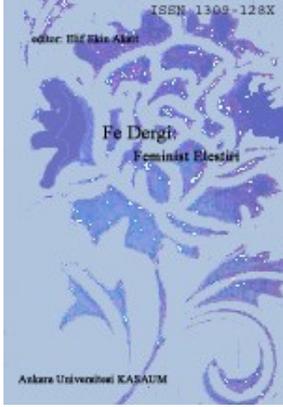


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**Gender relations regulated by customary law as reflected through legends and historical records in the Turkic societies**

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## Gender relations regulated by customary law as reflected through legends and historical records in the Turkic societies

Nilgün Dalkesen\*

*History of Turkish women have generally been examined as before and after Islam. For these periods generalizations are made as there was or was not any gender equality. Since there are very restricted historical sources for the pre-Islamic period, studies related to this period keep repeating each other. In this study, the legends of different Turkic societies are examined as historical sources in comparison under the light of some sociological and anthropological theories. Thus, I will try to show that parallel to different social, political and cultural formations in different times and different parts of Inner Asia before Islam, there were different gender relations among the Turkic societies.*

*Key words: Central Asia, Turkish Women, Early Turks, Uighurs*

### Destanlar ve tarihi kayıtlar ışığında farklı Türk toplumlarında cinslerarası ilişkiler

*Türk kadın tarihi genel olarak İslam öncesi ve sonrası olarak ele alınmakta ve bu dönemler için kadın-erkek ilişkilerinde eşitlik vardı veya yoktu yönünde genellemeler yapılmaktadır. Özellikle İslam öncesi dönemle ilgili yeterince kaynak bulunmaması sebebi ile bu dönemle ilgili yapılan çalışmalar birbirinin tekrarı niteliğindedir. Bu çalışmada, İslam kültür ve medeniyeti etkisi altına girmeden önce, Orta Asya'nın farklı zaman ve bölgelerinde yaşanan farklı siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel değişimlere bağlı olarak meydana gelen farklı kadın-erkek ilişkileri üzerinde durulmaktadır. Bu çerçevede farklı Türk toplumlarına ait çeşitli destanlar sosyolojik ve antropolojik verilerin ışığında karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmektedir.*

*Anahtar kelimeler: Orta Asya, Türk Kadını, Altaylar, Göktürkler, Uygurlar*

### Introduction

The subject of this article is gender relations in several (selected) Turkic societies which had not entered under the influence of Islamic culture and civilization yet. Within this frame, various Turkic and Mongolian societies who lived in different part of Inner Asia and had different social and political and cultural experiences during pre-Islamic times are examined from a comparative perspective. In this way, various Turkic and Mongolian societies from different historical periods are examined in order to show that Asia "before Islam" was not homogeneous, but rather culturally, socially and, politically diverse; by extension, the nature of gender relations was also diverse both through time and across spaces.

### Sources

While examining gender relations among the Turkic and Mongolian societies before Islam, the sources used here, are legends or myths of the Inner and Northern Asian<sup>1</sup> societies and the inscriptions of the ancient Turks as well as Chinese historical records. They were mostly documented by travelers and others who were outsiders to these societies. Some of these sources were translated into Turkish by Bahaeddin Ögel<sup>2</sup> and Abdülkadir İnan.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, some early Türk inscriptions give important information about the women of the ruling elite among the early Türk (Göktürks) (6-8<sup>th</sup> c.) and the Uighurs (8-9<sup>th</sup> c.).

In this study, the oral literature is being used as a primary tool for the analysis of the position of women especially in the northern parts of Inner Asia. Situated far away from sedentary civilizations, these societies have kept their ancient ways of life to a great extent but unfortunately left no written sources related to their past. Nevertheless, these oral sources- legends, myths and stories- created among the northern Asian societies were passed down over many centuries; this process of production and reproduction of oral histories carries with it traces of the past. It is indeed very difficult to figure out the exact position of the pre-Islamic women in Asia by using these legends as they have been reshaped by many cultural, social and political events through the

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centuries. Each society was affected from these outside impacts to a different degree. Yet these sources can be utilized to provide us with insight and information that is not available elsewhere.

### **Some Sociological and Anthropological Approaches and terminologies about Gender Relations and Women's Status**

Throughout history, there has always been a close relation between social, political and cultural transformations and roles and status of men and women. Formation of states and empires, class distinctions shaped gender relations in favor of men.<sup>4</sup> In this frame and for our purposes here, these societies of nomadic and semi nomadic tribes are analyzed mainly in two groups. Taking the lead from Esther Jacobsen's definition of northern clan societies and southern tribal societies,<sup>5</sup> in this study, the term 'northerly' is used for the first group consisting of clan and tribal societies located along the northern belt or zone,<sup>6</sup> while the second group that is confederative groups or state societies along the southern belt are referred to by 'southerly.' These definitions are not based on geographical conditions, but on social and cultural characteristics, and the terms 'northerly' and 'southerly' are used for the sake of analytical convenience.

In general, in very early stages these Inner Asian societies (southerly) from the Xiongnu (Huns) to the Uighurs (3<sup>rd</sup> B.C- to 840), established individual dynasties in the hearth of the Inner Asia, experienced social, political, economical and cultural transformations and adopted patrilineal and patriarchal traits; close commercial and cultural relations with the sedentary cultures, imbued with Confucianism, Buddhism and Manichaeism probably became effective in this adaptation of patriarchy. As a result, the position of women became more passive, more symbolic, and women became more invisible in the public sphere that is, in the political arena. These societies attributed less significance to women and to matrilineal descent. Patrilineality and superiority of masculine power was accepted to a greater degree among these groups.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, the Hakas and Yakut people who lived in South Siberia (northerly) did not experience great social, economic and political transformations. They did not established empires or states, they did not make conquest through which they gained great wealth and power and they also had quite limited interaction with the outside world.<sup>8</sup> Therefore they could keep their ancient culture and way of life to a great extent. There was not an important class distinction, social and economical differentiations within their societies.

In this article, the term "gender equality" is used often. But it does not imply certain equality between men and women. Here, some values which are made use of as a criteria for gender equality. For example absence of special (bad or good) attributes for men and women in the sources is an important clue of gender equality; In such kind of societies high personal assets, like power, right of ruling, bravery were not special to men or women; Ability and individual traits were more important than gender.<sup>9</sup> As "division of labor" between men and women is one of the causes of the differentiation of gender,<sup>10</sup> "division of labor" is applied as an important tool for analyzing gender relation among the "northerly" and "southerly" societies.

Furthermore, the terms 'matriarchy' and 'patriarchy' are not used in this study. Because, these terms are two opposite poles of gender relations and they are best understood as the subordination of male and female counterparts.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, gender relations in human societies show great variations and there is no evidence to support an evolution from matriarchy to patriarchy. Gender relations were not in a continuous evolution towards patriarchy. As Arthur Brittan states, since gender does not exist outside history and culture, this means that both masculinity and femininity are continuously subject to a process of reinterpretation.<sup>12</sup> Inner Asian societies were also continuously changing social, political and cultural structures while living in different times and places. In a parallel manner, gender relations, masculinity and femininity were re-shaped under these powers.

Instead of matriarchy and patriarchy, matrilineality and patrilineality are used in this study in order to avoid making certain judgments about gender relations. Matrilineal descent is eligibility acquired through female for both males and females and patrilineal when it is obtained through males.<sup>13</sup> According to Robert H. Lowie matrilineal residence and matrimonial property interests tended to produce a matrilineal descent, but this is not valid for every society. Some matrilineal societies can be patrilineal. A full-fledged matrilineal or patrilineal system does not evolve into its opposite. The two have a distinct history.<sup>14</sup> In this connection Gerda Lerner summarizes her assumptions about this matter as follows: (1) Most of the evidence for female equality in societies draws from matrilineal, matrilineal societies, which are historically transitional and currently vanishing. (2) While matrilineality and matrilineality confer certain rights and privileges on women, decision-making power

within the kinship group nevertheless rests with elder males. (3) Patrilineal descent does not imply subjugation of women nor does matrilineal descent indicate matriarchy. (4) Matrilineal societies have been unable to adapt to competitive, exploitive, techno-economic systems and gave way to patrilineal societies over time.<sup>15</sup> Under the light of these information it can be said that matrilineal societies are more egalitarian but it easily turn into patrilineal under social and political transformation. Similarly, among matrilineal “northerly” societies, the line between matrilineaty and patrilineaty was not clear as it will be seen.

Under the light of these anthropological insights, it can be said that there was no matriarchy among the Turkic and Mongolian societies during the ancient times as we see in the following. Therefore, instead of using matriarchy or patriarchy, various terms which do not imply complete obedience of one group to another are used here. These are the terms such as female/man centered, female/masculine values, and matrilineality/patrilineality and so on. By using these terms, we may try to analyze changing gender roles and the degree of tension or coherence between them without going into categorizations. Categories put boundaries on that which we are trying to understand and impose limitations on our heuristic endeavor. Better to let go of such categorical constructs and employ the proposed terminology so that we can better understand the nature of gender relations in the societies under study. And let us do so without committing them to broad kinship classifications that frustrate the reality of their gender relations.

### The “Northerly” Group as Reflected in Legends

The “northerly” group consists of the societies of Siberia and the Altay regions. Their common features are that they did not experience radical social, political and cultural transformations in comparison to the “southerly” societies. Because, these people represent different Turkic groups that were living within a clan or a tribal organization.<sup>16</sup> As they did not produce written records, their strong oral traditions are the main tool for learning about their social and cultural structures. They seem to have preserved their archaic values, ways of life, rituals, social and economic values to a great extent.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, their legends are the only main reliable source, and provide a window into their past.<sup>18</sup>

#### 1- Hakas’ Altın Ariğ Legend

The Hakas and Yakut people among the “northerly” societies were able to preserve their tribal/clan traditions and their ancient way of life and culture more than the other northerly societies, such as the Altai group. Because they had not transformed into a state society until the 20<sup>th</sup> century and they had no written literature.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, they had very restricted contact with sedentary civilizations. Therefore, their oral epic literature (legends) reflects their past to a great extent. In the Hakas and Yakut legends, we encounter matrilineality, a strong female cult, and see that female assets were valued. Among these, the creation legends, *Altın Ariğ*<sup>20</sup> and Yakut’s *Er-Sogotoh* stand out.

In the *Altın Ariğ* legend, the leading figures are women rather than men. High values are attributed to women who enjoy great freedom and play important roles in the society. As this legend is too long, only some important events will be mentioned here.

Marriages in this legend represent different values of the society about gender relations. Therefore, they show us the changing views or the changing traditions in gender relations of the past. The first marriage is between Picen Ariğ<sup>21</sup> who is a she-ruler (*hakan*) and Alp-Saaday who is the ruler of the neighboring country; she makes a marriage offer to Alp-Saaday, but he refuses to marry her. But when he sees that Picen Ariğ is a very beautiful girl, he changes his mind. Then he asks why do you want to marry me? Picen Ariğ replies that in my homeland (*yurt*) there is no hero (*yiğit*). We need a person who protects and defends us. This ruler, called Alp-Saaday refuses to stay in her homeland (*yurt*) and says “A heroic person (Alp insan) does not stay at the *yurt* of someone else.” Picen Ariğ accepts to live in his *yurt* and forces her people to migrate to her husband’s *yurt*. We see that the term *hakan* which we usually use only for men, is used here both in the masculine and feminine sense. Yet the she-ruler needs protection of a male hero *yiğit* and accepts to stay at her husband’s *yurt*. According to these legends, both men and women can have leading roles but patrilocality appears to have the upper hand.

In spite of its strong archaic characteristics, the society in this legend is patrilineal. This duality is seen in the following part of the legend and in other legend which are examined in this study. The old and new values were mixed but as it is seen below, these values can create tensions. This is explained by Karl Reichl as “formation of layers” in the cultural and social values of these societies. Karl Reichl thinks that these legends or heroic epic poetries have shaped cultural values which have been transformed.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore their oral character made them

more open to adaptation of different elements. Reichl states that “[...] the heroic epic, will be seen standing in a network of oral genres with which it interacts both synchronically and diachronically [...] This cultural context of the heroic epic entails a particular view of one's own past and the relationship of oneself to his past, both in a "genealogical" and "identificational" sense.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Bruce Lincoln thinks that social identities are continually (re-)established and social formations (re-)constructed from the past.<sup>24</sup> So these layers are useful for us to analyze gender relations and social and political formations. These layers also may show that even among societies like Hakas and Yakut who had very limited social, political and cultural transformations, some changes took place in gender relations and that these old and new elements composed layers.

We continue to examine the legend after keeping formation of layers in mind: One of the important figures of the Altın Arıĝ legend is Huu İney<sup>25</sup> a woman who has supernatural powers and has important roles in this legend. Another point of importance is Huu İney's character. She married sixty times and she has a son, Hulatay. After sixty years, Huu İney returns to her country. She makes Çibetey and Altın Arıĝ come to life again. Çibetey is the son of Alp Khan who was the ruler of this land, and Ak Ölen Arıĝ. They (his mother and father) died young and charged Pıcen Arıĝ to nurture and protect Çibetey until he becomes old enough to look after himself.<sup>26</sup> Pıcen Arıĝ is a warrior girl who protects the people of the land.

The other marriage is between Çibetey and Alp Khan Kız whose nickname is Ulu Alp Kız (great warrior girl). She subordinates ninety Khans (men rulers) and makes them pay tribute to herself. As she is so powerful, she refuses to marry Çibetey, but Altın Arıĝ who is the heroine of this legend and also protector of Çibetey, defeats this (Alp Khan Kız) in a fight and forces her to marry Çibetey. Here we see a woman who is a ruler defeating ninety Khans (male rulers) and making them to pay tribute. She is not overcome by a man but by a woman, Altın Arıĝ. Here again, ruling or fighting etc. are not activities preserved only for men. In these legends patrilocality seems to be the forerunner of patrilineality. In other words, patrilocality is a kind of accepting men's superiority. It seems that men or women are equal as far as they are in their own places. But when they come together, one of them has to subordinate to the other. Patrilocality puts men to a superior position. Ulu Alp Kız is not keen to marry Çibetey, because this means accepting superiority of her husband. Probably she has to leave her land and live with her husband. In other words, she has to share her power and authority with her husband Çibetey and put herself on a lower status after her husband.

It might be said that in these legends there is a close relation between marriage and patrilocality and women had to accept patrilineality and patrilocality, when they got married. Probably because of this, Altın Arıĝ refuses to marry Hulatay who is the son of Huu İney, a woman of supernatural powers. When Hulatay makes a marriage offer to Altın Arıĝ, the *Yiĝit* (Çibetey) warns Altın Arıĝ against marriage. He says that ‘if you marry Hulatay, they will count your sixty hair braids and make them into two thick braids; you cannot be a girl any more but will become the woman of Hulatay, and you will sleep with Hulatay in one bed.’<sup>27</sup> Altın Arıĝ refuses to be the woman of Hulatay and she dedicates herself to the safety and happiness of her people. In the first case, the woman (Pıcen Arıĝ) accepts the superiority of masculine power by marrying; in the second case, on the other hand, the woman (Ulu Alp Khan Kız) refuses to marry, but she is forced to marry by Altın Arıĝ, a girl. But Altın Arıĝ herself does not agree to marry and dedicates herself to her country's people's security and happiness.

These cases indicate that there was tension between the female and male authorities or between female and masculine values and in these cases matrilocality and patrilocality were points of tension or balance.

## ***2-Yakut's Er-Sogotoh Legend***

At the center of their legend called *Er-Sogotoh* there is an ancient Mother Goddess who creates the world and is the source of life. There are four versions of the Yakut creation legend where roles and presence of Mother Goddess show variations between each one of them.

In the A. Th. Von Middendorf version, although *Er-Sogotoh* is accepted as the ancestor of mankind, “Tree Mother, Life Tree, She-Ruler Tree (Agaç Hakan)” is seen as the mother of everything. Existence depends on her. Sky and earth are her residence.<sup>28</sup> In fact, this tree is in normal height, but when the Ana-Tanrı (Mother Goddess) comes, it starts to grow.<sup>29</sup> Here Mother Goddess and Tree Mother (Life Tree) Goddess are the same or the Tree Mother is the worldly existence of the Mother Goddess.

This legend is very interesting as there are many names and duties which are attributed to the Mother Goddess. These are the creator (Mother God; Life Tree), mother (Tree Mother), ruler (Hakan). But this woman did not create Er-Sogotoh who has a father and mother.<sup>30</sup> He (Er-Sogotoh) is a powerful person and the ancestor of mankind. It shows that the society in this legend recognizes patrilineal descent and gives importance to masculinity but they believed in the power of women and feminine values.

The other version was compiled by I. A. Hudyakov. Er-Sogotoh is not mentioned in this version; “The Life Tree” is essence of this legend. Yakuts believed that World had eight corners and in the middle there was a big tree which reached until the pole star. They called this tree Demir-Kazık,<sup>31</sup> it is a genderless tree.

Another version of the Yakut legend was compiled by Godohov.<sup>32</sup> This legend shows some contradictions. Roles of God and Goddess are unclear: The God Ürüng-Ayığ-Toyon created the first man Ak Oğlan (White Boy) who is seen as the ancestor of mankind. The “Tree Mother” protects Ak Oğlan and provides for his needs. Here there is clear distinction between duties of the God and Goddess but Ak Oğlan addresses her as “my worthy of respect and beautiful Goddess”<sup>33</sup> or “I have no other God, I see you!”<sup>34</sup> Here God, not Goddess, created first man (Ak Oğlan) who is the ancestor of mankind, but he recognizes “Tree Mother” (Goddess) as his only God and Ayığ-Toyon is not mentioned. Here, it might be said that the belief of God as creator of first man was recognized by the Yakut people but they did not forget their ancient Mother Goddess figure and in the legend she gains more importance than the God.

The fourth version of the legend<sup>35</sup> was compiled by German philologist Böhtling. In this legend, Er-Toyon and Kübey-Hatun are the parents of Er-Sogotoh who is the ancestor of the Yakuts. There is a gray haired Mother Goddess to whom an order comes from the third layer of the sky to protect and provide for Er-Sogotoh.<sup>36</sup> Here, the Goddess’ role is certain as a provider and protector, and she obeys orders which come from the third layer of the sky. This legend mentions many things which are not mentioned in the other versions. These are bad shaman women, and sacred beech tree of the Turks in the south and Er-Sogotoh’s struggle with Kara-Khan which is similar to Oğuz Khan Legend<sup>37</sup> in which masculine power and superiority of men is recognized. In this legend also, the main subject is Er-Sogotoh’s struggle with Kara-Khan in order to marry his daughter. During this struggle the hero (Er-Sogotoh) proves the superiority of masculine power as a super man. Er-Sogotoh’s power, supernatural strength and his handsomeness are described in a great detail like the hero Oğuz in the Oğuz Khan Legend.<sup>38</sup> It might be said that this version of the Er-Sogotoh Legend was influenced more from the outside cultures. If there is no “Mother Goddess” figure, it would become a kind of a heroic legend in which male values are dominant completely. But the hero addresses the “Life Tree” as “my Tree ruler (benim Ağaç Hakanim), Ey (?) Sacred soul! Ey great Khatun! Soul of my yurt (land)” and her doings as a mother are emphasized. In other words, the ancient Goddess figure which symbolizes feminine values, keeps her existence in this new version of the legend. In this respect, the Hakas legend shows similarities with Yakut legends in which many layers create dualities. These variations in the different versions of these legends show that these societies experienced restricted social and political transformations and they had influences from the outside patriarchal cultures. Esther Jacobson evaluated this duality as tension and says that “This sexual tension unquestionably reflects slowly changing political structures dependent on an ancient shift of political power away from female-centered clan structure, and reintegration of that power within male tribal elite...”<sup>39</sup>

### The First Group of Altai Legends

Altai Turks have been living in the Abaqan, Ob and Yenisey river-basins and Altai, Sayan, Tangru-la Mountains; they were divided into many tribes which are divided into small sections called *oymak*.<sup>40</sup> Geographically, the Altai Turks (or Altay Yenisey Turks) have been close to both sedentary monotheistic civilizations and shamanistic “northerly” civilizations. They were both close to Turkic and Chinese civilizations in the South and South Siberian and Mongolian societies in the North. In history, the Altai societies came under the hegemony of the Southerly societies and had close cultural interactions with them. Their earlier legends carry more archaic and egalitarian values, but the later were influenced from the southerly societies, and are less egalitarian and more men dominated.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, their legends show variations in respect to gender roles and women’s status.

These variations in their legends show how the old (ancient) and new elements were mixed or how feminine and masculine values have been competing with each other. According to many Altai creation legends, God Ülgen created the world with the help of Goddess White Mother called “Ak-Ene” or Ak-Ana.”<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, in a different version, God Ülgen created first man and then the woman from the ribs of the man.<sup>43</sup> This is the influence of monotheistic religions, i.e., Christianity, Islam.

Subsequently, the Altai legends show differences with respect to gender relations and there is no domination or certain authority of men over women or vice-versa. But all of them show patrilineal traits. Within this understanding these legends are divided in two groups in order to analyze gender relations during the ancient times.

The first groups of legends are older than the second group.<sup>44</sup> The societies in the first group show matrilineal traits; furthermore women are active and there is no certain division of labor between men and women. These are *Altay Maaday Kara*,<sup>45</sup> *Er Samır* and *Kökin Erkey* which are analyzed below. According to İbrahim Dilek, the legends in the second group have come into existence in later periods.<sup>46</sup> These are *Altay Buuçay* and *Közüyke legends*.<sup>47</sup> Generally, in the legends where men and male values are dominant, men are superior to women physically and ethically. On the other hand, the ancient Mother Goddess figure and matrilineality and some other feminine values persist and do not disappear.

### **1-Maaday Kara Legend**

The *Maaday Kara* legend shows strong archaic values; here men and women are evaluated in equal terms. In this legend, the hero Maaday Kara's father and mother ascend the sky in order to protect their people; an old lady who is the owner of Altai Mountain, protects Maaday Kara and provides for his needs; he becomes a hero in a very short time. The old lady makes him wear clothes of warriors and gives him a dark horse with a cotton mane (*pamuk yeveli gök boz at*). Throughout the legend, the hero's struggle is with Erlik Khan's daughter who makes a marriage proposal to him. He refuses her and fights with her. During his struggle "Forest Mother" or "Tree Mother" helps him; after defeating the daughter of the Erlik Khan who is the god of evil, he marries Altın Küskü who is the daughter of Ay Han (Moon Khan). Then he flies into sky with his wife to protect his people.

This legend is a good example of a patrilineal society in which matrilineality and feminine values are very important. Maaday Kara is the hero but his mother, his wife, and other women are acting as protectors and providers. They are also the enemy. Women's role is not restricted to a mother and wife role. The Hero proves his power against a girl, the daughter of Erlik Khan. Persons are praised or slandered according to their character not to their gender. Moreover, in this legend and in the others, the hero is always mentioned alongside with his wife. In other words, masculine values (power of men) and patrilineality are praised but matrilineality and feminine values are not undermined. Matrilineality and patrilineality with masculine and feminine values complete each other.

### **2-Er-Samır Legend**

Er-Samır legend starts with these verses which imply that men and women should be mentioned together and complete each other.

Ak Bökö a brave person  
With his wife Ermen Çeçen Hatun  
Lived in calm, comfort  
The son he raised  
With a wife Altın Tana Hatun  
He rides on a white-yellow horse  
was a young man named Er Samır.<sup>48</sup>

The most striking aspect of this legend is that the right of ruling is seen not only in men but also in women. Personal assets rather than gender are regarded important characteristics for a ruler. Through the legend, Er Samır struggles to rescue his wife from the hands of Kara (black) Bökö; on his way, he meets two *kağan* (ruler) girls who are more courageous and wiser than their brothers and help Er-Samır in his struggle. In return, he defeats their brothers, makes them rulers of their countries and marries them to brave young men who are equals of them.<sup>49</sup>

The other aspect of the legend is emphasizing monogamy. The hero's struggle is for rescuing his only wife. In the second part of the legend, polygamy is discouraged openly. The hero forces his brother to leave his second wife and return to his former wife.<sup>50</sup> It can be said that although there was polygamy, monogamy was preferred and practiced by those societies.

### **3-Kökin Erkey Legend**

The *Kökin Erkey* legend is different from the others; here we have the adventures of a brother and a sister. Kökin Erkey and his sister like each other and they did everything together. Kökin Erkey does not want to get married and does not let his sister marry. One day his sister is kidnapped and he fights in a great struggle to

rescue her. Here, there is gender equality not as wife and husband but as brother and sister. The hero, addresses his sister as “my sun my moon”; and in the legend many girls on his (Kökin Erkey) way say openly how they like him and would like to marry him. So it can be deduced that all of these legends of the first group reflect gender equality where masculine and feminine values are praised and personal assets are placed before gender.

### The Second Group of Altai Legends

This second group of Altai legends shows inclination towards a male dominated and strong patrilineal character. In these legends, patrilineality and masculine values occupy greater place than matrilineality and feminine values. They are *Altay Buuçay* and *Közüyke* legends. In many parts of these legends, women are placed in a lower position; here we see more male-centered societies and women can be seen as a symbol of weakness by comparison to men. Men are regarded more powerful mentally and physically.<sup>51</sup>

#### 1-Altay Buuçay Legend

In the legend, the hero Altay Buuçay leaves his family (his wife Ermen Çeçen, his daughter Caraa Çeçen and his small son Erkemel) for hunting. These women folk left behind by the hero ask for protection from the neighboring rulers (*kağan*), Aranay and Şaranay who are brothers. In their message to these neighboring rulers, they say that “there are properties without owner and land without men. He should come and take us”. Later, these two rulers accept the women’s offer and came to their land. One day while they are making fun, Altan Buuçay returns and joins them. As he drinks a lot, he becomes ill. He asks for help from his wife saying “my wife Ermen Çeçen, I took you (for marrying) by choosing from among the people help me.” But she and her daughter betray him and they (together with these two *kağan*) kill the hero Altan Buuçay and their son, Erkemel. In other words, a woman with her daughter kills her husband and her son. In the second part, two women with supernatural powers change the course of the legend; Goddess Earth Mother revives the hero Altan Buuçay and Teneri Kagan (God)’s daughter revived the hero’s son, Erkemel. Altan Buuçay takes his revenge and kills his wife and his daughter. Before killing them, he says to them that when you were hungry I fed you with game and I wrapped you with sable skin coat to make you live better!” In this legend, there is a certain division of labor. Men are protectors and providers of women as husbands and fathers. Women are seen as having weaker characters and in need to be protected and be provided. Ruling is the right and duty of men. Furthermore, class distinctions are emphasized. On the other hand, the ancient mother Goddess and female figures that have supernatural powers still play crucial roles.

Here, the hero engages in an exogamous marriage executed in a *hypogamic* fashion, i.e. marrying a woman from lower class. Themes like women’s betrayal, man’s duty of feeding and protecting women that are prevalent in these legends of the second group are absent from the first group. According to Sherry Ortner, *hypergamy* (women marrying up) is the result of patriarchal, hierarchical state systems.<sup>52</sup> I think this marriage is not an indication of such a radical transformation, but that of hierarchical tribal society. For example, no virginity or purity of women is demanded and women are not valued only as mother aspects, which are seen by Ortner as basic features of hierarchical state systems.

On the other hand, the goddess figure is very important in showing continuation of female figures of ancient times in the legends which are patrilineal and men centered. After punishing his wife and daughter, the hero (Altay Buuçay) marries the daughter of God (Teneri Kagan’s daughter) who helped him to revive his sons. This marriage is endogamous and between equals. The hero is not a protector and provider, but he and his wife have equal powers and charisma. In this legend, good, supernatural women and bad and/or weak women figures are brought together. This shows that the archaic and new masculine values go hand in hand and sometimes these values show obscurities.

#### 2-Közüyke Legend

Another legend in this group is the *Közüyke legend*.<sup>53</sup> In this legend daughters are not valued; furthermore a widow is regarded as incapable of educating her son. Having a deceased father is also seen as a negative point, so that the prospective groom is regarded as unfit for his prospective bride by the bride’s father. Here, in this legend the society is hierarchical; patrilineality and superiority of masculinity are emphasized; matrilineality is also very important but it comes after patriline; women are passive; power and authority are at the hands of men. Women do not play any important roles, their presence is very symbolic. In the first group of Altai legends, we see the use of the phrase “Sun and Moon” for the couples, and they are active and equal in many respects. But

here only men do every thing, they become successful and can be regarded as worthy of a wife passive throughout legend. In other words, women's only importance is as the wife of male figures.

In short, in the first group of Altai legend (*Maaday Kara, Er Samır and Kökin Ekey*), there is evidence of gender equality, societies are patrilineal and patrilocal but matrilineality and feminine values keep their importance. Marriages are between equals and there are no bad attributions to men or women or being bad or good are not prerogatives of men or women. On the other hand, in the second group of Altai legends, women are more symbolic, more passive, weak and not important as an individual but as the wife or daughter of men. So far, by examining the contemporary oral epic legends, gender relations among the societies who use only customary laws (*töre/törö*) in their gender relations have been studied. As a result we can say that they keep their ancient way of life. We may evaluate these findings as indications of pre-Islamic gender relations.

### **The “Southerly” Group as Reflected in Historical Sources**

The societies of the south consisted of composite tribes most of which had migrated from the eastern part of Altay Mountains<sup>54</sup> to the hearth of Inner Asia (south of Altai Mountains). They established political formations such as states, and empires known as Xiongnu (Huns), early Türk (Göktürks) and Uighurs. The core unit of these formations were all nomadic and semi nomadic. These people were able to establish militaristic, hierarchical and bureaucratic political states and empires. State formation, wars, trade, political and economical alliances led to radical transformations in their social and cultural structures and understandings. Thanks to their close relations with the Chinese civilization, there are some historical sources, some myths or stories and historical events which were recorded by the Chinese chronicles of their times. These sources report social, political and economical lives of various Turkic societies before they came into contact with Islam. Furthermore, they left some inscriptions which give valuable information about the social and political structures and gender roles.

In the southern part of Inner Asia, northern and north-western parts of China, we see in the history Xiongnu (Huns), the first and second Türk States (Göktürks) and the Uighurs. In terms of gender relations, we see them respecting feminine values, recognizing matriline. These all reflected themselves on gender relations, and parallel to these political fluctuations the position of women changed constantly. These societies perceived themselves more and more in patrilineal terms and, gave more importance to patriarchal values such as superiority of men's intelligence and strength. On the other hand, these societies did not become completely male centered, matrilineality was still recognized and feminine values were respected to a certain degree. Matrilineality and visibility of the women, on the other hand, increased during the periods of formation and dissolution of states.

#### **1-The Xiongnu (Huns)**

The Xiongnu established a dynasty under the leadership of T'ou-man (c.209-174 B.C.), father of Mao-dun. There are no legends directly related to their origins but there are some historical records which give valuable information about their establishment, and also about political, economical and social transformations and relations with the Chinese dynasties. These sources give also some information about their gender relations.

The Xiongnu made wars with Chinese between 569-307 B.C. and their leader Mao-dun (Mete) enlarged the empire between 209-174 B.C. The *Shiji* (Records of the Historian)<sup>55</sup> which is the first Chinese official history gives important information about the social, political and ideological transformation of the Xiongnu (Huns) Empire. About 204 B.C. Touman,<sup>56</sup> who was the father of Mao-dun (Mete), established the Xiongnu state. Mao-dun, on the other hand, founded a very disciplined, well armed and loyal army; then, he ordered his followers to kill his father and his step-mother and brother. In frame of his new policies, he undermined the earlier traditions. He gave his father's thousand-*li* horse which he inherited and his favorite wife to the Eastern Barbarians. But he refused to give 1.000 *li* of uninhabited land.<sup>57</sup> Mao-dun established a new social and political order in which he undermined the earlier social values for the sake of the state. He could easily give his horse and wife to the enemy but not a deserted land which was seen as the base of the state. Mao-dun married a girl from the Chinese imperial family to solidify his relations with the Han. In this way he obtained dowry, gifts; on the other hand opportunities to trade were also the by products of that intermarriage.<sup>58</sup> Political career of Mao-dun shows us there is a close relation between politics and gender relations.

#### **2-The Early Türk (Göktürks)**

The Early Türk established an empire in two phases: the first state in 553-682 and the second state in 682-745. The Early Türk experienced some changes in their gender relations, parallel to their social and political transformations. Patrilineality and patriarchal values gained more importance.

There are three versions of the creation legends of the Early Türk, which are examined here. These legends were for the creation of *Ashina* clan which had a right to rule the Türk.<sup>59</sup> They show variations and reflect the ideology and worldview of their times. Bruce Lincoln's following sentences give a sociological explanation to these creation legends.

In descent-based segmentary systems, it is not enough to observe blandly that the various groups and subgroups are defined by reference to apical ancestors. Rather, they are constructed, literally *called into being* by ancestral invocation-understanding within this term not only certain formal and ceremonial speech acts, but all of the means whereby persons remind themselves and others of the ancestral figures around whom their groups take shape: allusions, gestures, narratives, displays of emblematic objects or design, and so forth.<sup>60</sup>

These three versions of legends recorded by the Chinese annals are demarcated as Legend A, B and C by Denis Sinor. The oldest one is the one in *Zhoushu*, completed around 629; a slightly different version is told by the *Beishi*, completed ca. 659 and by the annals of the Sui dynasty (581-617). Two of them are almost the same and demarcated as Legend A. According to this version A, ancestors of the Early Türks (Göktürks) were defeated and only a small child could survive. He was raised by a female wolf and later this boy coupled with this wolf and they had ten sons and one of these boys started the *Ashina* lineage.<sup>61</sup> Immediately following the text of Legend A, the Türk chapter of the *zhoushu* relates "another tradition" concerning the origin of the Türks. In this legend which is named by Sinor as Legend B, matrilineality is valid. According to this oldest version, the leader of the Early Türk was Abangbu, who had seventeen sons and his oldest son's mother was a wolf, therefore, he had supernatural powers. He had two wives who were daughters of the Summer and Winter Gods. His eldest son, Jiansu, invented fire and rescued his people. Hence, the other three brothers chose him as their leader and gave him the name of "Türk." Türk had ten wives and they had many sons and each of them was mentioned by their mother's name. After his death, his ten sons gathered and chose their leader. Ashina's son could jump the highest. And he was chosen a leader and took the title of *Axian Shad*.<sup>62</sup>

The third one, the legend C, written probably in 860, is on the origins of the Türks, and is preserved in the *Yuyangdu*, a collection of anecdotes, curious or miraculous histories and the like.<sup>63</sup> According to this legend, the ancestor of the Türks was a lake spirit. It might be said that *Ashina* lineage came into being from a supernatural being, and therefore the patriline gained certain superiority over matriline.<sup>64</sup>

The last one was recorded more than two hundred years later and shows completely different character. The dates of other legends are almost the same, they show similarities but legend A is patrilineal and legend B is matrilineal. These variations in the legends show that the Early Türk societies had had different social and political experiences which reflect themselves in their ideologies. Further, it might be said that different parts of society had different cultural, social and ideological values. Ögel claimed that this legend (Legend B) is very old and it became a "folk legend" and others were recognized by the Early Türk officially and thus they are "state legends."<sup>65</sup> But legend A and Legend B were both recorded by *Zhoushu*. Therefore, it might be better to say that some part of the society was keeping their old traditions, while others adapted new patrilineal values.

The Orkhun Inscriptions were written during the Second Türk State and reflected men dominated values of the Early Türk. Generally, it seems that although they were quite patriarchal, they kept matriarchal values or emphasized matrilineal descent. For example, in the Tonyuquq<sup>66</sup> inscription, which was written after 716, during the Second Türk State; it is written that "But they did not suffer (these difficulties so much) Heaven and Umay and the Holy Spirits of the Earth and Water obviously favored us in succeeding (to overcome difficulties)."<sup>67</sup> In the East side of the Kültigin inscription, it is written that "When my father, the kagan, passed away, my younger brother Prince Kültigin (was at the age of seven). (At the age of ...) (E31) my younger brother Prince Kül got (his) adult name (=he was lifted up among grown-ups), by the good luck of my mother Umay-like mother, the katan."<sup>68</sup> According to Roux, Khatun's relation to Umay is similar to Khan's relation to Tengri. They were compared with Goddess and God. For Khatun the term of *umaytag* and for the Khan *tengriteg* "like Tengri" were used.<sup>69</sup> This is not an indication of gender equality; conversely it was a sign of male centered patrilineal society. The Khatun with her high sacred personality legitimized and empowered the Khan, in other words the patriarch. This shows great similarity with the ancient Greek imperial traditions. According to Susan Fischler, wife of the ruler or hero goddess was a potent and popular combination, resulting in some very powerful representations of divine empress.<sup>70</sup>

On a basic level, the image of the mother goddess was a natural addition to imperial iconography, not because it was *de rigueur* that these women be honored, but because their inclusion in the cult completed the image of the patriarchal emperor. It was more a part of the discourse about masculine power and patriarchal ideal, than about an individual woman's power within the imperial state... Thus the portrayal of his womenfolk enhanced the image of the emperor as masculine leader, one who could be sure of exercising control over an immortal household and, by extension, the empire.<sup>71</sup>

These observations are also valid for the imperial marriages of the Early Türks (Göktürks) and the Uighurs. For example, in the Orkhun inscriptions, Bumin Khan and Istemi Khan's domination (in the 1<sup>st</sup> state) of the world is narrated but the Khatun is not mentioned. On the other hand, when ascendance to the throne was described, Khan and Khatun were mentioned equally because it was believed that both of them were assigned by God. Roux evaluated this as equality of Khan and Khatun in front of their national gods.<sup>72</sup> In fact Khatun was not passive at all. She had her own autonomous area and authority. She had her own Otagh, male and female slaves; she took part in the state affairs beside her husband but not in equal terms.<sup>73</sup> It seems that the real Khan was identified with his wife whose powerful presence served authority and legitimacy of Khan. Maybe because of this, when one person defeated a Khan, he could not proclaim his victory unless he captured or killed the wife of the Khan.<sup>74</sup>

### 3- Uighurs

After the collapse of the early Türk Empire (Göktürks), Uighurs established an empire (744-840). They extended their empire from Mongolia to today's Xinjiang region (Eastern Turkistan). During the third ruler Böğü Qa'an (Mou-yü) the Uighurs reached the height of their power. In 763 Böğü Qa'an accepted Manichaeism as a state religion.<sup>75</sup> According to Michael R. Dromp, his reason for accepting Manichaeism was that he saw the utility of a centralizing and unifying religion in which he could act as defender of the faith by linking it to state patronage.<sup>76</sup> Parallel to its political and social transformations,<sup>77</sup> the creation legends of Uighurs carry traces of Manichaeism. The new male centered state ideology is dominant but there are also some ancient beliefs. According to one version of these creation legends, light from the sky went into trunk of a tree and it began to swell up like a pregnant woman; after nine months and ten days five boys were born; the youngest one was Böğü Khan who was superior to others with respect to his personality, ability to rule the country and to his interest to agricultural works.<sup>78</sup> According to another version, one night light from sky came down and people approached that light. There, they saw five tents with a child in each. These people treated these children as if they were sons of a king. After they became old enough, they chose the youngest one, who was most patient, strong-willed and the most handsome. Such kind of legends in which the mother is a supernatural being or does not come from a certain family, serves to the empowerment of patrilineality. There are no woman, the events are around men and men prove their power and superiority. Such kinds of features of the legend show us patrilineal and male dominated character of the society at that time. In this legend, Böğü Qa'an appears as an absolute, heavenly male authority. There is no matrilineality or a female being. Patrilineality and patriarchal values gain absolute power and do not share this power with the matriline. In real life, the Uighur rulers used marriage as an important political tool in their relations with the neighboring dynasties especially with Chinese.<sup>79</sup>

In conclusion, under the light of these information, Turkic people of Inner Asia, before entering Islamic culture and civilizations, experienced different social, political and cultural transformations and in a parallel manner gender relations show great variations. Certainly this subject needs to be explored with more detailed interdisciplinary studies, but it might be said that while gender relations among the northerly societies were more egalitarian, among the southerly societies they were more hierarchical and less egalitarian.

- <sup>1</sup> L. Ligetti divides Asia into five regions according to their social, cultural, political and geographical features. These are South Asia, East Asia, West Asia, Inner Asia and Northern Asia. See L. Ligetti, *Bilinmeyen iç Asya*, trans. Sadreddin Karatay (Ankara: TTK, 1998), 14-16.
- <sup>2</sup> Bahaeddin Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi* 2 vols (Ankara: TTK, 2003).
- <sup>3</sup> Abdülkadir İnan, *Makaleler ve İncelemeler* 2 vols (Ankara: TTK, 1998).
- <sup>4</sup> Many sociologists and anthropologists see a close relation between class formation, state formation and oppression of women. We can see domination of masculine values and matrilineality from the sources but there is no enough information for saying complete subordination of women in these societies. Viana Muller, "The Formation of the State and the Oppression of Women: Some Theoretical Considerations and A Case Study in England and Wales," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 9, no. 3(1977): 7-21; Sherry Ortner, "The Virgin and the State," *Feminist Studies* 4 (1978): 19-35; Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986).
- <sup>5</sup> Esther Jacobson, *The Deer Goddess of Ancient Siberia: A Study in the Ecology of Belief* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1993), 180.
- <sup>6</sup> Lands of these 'northerly' societies mentioned here are Siberia and Altay; their territories expanded from the north of the Altai Mountains to the Ural Mountains. The farthest north-eastern corner of Siberia is inhabited by Yakuts (Sahas) whose north western part is being inhabited by the Tuva people.
- <sup>7</sup> Jack Goody, "Bridewealth and Dowry in Africa and Eurasia," *Bridewealth and Dowry*, ed. Jack Goody and S.J. Tambiah (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,) 3-5.
- <sup>8</sup> About this matter Jacobson states that "the nomads living in proximity to the Pamir, Tyan-Shan, Altay, and Sayan mountain ranges probably live as a people today in those regions. During the winter months they inhabited relatively stable settlements in protected valleys. They may well have lived in solid log and plank structures...In spring, the nomads would begin to move their animals up to the slopes to alpine pastures where they would stay until the beginning of fall. During that period of the year, they almost certainly lived in portable yurt-like structures. In this respect, the lives of the early nomads of the Sakas may have closely resembled those described for modern pastoralists of the Altay, Tuva, and Mongols." Jacobson, *The Deer Goddess*, 7-8.
- <sup>9</sup> Anthropologist Patricia Draper in her research among the *!Kung* Tribe who are hunters and gatherers, used similar criteria in order to describe the egalitarian structure of that society. According to Draper, first female subsistence role is essential to group survival and satisfying to the women; secondly women's influence and power on marital relations, access to the extramarital relations, the influence of young women in determining the selection of their first husband, changes women's influence over their life cycles; finally worth of women's work being equal to men's. Patricia Draper, "Kung Women: Contrast in Sexual Egalitarianism in Foraging and Sedentary Context," in *Toward Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York London: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 94-95, 96.
- <sup>10</sup> Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 20.
- <sup>11</sup> Some feminist scholars like Anne Borstow and Stella Georgoudi see 'matriarchy' as a myth. Georgoudi describes matriarchy as follows: "Matriarchy is the superiority of women over men in the family as well as in the society; and exclusive recognition of maternal kinship, or, in the jargon of anthropology, matrilineal affiliations, which meant that only daughters could legally inherit property." Stella Georgoudi, "Creating Myth of Matriarchy," *A History of Women from Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints* (London: The Belkna Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 451. See also Anne Borstow, "The Uses of Archeology for Women's History: James Mellaart's Work on The Neolithic Goddess at Çatal Hüyük," *Feminist Studies* (1978): 8-9; Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 31.
- <sup>12</sup> Brittan, *Masculinity and Power*, 1.
- <sup>13</sup> Jack Goody, *Comparative Studies in Kinship* (California: Stanford Univesity Press, 1969), 50; About the relation between matrilineality and patrilineality Igor Kopytoff said that the matrilineage can be defined structurally as a shared group that produces itself through its female members, that is, through the sisters of its men. The number of patrilineage that, given polygyny, can rapidly increases its membership in one prosperous generation by acquiring many wives and begetting many children. See Igor Kopytoff, "Matrilineality, Residence, and Residential Zones," *American Ethnologist*, no. 4 (Aug., 1977): 543.
- <sup>14</sup> Robert H. Lowie, "Unilateral Descent Groups," *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader* ed. Robert Parkin and Linda Stone (Malden, M.A.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 53-68. See also David Aberle, "Matrilineal Descent in Cross-Cultural Perspective," *Matrilineal Kinship*, ed. David M. Scheinader and Kathlen Gough (Berkeley, Losangeles: University of California Press, 1962), 658.
- <sup>15</sup> Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, 30-31.
- <sup>16</sup> Y.A. Pustogaçev, "Altay ve Sibirya Türk Halklarının Etnik Kökeni ve Etnik Tarihlerinin Başlangıcı ile İlgili Bazı Görüşler," *Sibirya Araştırmaları* ed., Emine Gürsoy Naskali (İstanbul: Simurg, 1997a), 299-302.
- <sup>17</sup> For detailed information, see G.V. Kubarev, "Eski Altay Türklerinin Kültürü," *Sibirya Araştırmaları* ed. Emine Gürsoy Naskali (İstanbul: Simurg, 1997), 239-246; Y. A. Pustogaçev, "Altay ve Altaylılar," in *Sibirya Araştırmaları*, ed. Emine Gürsoy Naskali (İstanbul: Simurg, 1997b), 283-306.
- <sup>18</sup> The folklorist Karl Reichl divides Turkic oral epic tradition mainly into four groups and evaluated the narratives or legends of Yakuts in northern Siberia and Turkic peoples of Altai in one group as "Siberian" which have kept their archaic nature. See Karl Reichl, *Singing the Past: Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2000), 19-20.
- <sup>19</sup> They have a very rich oral literature, the Hakas epic legends were formed before the time of the early Türks. Altın Arığ is probably older; it should have been formed before circa. Fatma Özkan (ed.), *Altın Arığ Destanı* (Ankara: Bilig Yay. Ahmet Yesevi Üniversitesi Yardım Vakfı, 1997), 3- 9, 10.
- <sup>20</sup> Özkan claimed that are a few legends at the center of which women are the heroins and main characters. Altın Arığ is one of them. The others are Uighurs' Nözügüm, Başkurt's Zaya Tülek and Su Suluz, Hakas' Altın Çüs. According to the writer these legends belong to the matriarchal [the writer uses this term] ancient times. Özkan *Altın Arığ*, 9-11.
- <sup>21</sup> In this legend, Pıcen Arığ who was charged with the rise of Çibetey who was the son of the Alp who was the real Hakan of this yurt and his wife Ak Çeken Arığ. Pıcen Arığ and her sister İcen Arığ thought that this child will probably not show respect to them when he grows up and their effort will be in vain. Therefore, they killed the child and Altın Arığ and her horse *altın yeleli Ak Boz At* who was protector of the boy and yurt. After that, Pıcen Arığ wore the dress of Khans and took golden baton special to Khans and became han/bey of that yurt.

<sup>22</sup> Reichl, *Singing the Past*, 177-178.

<sup>23</sup> Reichl, *Singing the Past*, 3. For example, in the Hakas' *Huban Arıĝ* Legend which is a heroic legend of a woman, there is a sentence "it is said that always woman person (kadın kiři) 's hair is long and intelligence is short" which reflects the layers which Reichl describes. See Timur B. Davletov (ed.), *Huban Arıĝ, Hakas Türklerinin Kadın Yüğüllük Destanı* (Ankara: Türksöy, 2006), 6.

<sup>24</sup> Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos and Society; Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1986), 22.

<sup>25</sup> Huu Iney is originally a wolf, but she lived as a woman and she also turned into any creature.

<sup>26</sup> Özkan Altın Arıĝ, 7.

<sup>27</sup> "Altın saç örgünü sayıp, iki ayrı kalın örgü yaparlar. Kız olamazsın, Hulata'yın kadını olursun, Hulata'y ile bir yastukta bir döşekte beraber yatıp, beraber uyursun." Özkan Altın Arıĝ, 111

<sup>28</sup> *Büyüktü, herşeyin anası idi. Varlık ona baĝlıydı gökler yer binasıydı.*

<sup>29</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 98-99.

<sup>30</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 99.

<sup>31</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 100.

<sup>32</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 101-103.

<sup>33</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 103

<sup>34</sup> *Başkaca tanrım yoktur ben seni görüyorum.* Ögel 2003, 103

<sup>35</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 103-107

<sup>36</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 106.

<sup>37</sup> According to Pelliot, The Oĝuz Khan legend was written during 1<sup>st</sup> century. See Paul Pelliot, *Uygur Yazısı ile Yazılmış Uĝuz Han Destanı Üzerine*, trans. Vedat Köken (Ankara: TDK, 1995), 5. According to Yorgo Dedes in the course of the migrations of the tribes the 'oghuznames' were re-composed by the successive *ozans* and come to include tales not only from the period between the ninth and eleventh centuries but from the Turcoman period of the White and Black sheep (Oghuz) confederations. Yorgo Dedes (eds.), *Battalname* (Harvard University: The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1996), 65. See also Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 128.

<sup>38</sup> Er-Sogotoh struggled against Kara Khan like Oĝuz Khan. Er-Sogotoh is described as follows: Boyu on geniş Karıř, eni dört geniş karıř, bir omzundan bir omzuna kadar beř karıř tutarmıř... Kolları tıpkı kurumuř bařı kayın aĝacı gibi. Similarly Oĝuz Khan is described as öküz ayaĝı gibi idi sanki ayaĝı, Kurduñ Bileĝi gibi idi sanki bileĝi, Benzer idi omuzu tıpkı samurinkine/ Göĝsüde yakın idi, koca ayıninkine. Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 104, 115.

<sup>39</sup> Jacobson, *The Deer Goddess*, 180-184; İnan, *Makaleler*, 1998, 223.

<sup>40</sup> According to İnan these Turks were nomads and semi nomads, they established their own *Khanates*, *begliks* in Mogholistan, Turkistan and Siberia after the decline of the Chinggisid Jochi and Chagatahay Khanates after the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. İnan, *Makaleler*, 33-38.

<sup>41</sup> Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 21. For the history and civilization of Altai region see Kubarev, "Eski Altay," 239-244, Pustogaçev, "Altay ve Sibirya," 299-305 and Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 444.

<sup>42</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 451-465.

<sup>44</sup> Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 20.

<sup>45</sup> Emine Gürsoy Naskali (eds.), *Altay Destanı Maaday Kara* (İstanbul:YKY, Mart 1999).

<sup>46</sup> Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 21.

<sup>47</sup> Dilek *Altay Destanları*.

<sup>48</sup> Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 33.

<sup>49</sup> On his way, he meets Altın (golden) Topçı Kız and her brothers, who are living in their own palaces; this girl helps Er Samır while her brothers are attacking him; at the end, he defeats her brothers and makes this girl the ruler (Kaĝan) of her people. When the hero (Er Samır) needs help again, this time Altın (golden) Sanar Kız (girl) helps but her brothers does not. Er Samır defeats her brothers and makes this girl ruler of her people; at the end Er Samır with the help of these girls arrives to the palace of Kara (black) Bökö and he meets him there. Before defeating Kara (black) Bökö, the hero says that "you tied my one and only wife to a horse pole." The hero Er Samır and his wife returns to their country safely and his people make him and his wife Altın Tana sit on the white (ak) throne.

<sup>50</sup> The hero's brother's wife Bayan Suli complains about her husband Katan Mergen to Er Samır as he marries the daughter of Kün Kaĝan and he does not come to his home and home land (*evine yurduna uğramaz oldu*); Er Samır punishes his brother and forces him to return his former wife, and led his second wife (daughter of Kun Han) to go; the two brothers returns to their country with their wives. We see that the hero Er-Samır forces his brother to forsake a Khan's daughter and to return to his first wife, thus enforcing monogamy.

<sup>51</sup> For example, in Altan Buucay Legend, the hero's wife and daughter are weak persons and betrayed him. Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 200-229) and in the Kozuyke legend, "Wife of Ak Kaĝan gave birth to a boy but wife of Kara Kaĝan gave birth to an unfounded (gereksiz) daughter (kız çocuk)," Dilek *Altay Destanları*, 308.

<sup>52</sup> Ortner, "The Virgin," 19-35.

<sup>53</sup> In this legend, Ak (white) Kagan's wife bore a son but Kara (black) Kagan's wife gave birth to an unfounded girl (gereksiz kız çocuĝu). These families decided on the marriages of their children when they were born. In the legend it is said that he is son of "Ak Kagan" and Erke Tana is his mother and he is mentioned as Közüyke. For the girl it is said that she is the daughter of Kara Kaĝan, her mother is Altın Sırĝa; But after a while Ak Kagan died and his friend Kara Kaĝan thought that this boy has no father and his mother can't raise him very well. And he said that I can't give my only beautiful daughter to Közüyke (*hayvan kılıklı Közüyke*). In a short time, this boy became powerful and skillful hunter so that he could feed his mother; at the end he found his fiancé (beřik kertme) and married.

<sup>54</sup> Ligeti, *Bilinmeyen İ Asya*, 16-17.

<sup>55</sup> Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty I-II*, trans. Burton Watson (Hong Kong, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993 [1961]), 134-135.

<sup>56</sup> In the *Shih-Ji* he is called Touman but there are different readings of Teo-man, T'ou-man, Tuman, Duman or Tuman. Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 134-135. These events reported by Sima Qian are as follows. At this time the Eastern Barbarians were very powerful and, hearing that Maodun had killed his father and made himself leader, they sent an envoy to ask if they could have Touman's famous horse that could run 1.000 *li* in one day. Maodun consulted his ministers, but they all replied, "The thousand-*li* horse is one of the treasures of the Xiongnu people. You should not give it a way!

"When a neighboring country asks for it, why should I begrudge them one horse?" he said, and sent them the thousand-*li* horse.

After a while the Eastern Barbarians, supposing that Maudun was afraid of them, sent an envoy to ask for one of Maodun's consorts. Again Maodun questioned his ministers, and they replied in a rage, "The Eastern Barbarians are unreasoning beasts to come and to request one of the *Shanyu's* consorts. We beg to attack them!"

But Maudun replied, "If it is for a neighboring country, why should I grudge them on a woman?" and he sent his favorite consort to the Eastern Barbarians.

With this the ruler of the eastern Barbarians grew more and more bold and arrogant, invading the lands to the west. Between his territory and that of the Xiongnu was an area of over 1.000 *li* of uninhabited land; the two peoples made their homes on either side of this wasteland [Gobi desert]. The ruler of the Eastern Barbarians sent an envoy to Maodun saying, "The Xiongnu have no way of using the stretch of wasteland which lies between my border and yours. I would like to take possession of it!"

When Maudun consulted his ministers, some of them said, "Since the land is of no use you might as well give it to him," while others said, "No, you must not give it away!"

Maudun flew into rage. "Land is the basis of the nation!" he said. "Why should I give it away?" And he executed all the ministers who had advised him to do so. See also Ögel 2003, 7-8.

<sup>58</sup> Sechin Jagchid and Van Jay Symons, *Peace, war, and Trade Along the Great wall; Nomadic Chinese Interaction Through Two Millennia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 142; Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 130-131.

<sup>59</sup> According to Yaganoski and Delaney, narratives of origin incorporate classificatory schemes that describe the order of things as well as the relations between things and between different kinds of people. And these origin stories are a prime locus for a society's notion of itself-its identity, its worldview and social organization. Sylvia Yanagoski and Carol Delaney, "Naturalizing Power," *Naturalizing Power: Essays in Feminist Cultural Analysis*, ed. Sylvia Yanagoski and Carol Delaney (New York London: Routledge, 1995), 2.

<sup>60</sup> Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos and Society*, 20.

<sup>61</sup> Denis Sinor, "The Legendary Origin of the Turks" *Folklorica: Festschrift for Felix* ed.J. Oinas, Egle Victoria Žygas and Peter Voorheis (Bloomington Indiana: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1982), 223-225.

<sup>62</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 27-28; Sinor, "The Legendary Origin," 226-227.

<sup>63</sup> Sinor, "The Legendary Origin," 230.

<sup>64</sup> About these legends Sinor claimed that "Although the three Türk legends appear only in Chinese sources, there is no reason to impugn their authenticity. Perhaps in a garbled or incomplete way, the Chinese records must reflect contemporary information gained from some Türks. In showing that some of the legendary motifs mentioned our texts do, indeed, belong to the very fabric of Türk culture." Sinor, "The Legendary Origin," 233.

<sup>65</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 28.

<sup>66</sup> He was the chief counselor of Bilge Khan who was ruler of the Second Göktürk Empire (682-745), died in 734.

<sup>67</sup> Talat Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhun Turkic* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1994), 288; Hüseyin Namık Orkun, *Eski Türk Yazıtları* (Ankara: Türk Dil kurumu Yayınları: 529, 1994), 44, 116.

<sup>68</sup> Tekin, *A Grammar of*, 268. Orkhun, *Eski Türk*, 44.

<sup>69</sup> Jean Paul Roux, "Ortaçağ Türk Kadını I. "Oymayazi" Metinlerine Göre Kadın," *Erdem*, no.5 1989, 205.

<sup>70</sup> Susan Fischler, "Imperial Cult: Engendering the Cosmos," *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, Power&Identity in Classical Antiquity* ed. Lin Foxhall&John Salmon (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 174.

<sup>71</sup> Fischler, "Imperial Cult," 179.

<sup>72</sup> Roux, "Ortaçağ Türk Kadını I," 200-204; According to Türköne, Khatun took her sacredness from the old goddesses beliefs in which Ak Ana, Umay or Ayısit were seen as a source of creation, protector of children, source of patience and pithiness. Mualla Türköne, *Eski Türk Toplumunun Cinsiyet Kültürü* (Ankara: Ark Yayınevi, 1995), 118.

<sup>73</sup> Özkan İzgi, "İslamiyet'den Önceki Türklerde Kadın," *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları* (1973-75): 24-25.

<sup>74</sup> Roux, "Ortaçağ Türk Kadını I," 205.

<sup>75</sup> Colin Mackerras, "The Uighurs," *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990), 317-342; Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 73.

<sup>76</sup> Michael R. Dromp, *Tang China and the Collapse of the Uighur Empire, a Documentary History* (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2005), 26.

<sup>77</sup> Mackerras claimed that "Despite the persistence of the old ways, it is clear from their approach to religion that the Uighurs of the empire period was undergoing change more rapidly than at ant time in their earlier history. They were definitely advancing towards a more sophisticated stage of civilization in their models of thought, social patterns and economy." Mackerras, "The Uighurs," 335.

<sup>78</sup> Ögel, *Türk Mitolojisi*, 81.

<sup>79</sup> Dromp, *Tang China*, 28-29.

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