

Influential Women of the Mongol Empire

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Power within governments is not always what it appears and leaders are not always the man or woman at the top. Those who are connected intimately either through marriage or birth, or even friendships, often are the ones who wield the power behind the person or group who is the presumed head of governments. Modern governments typically exist as having a strong leader, either by election, monarchy or theocracy, and have supporting cabinets or ministers who advise the leader, and it is certainly not uncommon for leaders in current society to have strong female leaders who have attained high office through legitimate means. The concept of powerful women in government is not unusual even in a male-dominated society, but during the early medieval period, specifically the Mongol dynasty period, women could never attain the role of khan, even if they were the direct descendants of the royal Chinggisid family. However, they could influence government and politics in ways that were undoubtedly more instrumental in shaping the dynasty than the khans themselves.

Historians have recorded the genealogy of Chinggis Khan and the most common lineage chart only provides the names of Chinggis Khan's sons. The problem with these charts is that Chinggis Khan and his many wives had several daughters, many of whom were married off to distant tribes to secure alliances. Even though most dynastic charts focus on the male descendants of Chinggis Khan, historians have recorded the names of some of these daughters, validating the authority they had relating to their lineage. But the most powerful women of the Mongol dynasty were actually the women who were married to the khans, for they were not just advisors to their husbands; two of these dynamic women impacted politics in ways that historians would agree were unforeseen by even Chinggis Khan himself. Because of the respect women in general were given in Mongol society, traditions in regards to wives' inheritance rights, and the absence of a clear mandate regarding rules of succession, two women were able to shape the Mongol dynasty by

powerfully swaying the outcomes of the election process at two different *quriltais* (political assemblies). These two women, Törögene Khatun, or queen, and Sorqoqtani Beki, or princess, each married to sons of Chinggis Khan, either ruled as regent upon their spouse's deaths or managed their deceased husband's territory, making them quite powerful and influential in politics in ways that Chinggis Khan's own daughters were not.

Overview of the Lives of Mongol Women

A brief overview of the customs of the Mongols, including observations of women is provided by Friar Giovanni DiPlano Carpini who was commissioned by Pope Innocent IV in 1245 to “offer baptism to the Tartars and tell them of Christianity.”¹ Carpini's mission also included completing an ethnographic study of the Mongols for the purposes of discovering their intentions toward the west, and he describes many interesting observations of the Mongol women that include their dress and their abilities as archers and as horse riders, all of which was very similar to the men. Because the Mongols were a nomadic tribe, the women were expected to be skilled in archery and horse riding as they were often in charge of the tribes when the men were hunting or at war. Carpini describes the language the women use as “coarse and vulgar” and they often times “get very drunk,” but are “chaste” and without “scandal.”² Mongol men could have as many wives as they wished and could even buy them. It is interesting that women were expected to provide for the tribe and be as tough as the men, yet could still be considered property to be bought or sold. Jennifer Holmgren points out that not all women and or wives were purchased for a price or used for the building of alliances; many wives were women who had been captured during raids, and sometimes there was simply an “accidental meeting” that probably accounted for a great number of marriages among the average Mongol nomads.³ Regarding the living arrangements in Mongol society, Carpini notes that while

the women had to share their husbands, they never fought with each other and understood that one wife would be the primary wife and that she was “foremost among them and he stays with her more than with the others.”⁴ Carpini did not write about many noblewomen but he did make observations as to the wealth of the nobles and khans and we can assume that the women who were in these families were provided with more luxuries than the average Mongol woman might have had. Several historians note that the size of the tents in which nobles lived were usually significantly larger than the average, and Carpini relates that the tents of Güyük’s wives were made of “white felt [and] were quite large and beautiful.”⁵

Hö’elün and Börte: The Women Responsible for Shaping Chinggis Khan

The mother of Chinggis Khan, Hö’elün khan, had no luxuries when Chinggis Khan was a boy, but was still able to provide for her sons and is credited with saving their lives after her husband was killed by a rival tribe member. The account of Hö’elün and her children’s survival is eloquently detailed in a poem in *The Secret History of the Mongols*. There has been much debate as to when *The Secret History* was written, with many scholars providing valid points arguing their ideas, but Igor De Rachewiltz believes *The Secret History* was written in 1228, one year after the death of Chinggis Khan, with subsequent texts completed at later dates.⁶ Despite the many controversies surrounding the date it was written, *The Secret History* provides a framework for how the Mongols viewed women and Hö’elün in particular. She is revered as the mother of Temüjin because of her fierce strength in keeping her family alive as well as being a woman who continued her nurturing even after Temüjin was elected as khan. *The Secret History* includes a poem which describes Hö’elün as “a clever woman ... tying tightly her belt to shorten her skirt ... gathering crab apples and bird cherries” after she and her children were ostracized following the death of her husband, Yesügei.⁷ David Christian explains the matriarchal respect the Mongols had by relating stories from the *Secret History* that include how Hö’elün “rebukes” Chinggis Khan and how she “chased after him and disgraced him into pardoning his brother.”⁸ Christian argues that because *The Secret History* has so many stories of Hö’elün it is reflective of the Mongol “willingness to treat the judgment, as well as the endurance and fortitude of women with respect.”⁹

Börte’s story is similar to Höelün’s in that they were both from the Onggurut tribe and both had been kidnapped

by rival tribes. Temüjin met his bride-to-be when he was just nine years old and she was ten. His father, Yesügei, took him to the Onggurut tribe to arrange the marriage when Temüjin was a boy because that was the tribe of his mother, Hö’elün. *The Secret History* tells the story of Yesügei being received by Börte’s father, Dei Seċen, who believes that daughters and granddaughters of his tribe were born to be khatuns because of their “beauty” and their ability to be “intercessors.”¹⁰

Börte was Chinggis Khan’s primary wife, and while he had several wives and many children, Börte was important in the making of the Mongol dynasty because it was Temüjin’s rescue of her after she was kidnapped by the Merkit tribe that brought him to the attention of other clan leaders. Christian explains that because Temüjin was able to form a steppe coalition to help in the successful rescue of Börte, and the fact that they utterly destroyed the Merkit tribe in the process, the rescue and battle “transformed Temüjin’s status” on the steppe.¹¹ Rashċċl Al-Din recounts a different story about Börte’s kidnapping. He does not tell of the tribal alliance Temüjin made to get her back, but he does state that while she was held captive by the Merkit tribe, she was treated with “respect and consideration” and that she was “exceedingly beautiful and capable.”¹² Rashċċl Al-Din states that she was held by the Merkit tribe and then escorted back to Temüjin, with no mention of warfare on the part of Temüjin to get her back. While Rashċċl Al-Din is the only source to not describe Temüjin’s battle to get Börte back, it reaffirms the idea that women were respected and capable within the Mongol and steppe culture. Most secondary sources repeat the former story of Börte’s rescue, which enhanced the strength of Temüjin’s alliance building capabilities and reinforced the idea that he was willing to brutally exterminate opposing tribes.

While Börte’s rescue provided Temüjin the opportunity to demonstrate his *qut* (divine mandate to rule) at the beginning of his domination of a new era on the steppe, Hö’elün set the standard by which women were viewed, respected, and accepted in Mongol society. Because of her perseverance as a strong and powerful woman surviving on the steppe, along with the reality of what the average woman was capable of in regards to contributing to and care for steppe tribes, other women were recognized as nearly equal to men in life on the steppe. George Lane argues that steppe life was difficult for men and women alike, and because women performed duties similar to men, they were considered to be more equal and given more rights when compared to women who lived in sedentary populations,

who faced more oppression during this time period.¹³ This respect for women helped enable Törögene and Sorqoqtani achieve their goals in regards to the election of their sons as khans, as well as allowed them to rule as regent or to administer their spouses’ estate upon the deaths of their husbands.

Törögene and Sorqoqtani Beki: Women Who Changed the Course of the Mongol Dynasty

Törögene was the sixth wife of the Great Khan Ögödei, who was elected khan after the death of Chinggis Khan. Ögödei became khan in 1230 and he died in 1241, leaving Törögene to act as regent and allowing her to rule form 1241 to 1246. Her position as sixth wife should have excluded her from being regent, but she was the mother to the eldest son of Ögödei, Güyük, and this garnered her the rank of regent. As regent, Törögene took her position quite seriously and she instituted changes to the administration that were highly aggressive. Rashċċl Al-Din states that as regent Törögene “displaced all the great officers because no *quriltai* was held as the princes did not appear and meet together.”¹⁴ Rashċċl Al-Din’s statement reflects two major points in the regency of Törögene: She dismissed ministers of Ögödei and replaced them with men she believed would serve her more adequately and she delayed the *quriltai* until she had the votes she needed to get her son, Güyük, elected as khan. The *quriltai* is the event that takes place when a new khan is elected. All great khans are to be present for the election of a new khan, thus it took considerable time for the *quriltai* to proceed because of the distance people had to travel to reach the *quriltai*.

Ata-Malik Juvaini states that Törögene was a “very shrewd and capable woman,” and she secured the support of the Chaghatai line who agreed that because she was the mother of the eldest son, she should rule as regent until a *quriltai* could be held, but that “the old ministers should remain in the service of the court, so that the old and new *yasas* [laws] might not be changed from what was the law.”¹⁵ However, once Törögene was secure in her position, she made changes to the administration by replacing those ministers she did not like, specifically Yelü Chucai and Mahmud Yalavach¹⁶ By making these administrative changes, she effectively changed the *yasa*, permitting the new minister’s undersecretary, Sharaf al-Din, to tax widows and orphans. Timothy May points to the law recorded by Juvaini that stated “there is no charge in the law of God nor impost in the *yasa* of Chingiz-Khan” in reference to the taxation

of widows and orphans.¹⁷ While Törögene ruled as regent she “executed decrees” with the same authority that a great khan would have and Rashċċl Al-Din attributes her ability to control the empire to her habit of using bribery to attain her goals. She “wooed the hearts of kinfolk and emirs with all manner of gifts and presents.”¹⁸

While the Mongol administration was changed under the regency of Törögene, her most significant action was in the calculating manner in which she was able to get her son Güiyük elected as khan. As stated earlier, Törögene had the support of the Chagatai line in all matters, and Juvaini states that after the death of Ögödei, it was Törögene who took control of the empire by notifying Ögödei’s brothers of his death and that someone needed to administer important affairs of the Mongols, such as “the army and the court” and the “interests of the people.”¹⁹ The Chaghataids agreed that Törögene should rule as regent and Juvaini states, “until a *quriltai* [can be] held, it was she that should direct the affairs of the state.”²⁰ Törögene, however, went against Ögödei’s wishes regarding who should inherit the throne upon Ögögei’s death. According to René Grousset, Ögödei had initially wanted his third son, Kucha, to inherit the throne but he died before Ögödei. Ögödei then named Kucha’s eldest son, Shiramün, to become Great Khan upon Ögödei’s death.²¹ But Törögene “disobeyed [Ögödei’s] command and elevated Güyük to the Khanate.”²²

As with other medieval nomadic tribes, the issue of succession caused not only unrest within the tribes, but often battles for succession led to outright civil war among brothers, uncles, and cousins. When Chinggis Khan named his successor as Ögödei, his third born son, he began a new tradition on the steppe, which had previously seen the eldest son or brother be the successor to the throne. Because there were no real traditions or laws that clearly dictated the line of succession and she was ruling as regent, it was easy for Törögene to disregard Ögödei’s wishes. Rashċċl Al-Din asserts that Ögödei accepted the seat of khan at the 1246 *quriltai* “on the condition that henceforth the Khanate shall be settled in my family.”²³ Because Törögene ruled as regent she was able to secure the support of the all the Chinggisid families except that of Batu in her attempt to have her son Güyük succeed Ögödei, despite Ögödei’s explicit wishes that he be succeeded by his grandson, Shiramün.

Törögene is also thought to have created a level of corruption surrounding the issuance of *ortaghs*, or passports, that allowed merchants to use *yams*, or the postal service, at the same price as bureaucrats. Because the merchants were issued these *ortaghs* at the same price as bureaucrats they paid

a smaller fee, which caused an economic hardship on nomads who lived near a *yam*.²⁴ This corruption is another reason Törögene’s regency is so harshly judged.

Sorqoqtani Beki was the primary wife of Chinggis Khan’s youngest son, Tolui, and after his death, she inherited his territory and was the administrator of his estate, giving her great power. While she never ruled as regent she was nearly as powerful as Törögene and similarly she was able to get her son, Möngke, elected as Great Khan after the death of Ögödei. However, her actions differ in the area of administering the *yasa* set forth by Chinggis Khan. Firstly, Sorqoqtani Beki was given much power as she inherited the *ordos* (realms) of her husband Tolui when he died. This is significant because it reflects the Mongol pattern that women are considered equal to men and included in inheritance matters, even when they are not direct descendants of Chinggis Khan. Carpini states that camps were not broken up upon the death of princes, but were given to wives to rule.²⁵ Peter Jackson notes that *The Secret History* stated, “Yesüi Khatun, one of [Chinggis Khan’s] wives, was given a large part of the Tangut people in the recently subjugated kingdom of Hsi-Hsia.”²⁶ These sources are the foundation on which the high standard to which women were held and reflect the responsibility, power, and trust they were given in ruling Mongol territory. *The Secret History* also relates that Yisüi Khatun “respectfully” advised Chinggis Khan as he was going to war that it was important for him to “designate a successor” and he agreed, stating, “no one has advised me like this,” further showing that Mongols valued the advice of women.²⁷

Secondly, as Tolui’s primary and favorite wife, Sorqoqtani Beki inherited the Tolui *ordos* in approximately 1233. Sorqaqtani Beki is mentioned by Carpini as being “higher and more powerful among all the Tartars than any except the emperor’s mother [Törögene] and Bati.”²⁸ Rashǰl Al-Din states that Sorqoqtani Beki’s sister, whose name is not given, was Batu’s mother, which created an alliance between the Jochid and Toluid lines that would eventually change the destiny of the dynasty.²⁹ Rashǰl Al-Din describes her as “intelligent and able and towered above all women in the world, possessing . . . virtue, modesty and chastity.” Rashǰl Al-Din further compares her to Hö’elün in that she “[trained] her children” in the same manner as Hö’elün.³⁰ But more importantly, primary sources by Rashǰl Al-Din and Juvaini repeat the belief that Sorqoqtani Beki obeyed the law, stating, “Sorqoqtani Beki and her sons, [they] did not swerve one hair’s breath from the *yasa* and law of their ordinances.” Juvaini is referring to the *quriltai* to be held after the death

of Ögödei and is comparing Sorqoqtani to Törögene in her maneuvering to get Güyük elected as the next khan, ignoring Ögödei’s wishes. Juvaini also writes that even Güyük held Sorqoqtani Beki and her sons in higher esteem than other royal family matters and “in all his speeches Güyük Khan used to hold them up as an example. . . . Them he praised and lauded.”³¹

Because Sorqoqtani Beki was held in such high esteem, her opinion was respected and it allowed her to influence the shaping of the dynasty in a similar fashion as Törögene. Rashǰl Al-Din states that Sorqoqtani Beki became of aware of a plot against Batu from Güyük and sent a warning to Batu, but Güyük died before he reached Batu’s camp, which left the Mongols in the position of having to elect another khan. Just as Törögene was able to influence the *quriltai* and had the power to rule, Sorqoqtani Beki did as well, and Weatherford argues that in terms of who was most influential in shaping the Mongol dynasty, “she stands second only to Genghis Khan himself.”³²

As stated earlier, when Ögödei accepted the khanate, he did it on the grounds that his line would continue to be the ruling line and this was accepted by all the Jochid, Chagataid, and Toluid lines at Ögödei’s accession. However, after Güyük’s death, Sorqoqtani Beki, who had the backing of Batu, the eldest living son of the eldest son of Chinggis Khan, and who “had the right to nominate a new ruler,” agreed to hold the *quriltai* at Batu’s *ordos*, creating a conflict with Törögene and the remaining Ögödeids who wanted the *quriltai* held at the traditional location of “Chingiz-Khan’s capital.”³³ According to Rashǰl Al-Din, Sorqoqtani Beki wanted her son Möngke to be the next great khan and she knew that the “others” — the Ögödeids and Chagataids — would not go to Batu because they were in conflict with him and they demanded the *quraltai* be held in the traditional place of Qaraqorum. As a result, she sent Möngke to Batu, who “swore allegiance to him and set him up as Qa’an.”³⁴ Because of these maneuvers, Sorqoqtani Beki, with the help of Batu, effectively changed the royal line of the Mongol dynasty from the Ögödeid to the Toluid line, which in turn would later cause a civil war. Current historians have a view of Sorqoqtani Beki that is not as complimentary as those of Rashǰl Al-Din and Juvaini. Jackson describes her actions in regards to Möngke becoming khan as a power grab, or coup, and states, “it was Tolui’s line which seized upon the imperial dignity in 1251.” He further argues that “Möngke’s accession and the overthrow of the lines of Ögödei and Chaghatai” was the beginning of a clear division of territory and

resources that favored the Jochid and Toluid lines and largely eliminated the Ögödeid and Chaghataid lines.³⁵

The Ruling Daughters of Chinggis Khan

While Törögene and Sorqoqtani Beki were the two most influential ruling women in the Mongol dynasty, other women, including Chinggis Khan’s daughters, were given power to rule subordinate tribes by being married into these tribes, creating alliances based on marriage. This was not an uncommon practice among the nomads, dating back as far as the Tsiung-Nu, but because the Mongol territory was so vast, these daughters who were used to secure alliances were a true extension of Chinggis Khan. One of the most significant ways of securing an alliance was through the practice of one-way and two-way marriages. One-way marriage was the marriage between a Mongol princess to a member of a lesser tribe, giving her power to rule over that tribe, and a two-way marriage was the practice of Mongol princesses marrying princes of allied tribes, as well as princes from that tribe or dynasty marrying into the Mongol dynasty. The two-way marriage carried a more conciliatory tone of alliance than the one-way marriage. Chinggis Khan and Börte had several children, and Chinggis Khan had several children with his other wives as well. Several of the children were girls who would be used to help secure alliances through marriage. Many of these daughters of Chinggis Kahn would be sent to far away lands to rule in his stead, and while these daughters were placed in marriages to be used to “establish or strengthen the military relationships with every marriage partner,” they were in reality used “as pawns” by Chinggis Khan in controlling his empire.³⁶

Primary sources vary about the number of daughters Chinggis Khan had and used in marriages for political gain, but three daughters in particular are noted to have been advised personally by Chinggis Khan to “become one of [his] feet. . . . [They] should be [his] helper.”³⁷ His daughter Alahai-Beki was initially married to the chief of the Öngüt tribe and ruled over a substantial area that included “not only the Öngüt tribe, but also all territories of Northern China.”³⁸ Not only was Alahai-Beki’s marriage used as political strategy, but she was forced into levirate marriages, after the death of her first husband, the chief, in order to maintain the Chingissid hold on the Öngüt tribe. Levirate marriage implies that a widow is obliged to marry her deceased spouse’s brother and he is obliged to marry her. In this case, Alahai-Beki married her dead husband’s son, then his nephew, then her second husband’s son, in order to preserve the hold the Mongols had on this area.³⁹ This demonstrates

that the daughters of Chinggis Khan were placed in marriages that enabled them to rule for the Mongol dynasty, regardless of their own personal desire, but they understood that the common goal was to keep control of the tribes via these marriage alliances, therefore strengthening and growing the Mongol dynasty. It also indicates that the Mongols, or at least Chinggis Khan, understood the value of marriage alliances. Zhao points out that Chinggis Khan and his successors never married his daughters to his own generals because he had already secured the loyalty of his generals; marriage alliances were not necessary within his own tribe.⁴⁰ Interestingly, Ögödei had proposed that Sorqoqtani Beki marry Güyük after the death of Tolui, which would have strengthened the bond between the Ögödeied and Toluid line and perhaps changed the course of history, but she declined.⁴¹ Holmgren suggests that levirate marriage “was not an obligatory institution . . . and that elite women had some choice in the matter.”⁴² It is clear that Sorqoqtani Beki had more power being the widow of Tolui than a wife of Güyük.

Jack Weatherford relates that sources that include B. Baljinnyam indicate that an “unidentified” daughter was married to “Arslan Khan of the Karluk Turks” who lived far to the west, near the Ili Valley, in approximately 1211. Chinggis Khan removed the title of khan from Karluk’s name and replaced it with “guregen, son-in-law, or prince consort.”⁴³ Weatherford asserts that while this daughter’s name had been “censored” from *The Secret History*, this story illustrates the elevation of Mongol princesses over the khans of subordinate tribes in that the Mongols were aware of how titles were perceived and that the Mongol princesses were required to “outrank” whoever they were married to in the subordinate tribe. According to Weatherford, Arlsan would later join Genghis Khan on a campaign, leaving the “unidentified” daughter to rule Arslan’s “homeland,” which was the “Mongol gateway to the Muslim lands to the south.”⁴⁴ Weatherford explains the difficulty in identifying this daughter by concluding that she was “Tolai, a name that formed a euphonious set with Tolu” and the that *Yuan Shi* mentions a daughter of a similar sounding name being married to Arslan’s son.⁴⁵

A third daughter by the name of Checheyigen was married to “Inalchi, the son of Khutuqa-Begi of the Oirat tribe,” who were known as the “People of the Forest,” in approximately 1207.⁴⁶ Weatherford argues that while this daughter was in the least sophisticated marriage because of the location of the tribe compared to the other daughters who might have ruled over the Silk Road or in Northern

China garnering them more luxuries and interactions with more developed cultures, Checheyigen was successful in combining the Oirat tribe with the Mongol tribe, making the Oirat the “first non herding tribe to join Genghis Khan.”⁴⁷

Weatherford argues that the daughters of Chinggis Khan were used as “shields around the Mongol homeland.”The three daughters mentioned in this essay were all married into tribes whose geographical locations created a triangle that Weatherford claims was a “phalanx” that gave Chinggis Khan security to know that Mongols ruled all points of the empire, allowing him the freedom to “move outward from the Mongol steppe.”⁴⁸

Conclusion

There were many variables that shaped the Mongol dynasty, but it is clear that women, especially those most intimately connected to the sons of Chinggis Khan, played a significant role in how the dynasty evolved. Because of the liberal inheritance rules that benefitted the wives of Mongols, Törögene and Sorqoqtani Beki each “received a portion of property from her husband’s share of the family patrimony.”⁴⁹ With the inheritance of property came resources and power and each woman used her power to influence the outcomes of the *quraltai* by either bribery or using the alliance and support of other lines to sway the outcome of the election, changing the course of the Mongol dynasty, while disregarding the wishes of Ögödei. While both Chinggis Khan and Ögödei named their successor and attempted to set up a clear line of succession, the Mongols were no different from other nomadic tribes when it came to succession, and Holmgren correctly concludes that when a strong father dies, “his death [leaves] power and authority in the clan dangerously fragmented.”⁵⁰ This is demonstrated clearly in the Mongol dynasty by the actions following the death of Güyük when Sorqoqtani Beki and Batu staged their coup, taking power away from the Ögödeids that created a divide among the families that led to virtually independent states.

While Törögene and Sorqoqtani were undoubtedly the most powerful women of the early Mongol period, Chinggis Khan’s daughters played an important role as well, but to a lesser degree. They were used to secure alliances with rival tribes and ruled with the authority given to them by their father. Although they were important rulers for the Mongol dynasty,

Chinggis Khan’s daughters were left in the far reaches of the empire and their power only extended as far as

the areas in which they lived. Timothy May states that travelers from the west were quite astonished and “clearly uncomfortable with the idea of a woman openly issuing governmental orders” as “female rulers,” which was unusual among sedentary populations, but was normal in the Mongol empire, and is reflected by they power women held.⁵¹ While Mongol women could never become khans, their influence shaped the structure of the Mongol empire and changed the course of history.

Endnotes

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³³ J. Holmgren, “Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices in Early Mongol and Yüan Socieity, with Particular Reference to the Levirate,” *Journal of Asian History* 20 (1986): 127-92.
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⁵⁵ Ibid., 111.
⁶⁶ Igor De Rachewiltz, trans., *The Secret History of the Mongols: A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. (Leiden: Brill, 2004), xxxiii.
⁷⁷ Ibid., 18-19
⁸ David Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 421.
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¹⁰ De Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, 15.
¹¹ Christian, *A History of Russia*, 391.
¹² Rashīd Al-Din, *The Succeses of Genghis Kahn*, trans. John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia, 1971), 97-98.
¹³ George Lane, *Daily Life in the Mongol Empire* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2006), 232.
¹⁴ Rashīd Al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, 178.
¹⁵ Ata-Malik Juvaini, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror*, trans. J. A. Boyle (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 240.
¹⁶ Timothy May, *The Mongol Conquests in World History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 50.
¹⁷ Ibid., 50.
¹⁸ Rashīd Al-din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, 176.
¹⁹ Juvaini, *Genghis Khan*, 240.
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²¹ René Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 268.
²² Rashīd Al-Din, *The Successors of Ghenghis Khan*, 19.
²³ Ibid., 182.
²⁴ May, *The Mongol Conquests in World History*, 120.
²⁵ Carpini, *The Story of the Mongols*, 106.
²⁶ Peter Jackson, “From *Ulus* to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220–c. 1290,” in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 19.
²⁷ De Rachewiltz, *The Secret History*, 182.
²⁸ Carpini, *The Story of the Mongols*, 64.

²⁹ Rashīd Al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, 99.
³⁰ Ibid., 169.
³¹ Juvaini, *Genghis Khan*, 255–256.
³² Jack Weatherford, *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens: How the Daughters of Genghis Khan Rescued His Empire* (New York: Crown, 2010), 103.
³³ Ibid., 170.
³⁴ Ibid.
³⁵ Jackson, “From *Ulus* to Khanate,” 28.
³⁶ George Qingzhi Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 36–37.
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³⁸ Ibid.
³⁹ Ibid., 38.
⁴⁰ Ibid., 40.
⁴¹ Holmgren, “Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices,” 163.
⁴² Ibid.
⁴³ Weatherford, *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens*, 64.
⁴⁴ Ibid., 65.
⁴⁵ Ibid.
⁴⁶ Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy*, 39.
⁴⁷ Weatherford, *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens*, 66.
⁴⁸ Ibid.
⁴⁹ Holmgren, “Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices,” 131.
⁵⁰ Ibid., 149.
⁵¹ May, *The Mongol Conquests in the World*, 236.

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