siyasi olaylarından derinden etkilendi. İlhanlı hükümdarı Ebu Said, Cengizhan Yasası'nı (*Yasa-yi Buzurg*) kendisine verdiği yetkiye dayanarak Emir Çoban'ın kızı ve Şeyh Hasan Celayir'in eşi Bağdat Hatun ile evlenmek istediğini bildirdi. Bu, şüphesiz Çoban ailesi tarafından ekonomik ve politik olarak gölgede bırakılan Ebu Said'in otoritesini ve gücünü kullanarak onları kontrol altına alma ve/veya ortadan kaldırma planının bir parçasıydı. Nitekim özel hayata ve aile onuruna dokunan bu istek, önemli siyasi ve askeri olayların tetikleyicisi oldu. Çoban ailesinin Ebu Said ile yaşadığı güç mücadelesi Bağdat Hatun olayı başta olmak üzere özellikle yasaya dayandırılarak özel hayat üzerinden bir meydan okumaya dönüştürüldü. Bu teklif nerede ise ülkenin tamamının idaresini elinde tutan Çoban ailesinin sadakatlerini zor bir teste tabi tuttu. Bu makale, yasanın Moğol siyasi düşüncesindeki yerini ve işlevini ve aynı zamanda Müslüman olan İlhanlıların yasa ve şeriatı birlikte nasıl uyguladıklarını incelemektedir. Böylece hükümdarlar ile emirler arasındaki ilişkinin farklı boyutları toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri çerçevesinde değerlendirilmeye çalışıldı.

#### Keywords

Bagdād Khatun • Amīr Chupan • Abū Sa'īd • Yasa/Yasaq • Amīrs (tribal leaders)

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

Bağdat Hatun • Emir Çoban • Ebu Said • Yasa/Yasaq • Emirler (kabile beyleri)

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## Introduction

Bagdād Khatun (d.1335) was the daughter of Amīr Chupan (d.1331), who was the leading Mongol Amīr of the Ilkhānid period. She was married to Amīr Shaikh Hasan<sup>1</sup> from the Jalāyirī tribe in 1323. Two years later, in 1325, the twenty-year-old Abū Sa'īd,<sup>2</sup> the Ilkhān in Persia, “fell in love with Bagdād Khatun” and wanted to marry her according to yasa.<sup>3</sup> By proposing this Abū Sa'īd, violated a clear prohibition in the Qur'an and reduced Bagdād Khatun and her family to the status of slave.<sup>4</sup> Throughout history, in many Muslim communities, it was possible for a Muslim ruler to set his sights on a married woman and marry her. However, this could be done secretly or without much publicity and with no legal basis. In this case, however, Abū Sa'īd publicly emphasized that he had made this proposal in accordance with yasa, rather than conducting this unusual matter in secret to avoid possible repercussions. Nevertheless, the marriage was conducted in accordance with the rules of sharī'a. His request for marriage exacerbated long-standing yet unspoken issues with the Chupanis, triggering significant political and military events. In fact, the amīrs of the Ilkhānate were granted considerable power and authority on condition of their obedience to the dynasty. This allowed them to amass significant military and economic power while operating within the legal framework. However, the growing power of the Chupanids was perceived as a threat to the dynasty and the rival amīrs, causing conflict between them and the rulers. Problems between the Chupanids and Abū Sa'īd were a recurring feature of Ilkhānid history. This time, however, private matters played a significant role in the events. This offers an opportunity to examine the role and position of women among the Mongols from a different perspective. This article examines the relationship between women, politics, and sharī'a and yasa within the Ilkhānid dynasty in the context of the Bagdad Khatun case and related events.

## 1. Chupanids and Abū Sa'īd

Amīr Chupan's rising power and authority within the dynasty was due in large part to Uljaitu's favor.<sup>5</sup> He won the trust of Uljaitu to such an extent that he was able to marry two of the daughters of Uljaitu, first Shāhzāda maghfūr Dowlandī in 1319/1320, and immediately after her death, he married Shāhzāda Sati Bik, (6 September 1319).<sup>6</sup> Abū Sa'īd was crowned in 1317 at the very young age of 12, which made it easier for the Chupan to exert his influence over him. Therefore, Abū Sa'īd's reign was divided into two phases; the first

<sup>1</sup> He was the son of Amīr Husain, the son of the martyred Aqbuqa Guregan, the son of the late Amīr Ilkhān Noyan. His mother was Uljai Sultān, the daughter of Arghun Khan. Amīr Shaikh Hasan was also cousin of Abū Sa'īd. Al-Āharī, Abu Bakr al-Qutbī (fl. 1350s), *Ta'riḫ-i Shaikh Uwais*, tran. J. B. van Loon, *History of Shaikh (Uais): An Important Source for the History of Adharbaijān in the fourteenth Century*, Holland 1954, p.83. For more detailed information about Shaikh Hasan and Jalāyirids, see: Shīrīn Bāyanī, *Tāriḫ al- Jalāyer*, Tehrān, 1945, p.1-50; Al-Shabānkārā'i, Muhammad b. 'Alī, *Majma' al-Ansāb*, ed. Mir Hāshim Muhaddith, Tehrān 1984, p.297.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to his accession to the throne, Abū Sa'īd married Ūljāy Qutlugh Khatun, daughter of Ghazan Khan. According to Samarqandī, Ūljāy Qutlugh Khatun was previously married to Prince Bāstām. Following his death, she married Abū Sa'īd. Baghdād Khatun was his second wife. His third wife was Delshād Khatun, niece of Baghdād Khatun. His fourth wife was Adelshāh Khatun, the daughter of Tukel, son of Amīr Isen Qutlugh. His fifth wife was the daughter of Dawlatshāh, who was a relative of Amīr Chupan. Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī, *Maṭla'al-Sa'dayn va Majma'al Baḥrayn*, ed. 'Abd al-Husayn Navā'i, Tehrān 1994, p. 20-21.

<sup>3</sup> All historical sources report that Abū Sa'īd proposed marriage to Baghdad Khatun on the basis of the Chinggisid Yasa. Shabānqārā'i, p. 298; Hāfez Abrū, *Zubdat al-Tawāriḫ*, ed. Kamāl Hājj Sayyid Javādī, Tehrān 1993, p. 117.; Samarqandī, p. 60. According to Riasanovsky, the Yasa required that all daughters be presented to the Sultan at the start of each year, so that he could select some for himself and his children. If he asked for a maid or anyone's sister, she was to be given to him without resistance. Valentin Riasanovsky, *Fundamental Principles of Mongol Law*, Indiana University, Bloomington, Mouton&Co., The Hague, The Netherlands 1965, p. 84; Gregory Abū'l Farac (Hebraeus), *Abū'l-Farac Tarihi*, II, tran. Ömer Rıza Doğrul, TTK Basımevi, Ankara 1999, 526; Cem Tüysüz, “İlhanlı Devleti Tarihinde Bağdad Hatun (Hayatı ve Siyasi Yaşama Etkileri)”, *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, issue 72, 2021, p. 265-276.

<sup>4</sup> Qur'an, 4:24. Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: a man can only marry a slave married woman.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Melville, *Çobān*, *El*, V, 875.

<sup>6</sup> Hāmdullāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Dhail-i Tāriḫ-i Guzīda*, ed. Īraj Afshār, Tehrān 1993, p.614-15; Samarqandī, p. 54; Abrū, p. 71; Qāshānī, Abū al-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī, *Tāriḫ-i Ūljāytū*, ed. M. Hambly, Tehrān 1969-70, p. 6.

phase, in which Amīr Chupan and the Chupanids gained superiority over the other leading Amīrs through political maneuvering by suppressing the Amīr revolt in 1319, and the second phase, which began with the struggle of Amīr Chupan and his sons against the Ilkhāns and ended with the execution of this family.<sup>7</sup>

In the first phase, members of the Chupanid family controlled almost the entire country, each as governor of a region; Timurtash was in Rūm, Shaikh Mahmūd in Gurjīstān, and Hasan in Khūrāsān, Talash (son) of Hasan in Fārs and Kermān, and Dimashq Khwāja in both Āzarbāijān and Irāq. Ahari summarizes the situation in the following sentence. "Abū Sa'īd became a king in name only".<sup>8</sup> In parallel, Khāfez Abrū reported that "Amīr Chupan took control and rule of Abū Sa'īd's country".<sup>9</sup> In this case, the following question comes to mind. How did an amīr gain such a great power? The answer to this question may also be a key to understanding the events leading up to the Baghdād Khatun incident.

In the Chinggisid political understanding, the right to rule was only the right of a person from *Altan Urugh* (the Golden Seed). This tradition did not allow any man, no matter how powerful, from outside the ruling family to seize power and ascend the throne. Therefore, no matter how powerful an amīr was, he could hardly think of sitting on the throne of the ruler of a golden lineage of a Chinggisid ruler.<sup>10</sup> According to İ.Togan, *yasa* (*Jasagh*) had many aspects and one of them was that this was a world with a center; this center was not necessarily locational as in the case of capital but more personal. This world-view required a *khan* or a *qaghan*. In other words, *khanship* had become institutionalized.<sup>11</sup> In this system, amīrs and bureaucrats were in constant competition to gain the ruler's favour. Those who helped the ruler in their struggle for the throne or in overcoming political and military crises were, over time, seen as a threat to the ruler and the ruling elite. The rulers exploited the competition between the amīrs, setting them against each other, in order to maintain their authority over them.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the relationship between amīrs and rulers tended to rise and fall. As in the relationship between Ghazan Khan (r.1295-1304) and Amīr Nawrūz,<sup>13</sup> Amīr Chupan crushed this rebellion in the uprising of 1319, consolidating both Abū Sa'īd's power and his own place. History repeated itself and Amīr Chupan and his large family, all of whom held important positions, began to be seen as a threat. About this matter Melville said that "Chopan became master of affairs as Öljeitü had recommended he should; but this was not universally accepted, and by depriving the new Sultan all but the name of ruler, Chupan also created a more dangerous enemy in Abū Sa'īd himself".<sup>14</sup> This time, to eliminate the Chupanids, Abū Sa'īd used the other amīrs who, like himself, were inconvenient to the Chupanids.<sup>15</sup> Abū Sa'īd lit the fuse by proposing marriage to Bağdād Khatun, depending on the *yasa*/*yasaq*. Although there is not enough evidence to claim that the proposal was made solely for political purposes, subsequent events can be viewed as evidence of its strong political dimension. In fact, the sources' mention

<sup>7</sup>Hüseyin Peyrovi Milāni, *Ebū Said Bahadır Han (1316-1335)*, Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi, Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Ankara 1971, p. 60.

<sup>8</sup>Loon, p. 53.

<sup>9</sup>Abrū, p. 117.

<sup>10</sup>Similarly, even in the Great Seljuk Empire, where the dynastic powers of the rulers were not as strong as in the Mongol Empire, many powerful amīrs did not think of seizing the Seljuk throne because they were not from the ruling clan. A. C. S. Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2015, p. 234, 268.

<sup>11</sup>İsenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitations in Steppe Formations; The Kerait Khanate and Chinggis Khan*, Brill, Leiden 1998, p. 149.

<sup>12</sup>Melville Charles, "Abū Sa'īd and the Revolt of Amirs in 1319", *L'Iran Face À La Domination Mongole*, ed. Denis Aigle, Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, Téhéran 1997, p. 89-95 (Revolt of Amirs in 1319).

<sup>13</sup>Osman Gazi Özgüdenli, *Gâzân Han ve Reformları*, Kaknüs Tarih, İstanbul 2009, p. 161.

<sup>14</sup>Melville, "Revolt of Amirs in 1319", p. 96.

<sup>15</sup>Abrū mentioned "According to the information I received, Vizier Malik Nasrad al-Dīn, whose nickname was 'Adel', was behind this intrigue against Chupan, there was." Abrū, p.120; Qazwīnī, p. 606-617; Khwāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar fī Akhbār-i Afrād-i Bashār*, III, tran. W. Thackston *The Reign of the Mongol and the Turk*, Cambridge 1994, p.120; Samarqandī, p. 63.

of the unease caused by the power of the Chupan family and this marriage proposal together can be seen as evidence of the political aspect of this proposal.

This incident challenges the widely held view that women in the Mongol dynasty and ruling elite permanently held great power and authority, and that their rights were protected by the *yasa*.<sup>16</sup> The position of elite women depended on the authority of the Chinggisid ruler as much as that of elite men. This is evident from the ups and downs experienced by Baghdād Khatun, and from the marriage of her niece, Delshād Khatun, to the ruler who murdered her father, Dimashq Khwāja.

## 2. Yasa/Yasaq

The customary law *töre/törü*, practiced among steppe societies, was regulated by Chinggis Khan as the *yasa/yasaq*, which permanently strengthened the ruler's authority.<sup>17</sup> *Yasa* represented and symbolized the imperial ideology and authority of the Mongols.<sup>18</sup> As Togan claims, with Chinggis Khan in the political sphere, "the state" was elevated to a position above any tribe that remained intact after the changes. The supreme leadership was represented by one dynastic family, the family of Chinggis Khan and his descendants. This new order of Chinggis Khan occupied a central place in the *yasa/yasaq*. Any move to the contrary would be severely punished.<sup>19</sup> The account of the Armenian historian Grigor Akanc (d. 1335) reveals the centrality of *yasa* to the Mongol political system. He reported that the Mongols made a great covenant with God, the Creator of heaven and earth, to abide by His commandments. These are the commandments of God which He imposed on them and which they themselves call "*Yasax*".<sup>20</sup> The fact that Akanc, an outsider living at the same time as Abū Sa'īd, saw the *yasa* as a pact with God can be taken as an indication of how the Chingisid *yasa* was glorified for the Ilkhānids. *Yasa* was binding all his descendants and the rest of the Mongols, serving as a yardstick for their faithfulness to him and to his heritage throughout the countries under their rule.<sup>21</sup> Like Ghazan Khan,<sup>22</sup> his successors, who had remained loyal to the Mongol *yasa*, did not make their Islam a "state religion." They did not adhere to the principles of Islamic law.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the ruling class, whose whole life was a part of politics, was not punished according to *sharī'a* but by *yasa*.<sup>24</sup>

As an experienced soldier and bureaucrat, Chupan undoubtedly knew the Chinggisid imperial ideology well and acted accordingly. The fact that he carried out his duties under *yasa* with great loyalty is emphasized in almost all historical sources. Chupan tried to make sure that his children would remain loyal to the

<sup>16</sup>Nicola de Bruno, "Women's Role and participation in Warfare in the Mongol Empire," *Soldatinnen: gewalt und Geschichte im Krieg vom Mittelalter bis Heute*, ed. Franka Maubach, Silke Satjukov and Klaus Latzel, Krieg in der Geschichte series, LX, Brill 2019, s.95-112.

<sup>17</sup>George Vernadsky, "The Scope and Contents of Chingis Khan's *Yasa*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, III/4 (Dec. 1938), 339; Zeki Velidi Togan, *Umumî Türk Tarihi'ne Giriş*, Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul 1981, p.132; Abdülkadir İnan, "*Yasa, Töre-Türe ve şariat*," *Makaleler ve İncelemeler*, I, TTK, Ankara 1998, p. 222.

<sup>18</sup>David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1040-1797*, Longman, London, New York 1985, p. 58.

<sup>19</sup>İsenbike Togan, "Variation and Perception of *Jasagh*," *History of Central Asia in Modern Medieval Studies (In Memoriam of Professor Roziya Mukminova)*, ed. D. A. Alimova, Yangi Nashr, Tashkent 2013, p.69.

<sup>20</sup>Grigor Akanc, "History of the Nation of the Archers", tran. Robert P. Blake and Richard N. Frye, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, XII/3-4 (1949), 289-91.

<sup>21</sup>David Ayalon, "The Great *Yasa* of Chingiz Khan, A Reexamination," *Studia slavica*, issue 33, 1971, p. 132.

<sup>22</sup>Shortly before he converted to Islam, Ghazan Khan wanted to marry the wife of his late father, Bulughan Khatun. While such a marriage was typical for Mongols, under *sharī'a* it would be illegal. Al-Safadī tells how Ghazan (r. 694/1295-703/1304) was willing to abandon Islam if the marriage could not be performed, but a scholar suggested a solution: as Ghazan's father had not been a Muslim, his marriage to Bulughan Khatun could be deemed invalid. Amitai-Preiss, R. Ghazan, "Islam and Mongol Tradition: A View from the Mamluk Sultanate", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, LIX/1 (1996), 3.

<sup>23</sup>Denise Aigle, "The Mongol Invasions of Bilād al-Shām by Ghāzān Khān and Ibn Taymīyah's Three 'Anti-Mongols' Fatwas", *Mamluk Studies Review*, XI/2 (2007), 116; Michal Biran, *The Mongol Transformation: from the Steppe to Eurasian Empire*, Brill, Leiden 2004, p.359.

<sup>24</sup>Z. V. Togan, p. 386-387; In the Seljuq dynasty, high-ranking members of the elite were also judged according to traditional steppe law (*yasa*) Peacock, p. 166.



dynasty. When his son Timurtash Noyan the governor of Anatolia, rebelled in 1322,<sup>25</sup> he went to Anatolia he tied his son's hands together and brought him before Abū Sa'īd, saying, "He is a criminal, execute him," but Abū Sa'īd forgave him, and later Timurtash Noyan returned to Anatolia as governor.<sup>26</sup> As in the case of his son's disloyalty to Abū Sa'īd, he never wavered in his loyalty to the dynasty and yasa. Even when this humiliating marriage proposal was made, Amīr Chupan shocked and ashamed<sup>27</sup> however, he did not openly refused Abū Sa'īd's request. Chupan's failure to respond to this humiliating offer was the only way to exist in a system where all kinds of power and authority were available as long as yasa was followed, that is, as long as the ruler who had the greatest authority was obeyed. Therefore, he tried to divert his attention and send his daughter and son in law Shaikh Hasan Jalāyer to Qarabagh and he recommended that Abū Sa'īd spend the winter in Baghdād.<sup>28</sup> With the arrival of spring, Chupan had still not responded to the Khan's request. One day Sultan Abū Sa'īd said: I have given you all my land, do it in such a way that I can be carefree, I have never had a burden (difficulty, problem) until today". Abū Sa'īd then told him that he was disturbed by his son Dimashq Khwāja, who represented Chupan at court, and that asked him to replace Dimashq Khwāja with his other sons.<sup>29</sup> This reproachful speech was probably also due to the fact that Chupan still did not give his daughter Baghdād Khatun to the Sultan.<sup>30</sup>

Once again, rather than reacting to Abū Sa'īd, Chupan advised his son, Dimashq Khwāja, on how to behave towards the ruler and establish good relations with him. He said that if he gained the trust of the ruler, his life would be easier and he would easily achieve his goals and desires. Dimashq responded by telling his father, "I served the emperor with great devotion and I always preserved my servitude (*'ubūdiyyet*) and I have spent my life in his service." He also added that he suspected that the problem between him and the ruler was not because of his abuse of power, but because Sā'in Vizier had betrayed him to the ruler.<sup>31</sup> For the second time, Chupan, without fulfilling the ruler's order, moved to Khorasan to solve a problem related to the military security of the country in the east. He took Sā'in Vizier with him when he left. This time, he was murdered on Abū Sa'īd's orders, upon rumours of Dimashq Khwāja's secret affair with a Uljaitu's concubine.

Ibn Battuta, who visited Baghdad (1326-27) during Abū Sa'īd's stay there, provided valuable information about the tensions between the Chupanids and Abū Sa'īd and the murder of Dimashq Khwāja. His accounts agree with the historical sources and include information not mentioned in them. Battuta included the following sentence, which is the same as Āharī's and Abrū's sentences "nothing of sovereignty remained in his hands but the name". Furthermore he reported that Abū Sa'īd had no money to distribute to the poor on a feast day and borrowed money from a merchant. Finally, his mother Donyā Khatun said to him: "If we were men, we should not let Chupan and his son continue to behave like this. The behavior of Dimashq Khwāja, the son of Chupan has reached the point of dishonoring your father's wives. Last night he spent the night with Tugha Khatun, and he sent me a message saying, "Tonight I will spend the night with you." Donyā Khatun advised Abū Sa'īd to capture Dimashq Khwāja and then said, "As for his father [Chupan], God will suffice to deal with him."<sup>32</sup> Her words to his father [Chupan], "God will be enough to deal with him,"

<sup>25</sup>For detailed information about this revolt see Nilgün Dalkesen, "İlhanlı Valisi Emir Timurtaş'ın İsyanı", *Kebikeç*, Issue 43, Ankara 2017, p.301-324 ("İlhanlı Valisi Emir Timurtaş'ın İsyanı").

<sup>26</sup>Loon, p. 54; Qazvīnī, p. 606; Abrū, p. 114-115; Shabānkārā'i, p.285.

<sup>27</sup>Abrū described Chupan's reaction to this offer in a very dramatic manner. See Abrū, p. 118. See also Samarqandī, p. 60.

<sup>28</sup>Thackston, p. 120; Samarqandī, p. 63.

<sup>29</sup>Abrū, p. 119.

<sup>30</sup>C. Melville, "Wolf or Sepherd? Amīr Chohan's Attitude to Government?", *The Court of the Il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby & Teresa Fitzherbert, Oxford University Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, Oxford, New York 1996, p.80.

<sup>31</sup>Abrū, p. 119-120. Loon, 54; Qazvīnī, 606-617; Thackston, p. 120; Samarqandī, p. 63.

<sup>32</sup>Ibn Battūta, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb, Cambridge Univ. Press, III, 1962, 336-337; İbn Battūta, *İbn Battūta Seyahatnāmesi*, tran. A. Sait Aykut, YKY, I, İstanbul, 2000, 322-323.



also reflected on the idea of eliminating Chupan. While Donyā Khatun's conversation with her son Abū Sa'īd was about complaining about Dimashq Khwāja's behavior, the historical sources emphasized the extent of Dimashq Khwāja's political and economic power. Shabānqārāī said of Dimashq that he sat himself on the throne of the Khān, and his power and wealth became greater than the Khān, and his improper sayings about the Khān reached his ears.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Āharī said "Amīr Dimashq Khwāja, in the camp (*ordu*), ruled (the) whole world."<sup>34</sup> Historical sources or Donyā Khatun criticized him not for abusing his duty or not doing it well, but for broking the rules of being a servant (*'ubūdiyyet*).<sup>35</sup> Dimashq Khwāja's complaint, quoted above, also proves that the Chupanis were being targeted for extermination.<sup>36</sup> Abū Sa'īd's desire to marry Baghdad Khatun accelerated the process.

At the end, the pretext of his secret relationship with one of the concubines of Uljaitu, Dimashq was killed in August 1328 and his properties were plundered. He was so rich that "a man (plunderer) who did not have bread for breakfast became rich with Dimashq's property by night."<sup>37</sup> Abū Sa'īd turned the execution of Dimashq into a show. Shabānqārāī wrote that when Dimashq was killed, his head was brought from the castle and exhibited for public view. Abū Sa'īd sat stately and said "whoever oppose me, his end will be like this" (*Her kesi ke o rā del-i mukhālāfat bāshad, aqibet-i o chenīn bashād*).<sup>38</sup> Once again, a member of Chupan family was punished not because of what he said or did against the Khān, but because of a private matter.

Although Chupan had taken no action against the Khan for his request to marry Baghdād Khatun, the execution of his son caused him to speak ill of the Khan, leading to a fight in which he was killed by the Khan's soldiers.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the reason for his defeat of Chupan's army was the defection of thirty thousand soldiers from Chupan's army to Abu Said's side.<sup>40</sup> After the execution of Dimashq and Chupan, the rest of Chupan's family were forced to leave the country and the Chupanid rule came to an end.<sup>41</sup> According to Āharī, Abū Sa'īd acquired absolute power after the execution of Chupan and his son Dimashq.<sup>42</sup> After the elimination of the Chupanids, there was nothing to hinder Abū Sa'īd from marrying Baghdād Khatun. This time, he sent Qādī al-Quzāt Mobārak Shāh to ask Baghdād from her husband Shaikh Ḥasan.<sup>43</sup> Abū Sa'īd's marriage proposal was in accordance with yasa but the wedding was carried in accordance with shari'a. Thus, before the wedding, Baghdād Khatun spent the *'iddah period* in accordance with shari'a.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Shabānqārāī, p. 281-282.

<sup>34</sup>Loon, p. 55. Shabānqārāī reported that, one day, when Abū Sa'īd was drunk, the amīrs said that "Dimashq's treasury is worth more than yours. You are pādeshāh in name, but the real pādeshāh is Dimashq". *Majma' al-Ansāb*, 280.

<sup>35</sup>His brother, Timurtash, was also executed by the Mamluk Sultan for similar reasons. It is thought that their power and wealth made it difficult for them to remain within the framework of servitude. Dalkesen, "İlhanlı Valisi Emir Timurtaş'ın İsyanı", p. 320-321.

<sup>36</sup>Charles Melville, "The Fall of Amir Chupan and the Decline of the Ilkhanate, 1327-37: A Decade of Discord in Mongol Iran", *Papers on Inner Asia*, Indiana Bloomington, XXX (1999), 15.

<sup>37</sup>Thackston, p. 120; Fasīh al-Khwāfī, *Mujmal-i Faṣīhī (777-849)*, ed. Mahmūd Farrukh, Tehrān, 1960, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup>Shabānqārāī, p. 280.

<sup>39</sup>Shabānqārāī, p. 284. The sources mentioned the reluctance of the soldiers to fight with or kill Chupan and his son Dimashq. See Samarqandī, p. 67. Abrū reported what Abū Sa'īd had said about Chupan's good character, and Abū Sa'īd sent his coffin to Medina. Before he died, Chupan gave his will to Amir Malik Giyath al-Din, the man who had killed him. Chupan's will stated: 1. Do not separate my body from my head, as I am innocent. If proof is required, cut off one of my fingers and send it. 2. Do not kill my son Jalāu Khān, who is very young. Send him alive, as he is the son of his sister. 3. Send my corpse to Madīna-i Rasūl. Abrū, p. 133.

<sup>40</sup>Abrū, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*, 130.

<sup>41</sup>Amīr Timurtash took refuge in Egypt, he was delivered to the Khān and executed; Chupan's son Hasan and Hāḥasan's son Talash were sheltered by the Uzbek Khān; Chupan's other son Shaikh Mahmūd, the ruler of Georgia, was taken captive and killed by the Khan's soldiers. See Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, 620; Firdevs, Özen, "İlhanlı Devleti'nin Son Hükümdarı Ebū Sa'īd Bahādır Han'ın Emīr Çoban'ın Ölümünden Sonraki Faaliyetleri ve Ölümü (728-736/1327-1335)", *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, issue 74, 2022, p. 268-281.

<sup>42</sup>Loon, p. 56.

<sup>43</sup>Abrū, p. 139.

<sup>44</sup>Abrū, 140.

### 3. Baghdad Khatun as a Wife of the Khan

When Baghdād khatun was the daughter of Chupan and the wife of Shaikh Hasan Jalāyer, she was treated like a slave. However, once she was married to the Khan, this time as the Khan's wife, she enjoyed the advantages of *yasa* and was able to act as a ruler with great power and prestige. Historical sources report that after the marriage, "Baghdād Khatun sat on the throne of the state"<sup>45</sup> and began to take an active part in all administrative and fiscal matters; She was given many *yarliqs* around the surrounding lands, and her decisions were respected and obeyed, Chupanids were executed, but this time through Baghdad Khatun, Chupanids were able to exercise power once again. She avenged her father and brothers by executing their enemies who had provoked Abū Sa'īd against their family.<sup>46</sup> Abrū reported that Baghdād Khatun prevented Abū Sa'īd from giving the lands and wealth of his father to Ghiyas al-Dīn, who was one of the enemies of his father. Regarding his power and authority, the author referred to him as *khodāwandegār*, which means ruler.<sup>47</sup>

Inevitably, the extent of Baghdād Khatun's power disturbed some of the ruling elite, and they spread a rumor in October 1331-September 1332 that Baghdād Khatun and her former husband Shaikh Hasan<sup>48</sup> were secretly meeting and planning to kill Abū Sa'īd.<sup>49</sup> They warned him that women are not faithful or loyal and shouldn't be trusted.<sup>50</sup> It was not until a year later that this was exposed as mere gossip, but this did not prevent Baghdād Khatun from losing her power and prestige, and Shaikh Hasan from being exiled to Anatolia as governor.<sup>51</sup> Once again, private matters were used as a pretext to eliminate a Chupanid.

Abū Sa'īd wanted to marry Delshād Khatun after the event in 1333,<sup>52</sup> who was the niece of Baghdād Khatun (the daughter of Dimashq Khwāja) and the granddaughter of Amīr Chupan.<sup>53</sup> As she was his wife's niece, his proposal of marriage was in accordance with *yasa* (*ayīn-i Mongol*).<sup>54</sup> However, in order to marry Delshād Khatun, he had to divorce Baghdād Khatun, because according to shari'a, it is not permissible for an aunt and niece to be the wives of the same man at the same time.<sup>55</sup> This time Abū Sa'īd followed the rules of the shari'a this time. It is likely that marrying Delshād Khatun was a way of punishing and eliminating another Chupanid, Baghdād Khatun. Shabānqārāi reported that the Khān had been unhappy with his previous wives and that he had married Delshād Khatun at the end of his life and loved her very much.<sup>56</sup> This made Baghdād

<sup>45</sup>Shabānqārāi, p. 285-295; See also Samarqandī, p. 79. Hāfez Abrū, *Dhayl-i Jāmi'u't- Tavārikh-i Rashīdī*, 134.

<sup>46</sup>Loon, p.56.

<sup>47</sup>Abrū, p. 134; Roger Savory, "Baghdād Khatun," *EI*, I (1960): 908-909.

<sup>48</sup>Shaikh Hasan was the ruler of Āzarbaijān, Arrān, Mūghān and Shirwān. For more detailed information, see Bāyanī, p. 15; Loon, p. 52.

<sup>49</sup>Āharī openly said "he (Shaikh Hasan) and *Khodāwandegār Baghdād*, the daughter of Amīr Chupan had conspired and planned an attempt on the life of the king. One named Īrmūkī Īrāghal was the originator of this intrigue which reached Amīr Aḥmad Rashīd by word-of-mouth. He repeated it to his majesty and the Khan was very angry about this situation". Loon, p. 57; Abrū, p.142; Samarqandī, p. 95.

<sup>50</sup>Shabānqārāi, p. 295.

<sup>51</sup>Loon, p. 57. Abrū said that Abū Sa'īd had wanted to punish him, but did not because his mother was the Khan's aunt. Therefore, for her sake, therefore, he forgave Hasan and sent him, along with his mother, to the fortress at Kamāh. Abrū, p. 142; Bāyanī, p. 15.

<sup>52</sup>After the fall of the Chupanids in 1327, Delshād Khatun was brought under the protection of her aunt Baghdād Khatun. When she attained maturity she was presented to Abū Sa'īd. Melville, "Delshād Khatun," *EI*, VII, 255.

<sup>53</sup>According to Shabānqārāi, Baghdād Khatun educated and raised Delshād Khatun and sacrificed her to the Khan. However, her plan backfired because the Khan favoured Delshād, which made Baghdād Khatun jealous. Shabānqārāi, p. 295. He also reported that Abū Sa'īd wanted to have a child, and God gave him a daughter. However, he could not see her as she was born seven months after his death. Shabānqārāi, p. 293.

<sup>54</sup>Shabānqārāi, p. 295.

<sup>55</sup>Marriage, between a man and his mother-in-law, step- daughter, two sisters or with an aunt and niece at the same time is forbidden. See: J. Schacht, "Nikāh in Classical Islamic Law", *EI*, III (1995), 28. According to Hāfez Abrū, Dimasq, father of Delshād and Baghdād Khatun were from the same mother, Abrū, *Zubdat al-Tawārikh*, 138; Thackston, p. 125.

<sup>56</sup>When Abū Sa'īd died, Abrū reported that Delshād Khatun was very sad. Abrū, p. 145.

Khatun very jealous, and the relationship between her and the Khān weakened.<sup>57</sup>

Following Abū Sa'īd's death, Arpā Khān was crowned as the king of the Ilkhānid realm but Bagdād Khatun refused to obey him. Arpa Khan accused her of secretly allying with the enemy, Uzbek Khan, and of poisoning Abū Sa'īd on 17 January 1333. She was subsequently punished and killed by Khwāja Lū'lū' in a bathhouse in November 1335.<sup>58</sup> Another Chupanid woman, Delshād Khatun, was brought to the center of the stage after the removal of Baghdad.

Following the death of Abū Sa'īd, Delshād Khatun fled to Amīr 'Alī, the leader of Oirat tribe and governor of Baghdād.<sup>59</sup> Her mother was Tursin Khatun, who was the daughter of Kunjak Khatun and Ahmad Khān, who was the son of Hulagu Khan.<sup>60</sup> In addition to her Chingisid descent, Delshād Khatun was pregnant with Abū Sa'īd's child. Had she given birth to a son, she could have proclaimed him Khan, thereby reigning in his name.<sup>61</sup> Thus, Delshād Khatun became an important figure in this chaotic political environment. In July/August 1336, Shaikh Hasan, who was the founder of the Jalāyirīd dynasty, took the control of the northwestern part of Iran and married Delshād Khatun.<sup>62</sup> Shaikh Hasan was from the family of İlkan Noyan, whose lineage extended back to Chingisid Khān. His mother was Uljaitu Khatun, who was the daughter of Arghun Khan.<sup>63</sup> Through this marriage, Shaikh Hasan gained the upper hand over rival amīrs who were competing with each other to take the control of the Ilkhānid lands through puppet khans. Furthermore, Shaikh Hasan took the revenge for what had happened to his former wife, Baghdād Khatun, whom Abū Sa'īd took by force. As Samarqandī stated regarding this marriage: "Having Delshād Khatun cost the dreams of Baghdād Khatun (*"Khayāl-i Baghdād Khatun be vasl-ı Delshād Khatun bedel shode"*).<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusion

The political and administrative structure of the Ilkhans facilitated the economic and political power of Chupan and his sons, who skillfully carried out their duties in accordance with the rules, to reach such a level that they overshadowed the ruler. This system also protected the absolute authority of the Chinggisid rulers through yasa over his subject people. Because yasa was the most important tool the Mongol rulers used to protect their own superiority, they knew no bounds in this regard. In the absence of actual crimes to punish, abstract concepts and symbols of honour and decency were used instead. It was issues relating their private lives. These became the pretext for taking action against Chupan's family members. To this end, he applied both yasa and sharī'a flexibly, relying on the authority granted to him by the law of Ching Khan as a Chingisid ruler. Therefore, just like men, the women of the family were affected by this system positively or negatively depending on the context, because they were all active servants of the Chinggisid ruler.

In this respect, the traditional view that Mongolian imperial ideology and traditions gave great power and authority to the women of the dynasties and the ruling elite, and that these values were protected by yasa, needs to be questioned. Indeed, it is clear that the position of elite women, like that of men, was

<sup>57</sup>Shabānqārāī, p. 293.

<sup>58</sup>Shabānqārāī, p. 295-296. Abrū reported that when Abū Sa'īd died, Bagdād was too proud to present herself and obey Arpa Khan. When it became known that she had poisoned Chupan and had written a letter to the Uzbek Khan opposing Arpa Khan, she was killed on Arpa Khan's orders. Abrū, p. 295-96; Āharī said that in October 19-November 17, 1335 she was killed because she corresponded with the Uzbek Khan and persuaded him to come to Īrān. Loon, p. 59. Abrū, p. 146; Samarqandī, p. 124; Bāyanī, p. 16.

<sup>59</sup>Samarqandī, p.125-126; Bāyanī, p. 18.

<sup>60</sup>Loon, p. 8.3.

<sup>61</sup>Bāyanī, p. 20; Abrū, p.151.

<sup>62</sup>Abrū, p. 153.

<sup>63</sup>Loon, p. 83; Shabānqārāī, p. 295.

<sup>64</sup>Samarqandī, p. 132-133; Abrū, p. 154.



directly affected by changing political conditions. In fact, this can serve as evidence that they were highly active and effective in the political, administrative, social and economic spheres.



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