

## **Textological Structure and Political Message of the Old Turkic Runic Inscriptions**

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The aim of this paper is, that based on a textological analyse of the Turkic inscriptions to give a reconstruction of phases of their composition, their textological structure, parallellisms, and connections. This will give us a possibility to make a comparative research on their ways of narration regarding to certain well-known spots in the history of the Second Turkic Khaganate.

Provided with the results of such a throughout textological analyse we shall try to make an inquiry into the historical and political ideas that were behind of the composition of the inscriptions.

The textological peculiarities of the Orkhon Inscriptions, mostly those of the *Kül Tegin* Inscription have been analysed by many scolars, amongst whom we mention only Osman Fikri Sertkaya and Árpád Berta.

The author of these lines made his first attempt to make such an analyse in 1999, but the he could not publish his results.

The most important feature of the *Kül Tegin* Inscription that it is seemingly not an original funerary (epitaphal) text. While in all funerary inscriptions the main hero expresses his thoughts and emontions from the first person singular, on the *Kül Tegin* inscription the main hero is a kind of distinguished foreigner about whom and whose life his brother makes some important notices. Seemingly he is not the main concern of the text. The main concern is the dynasty and the legitimation of the dynasty.

The longest part of this text is completely indential with that of his brother, calling himself *Bilgä Qayan*. For this we can constate that the

original textological programme was preserved in the text of the *Bilgä Qayan* Inscription. This was a real royal inscription, not a funerary text, which we can connect firstly to the famous Bugut Inscription and through that with the well-known pattern of the old Iranian (and other Middle Eastern) pattern of the royal inscriptions.

We can also mention that narrative of the the famous Tonyuquq Inscription contradicts in many points to the narrative of the Orkhon Inscriptions. It was Osman Fikri Sertkaya, who first paid a serious attention to this fact. His point was that Tonyuquq's narrative was a kind of answer to the *Kül Tegin/Bilgä Qayan* Inscriptions. Of course this agrumentation is weak from the point of view of chronology. It was impossible, that Tonyuquq could see and answer the Orkhon Inscriptions. On the contrary, we can suppose, that the Orkhon Inscriptions were a political answer to the allegations of the Tonyuquq Inscription. So we can also suppose, that the original programme was preserved not by the *Kül Tegin* Inscription but by that of *Bilgä Qayan*. In our analyses we shall treat the two inscriptions as one complex. We can fully suppose that this text might be originally composed as a kind of royal declaration, and was recomposed as a funerary isncrption when its main hero died untimely.

If we set parallely the main points of the Orkhon Inscriptions and the Tonyuquq Inscription we can see that follows:

- (1) The Tonyuquq Inscription makes no mention of the First Khaganate. It does not concern a much about the legitimacy of the ruling clan Ashina. It emphasizes the role of its author and main hero in the foundation and in the history of the (Second) Empire. On the contrary, the Orkhon Inscription give although a short and superficial, but real description of the history of the First Empire. The importance of the dynasty and also its heavenly legitimacy is overemphasized. Of course there is no mention of Tonyoquq's role in the history of the affaits. His only mention on the Orkhin Inscriptions gives an impression of an important but by no means subordinate officer.

- (2) It also worths mention how the two texts describe the process leading to the foundation of the Second Empire. According to Tonyuquq the attempt of the Ashide Wenfu and Ashide Fengji to revolt against the Chinese and set to the throne a *qayan* called Ashina Nishufu was legitimate action and is was the people's fault that they deposed and killed hib subduing themselves again to the Chinese. (T. I. W. 2-4: *türk bodun qanin bulmayin tabyaçda adrilti qanlantı qanin qodup tabyaçda yana içikdi täñri anča temis ärinç qan bertim qaniñin qodup içikdiñ içikdük üçün täñri ölütmis ärinç* "Without having found their khan, the Turkish people were parted from the Chinese, and got themselves a khan. They (soon, however,) abandoned their khan and submitted to China again. Heaven, then, must tave spoken as follows: 'I had given to you a khan; but you abandoned your khan and submitted again'. As a punishment for this submission, Heaven caused Turkish people to be killed." On the contrary we can read in the Orkhon Inscriptions: (I. E. 9-10) *anča tip tabyaç qayanqa yayi bolmis yayi bolup itünü yaratunu umaduq üçün yana içikmis bunča isig kücüg bertükgäri saqınmati türk bodun ölüräyin uruysıratayın tir ärmis* ("... they again became hostile to the Chinese emperor. But, after they had become hostile to him, they could not form and organize themselves (i.e. the state) well, and therefore they again submitted (to the Chinese). (The Chinese), without taking into consideration the fact that (the Turkish people) have given their services so much (to the Chinese), said: 'We shall kill and exterminate the Turkish people'. So in this context we can see a complete negation of any kind of legitimation. It was not the Heaven who give a legitimation to Ashina Nushifu, but it was the people who made an unsuccessful revolt and was therefore punished by the Chinese.
- (3) We will not entertain themselves very long with the intronization of *Ileris qayan* and his wife, *Ilbilgä qatun*, the parents of *Bilgä qayan* for it is a quite well-known story. Of course Tonyuquq

once again emphasizes his own role making ruler of who originally calls *šad*; while *Bilgä qayan* exaggerates that both of his parents were chosen by Heaven (and other deities) to rebuild the empire and recultivate old pasture lands of the Turkish people. The role of the mother is important for she will be permanently mentioned by the Orkhon Inscriptions.

- (4) As to the second ruler of the empire, although he criticizes his adventurism which caused his death and led the empire near to a collapse, for Tonyuquq *Qapyan* is a legitimate and even a great ruler. For the author of the Orkhon Inscriptions he was merely *äčim qayan* (the *qayan* who was my uncle) without any mention of his throne name. He figures as an older member of the family looking after the heritage of the sons of the founder of the dynasty.
- (5) Of course nothing is told on the Orkhon Inscriptions about the tragic fate of the son and co-ruler of *Qapyan qayan*, who was killed together with all his retinue by *Kül Tegin* soonly after the death of his father. For Tonyuquq, *Inal qayan* (as was his title as co-ruler) and *Bögü qayan* (as was his title as an independent ruler) was a legitimate ruler of the empire.

We can also make mention of two funeraries highlightint the political influence of the empire. One is that of *Bumün qayan* the second is that of *Kül tegin*. In both occasions we can see the representatives of all the known world to gather for to pay the last services of a dead Turkish leader.

So the empire once founded by two brothers reached again its peak of power under the rule of two brethen, *Bilgä qayan* and *Kül tegin*. The main difference was that this later have never achieved the title *qayan*. He got a title wich correlates with that of the two viceroys of the Asian Xiongnu Empire, *xianwang* ('illustrious prince').

So we can constate that the Orkhon Inscriptions have two main political claims. The first is not to mention any role of Tuyuquq or his tribe the Ashide as well. They were not only numerous, having three divisions (*Ashide, Da Ashide, Bayan Ashide*) but the role of their leaders on the top of the empire resembled to much the situation from what the *Il ügäsi* of the Uygurs or the the Khazar double kingship might arise.

The author of the Orkhon Inscriptions insisted not only on this. For him it was also important to legitimate a new political situation that had begun since 716. From his point of view it was not the dynasty as a whole that might hold the legitimation, but it was only one part of is, the lineage of *Iltäris qayan*. From 716 onwards we can see a change in the empire, the old principle of the dynastic rule and the sieniorate was replaced by that of the primogeniture. All what we are told about the history of the Empire, was arranged specially to legitimize this new way of rule.