

A REPORT ON THE RUBBINGS OF THE ORKHON INSCRIPTIONS BELONGING TO THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS IN ST. PETERSBURG

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Abstract

The rubbings which W. Radloff used or did not use in his Atlas are preserved at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg. The complete rubbings could not be used in Radloff publication. Some of them are retouched and some of them are not. With Orkhon publication, some of rubbings have been published which had not been published before. In this study, the rubbings of only two of Old Turkic Inscriptions, K l Tegin ve Bilg  Qayan have been discussed.

Keywords: Radloff's Atlas, rubbing, Old Turkic Inscriptions

St. Petersburg Doĝu Yazmaları Enstit s ne Ait Orhun Yazıtları Estampajları  zerine Bir Rapor

 zet

W. Radloff'un Atlas'ında kullandığı ve kullanmadığı estampajlar bug n St. Petersburg'da Doĝu Yazmaları Enstit s nde saklanmaktadır. Radloff yayınında mevcut estampajların tamamı kullanılamamıştır. Bunların bir kısmı r tuşlu bir kısmı da r tuşsuzdur. Orhun yayını ile daha evvel yayımlanmamış bazı estampajlar yayımlanmıştır. Eldeki yazıda Eski T rk yazıtlarından sadece ikisine, K l Tegin ve Bilge Kaĝan yazıtlarına ait estampajlara yer verilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Radloff Atlası, estampaj, Eski T rk Yazıtları

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1. Introduction

The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg houses the rubbings of the Orkhon Inscriptions,¹ which were collected by Dr. Wilhelm Radloff. I visited St. Petersburg for a week in February 2011 with the purpose of researching these rubbings.

Photographs of these rubbings were first published in Dr. Radloff's *Atlas*. Later, TIKA (Turkic Cooperation and Coordination Agency) researched the rubbings again, and published these findings in *Orhun*. There are clearer photographs of the rubbings in this book, and sections of these rubbings were not previously observable, because they were not published in *Atlas*. Therefore, in order to recheck the texts of the Orkhon Inscriptions, *Orhun* is a valuable resource for this pursuit.

These two books have some issues however, as the photographs of the rubbings are too small to closely view the scripts. Thus, it was very important for the purpose of my research to observe the actual rubbing.

2. Köl Tegin Inscription

I set out to research the rubbings of the Köl Tegin, Bilgä Qayan, and Ongi Inscriptions. When I officially requested permission to research these rubbings, Dr. Irina Popova, the director of the institute, and Dr. Dmitrii Rukhliadev were of great assistance to me, which I am very grateful for.

In the collection of these Orkhon Inscriptions rubbings, there at least four sets of rubbings of the Köl Tegin Inscription in Japan. Therefore, if we compare the rubbings in St. Petersburg with those in Japan, we are able to interpret the text of this Inscription more exactly. I had already researched two sets of the rubbings in Japan. There were some difference seen between the rubbings in St. Petersburg and the rubbings in Japan. The biggest difference was that the St. Petersburg's rubbings were not made on paper, but rather than on fabric. The kind of cloth used is cotton, and they resemble tablecloths. In general, thin papers that are painted with black ink are used when making a rubbing, and thick cloth is a difficult material to use in making rubbings. This means that the scripts of the rubbings in St. Petersburg are partly unclear, compared to those in Japan.

In this research, I was most interested in the rubbing of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription, because when the inscription was discovered, it had been broken into various pieces, and it was difficult to read the text. The collection of these rubbings is limited and very precious, and those housed in St. Petersburg are

¹ In this presentation, the "Orkhon Inscription" refers to all the ancient Turkic inscriptions from Türk Qayanate.

one of the oldest rubbing. It was for these reasons that my research of the rubbing of Kōl Tegin Inscription lasted only a short time. Despite this, I was able to generate a few findings and I intend to report these in this forum.

The most important critical issue to discuss is that the rubbings of the Kōl Tegin Inscription in St. Petersburg have been retouched in places, and this was not officially announced to the broader academic community. It is my belief that the image of the rubbing that was published in *Orhun* (pp. 22-23) is retouched, as the script on these rubbings is so legible. This is evident from the fact that letters which must have been damaged by cracks in the stone seem so clear in the image.

These retouched rubbings were not published in *Atlas*, but they do appear in *Orhun* (pp. 22-23). This is a photograph of the rubbing of Eastern side. It is Retouched partly, for example, ll. 24-27. However, it is not possible to distinguish retouched rubbing from original rubbing in the photographs of *Orhun*. Therefore, establishing that the rubbing had been retouched was an important component of my future research. The extent and quantity of retouched rubbings that exist would be an area of further research I would like to undertake.

3. Bilgä Qayan Inscription

The rubbings of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription are preserved together with the rubbings of the Kōl Tegin Inscriptions. As with the rubbings of the Kōl Tegin Inscriptions, the rubbings of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription are on cloth too. Therefore, these rubbings share the issue of having illegible letters in places, due to the material used for the rubbing. The rubbings of the Western side inscriptions, which were mostly written in Chinese scripts, are especially unclear. However, it is legible enough that we can decipher when the Bilgä Qayan Inscription was constructed. It reads “開] 元廿三 [年”, which means 735 A.D.

On the Bilgä Qayan Inscription, there are retouched rubbings, the images for which are only published in *Orhun*. It is easier to establish which rubbing has been retouched in *Orhun* than it is to see the retouches that might have happened for the Kōl Tegin Inscription. In the retouched rubbing of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription, it is clear that some parts have been retouched, while other sections have been left as is, and so it is straightforward to establish the retouched sections in *Orhun* [Plate 1]. However, there are also completely retouched rubbings (*Orhun*, pp. 33-34). Caution should be exercised in interpreting retouched rubbings. In my opinion, there are other rubbings that have been left in their original state. However, during my research, I could not

find the rubbing that was published in *Atlas* as an original rubbing (the upper part of the rubbings of the plate XXIV, 2 (Xb.) in *Atlas*).

The most important discovery on the rubbings of Bilgä Qayan Inscription is the existence of a previously unknown damaged section found in Line 13 on the southern side of the rubbings. As you know, the Bilgä Qayan Inscription is fragmented into various parts, so it was difficult to see the original and comprehensive image of the inscription. I therefore placed the rubbings side by side and tried to restore the original size. As a result, I noticed that Line 13 in the southern side of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription has big blank. However, old reserches paid no attention to this blank. This blank is 71cm or 54 letters [Plate 2]. It is possible that the Line 13 might contain long lost texts in this blank. Considering this premise, we should discuss an issue with the following text of line 13 and 14 in the southern side of the Bilgä Qayan Inscription.

[Transcription]

(**I. 13**)..... **kisrā** : **tarduš** : **bāglār** : **köl čor** : **bašlayu** : **ulayu** : **šadapit** : **bāglār** : **önrā** : **tölis** : **bāglār** : **apa tarqan** *BLANK* (**I. 14**) **bašlayu** : **ulayu** : **šadapit** : **bāglār** :²

[Translation]

(**I. 13**). . . Westwards the Tarduš loads, Köl Čor as the leader and then šadapit³ and the lards, Eastwards the Tölis lords, *apa tarqan*⁴ *BLANK* (**I. 14**) as the leader and then šadapit and the lords . . .

We generally consider that the texts between Line 13 and 14 are continuous⁵. As mentioned above, however, the last part of this line is largely damaged, and it is my belief that the lost unknown text is part of the last section of Line 13. Therefore, “the man who leads šadapit and the lords” at the start of the text of Line 14 should not be “the man who is *apa tarqan*.”

2 In the text, [. . .] means the omitted text, the letters that are underline mean script that has been restored in the transcription, **the letters in bold** mean the wholly restored letter, and *the letters in italics* mean letters that were partly damaged but have been restored with certainty.

3 According to Aalto [1971, pp. 34-45] and Bombaci [1976], šadapit was not the plural of šad but rather the proper official title from the Iranian origin.

4 According to Ōsawa [2007, pp. 211-217], in that time, Köl Tegin had the title of *apa tarqan*.

5 This scene is possibly the enthronement ceremony for Bilgä Qayan [Katayama 1992].

4. Conclusion

I have presented my report from researching the rubbings of the Orkhon Inscriptions in St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, I cannot report information about the rubbing of the Ongi Inscription, nor was I able to sufficiently research all the rubbings of the Orkhon Inscriptions in St. Petersburg, as my time there was too brief. I would therefore like to visit St. Petersburg again and continue researching all the rubbings of the Orkhon Inscriptions.

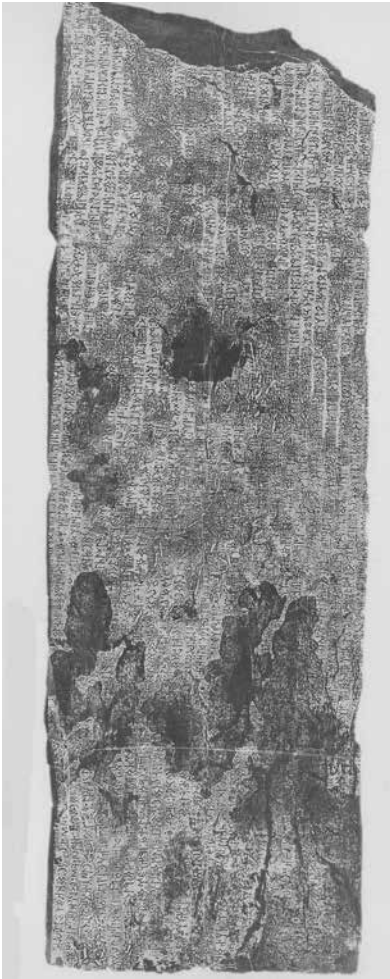
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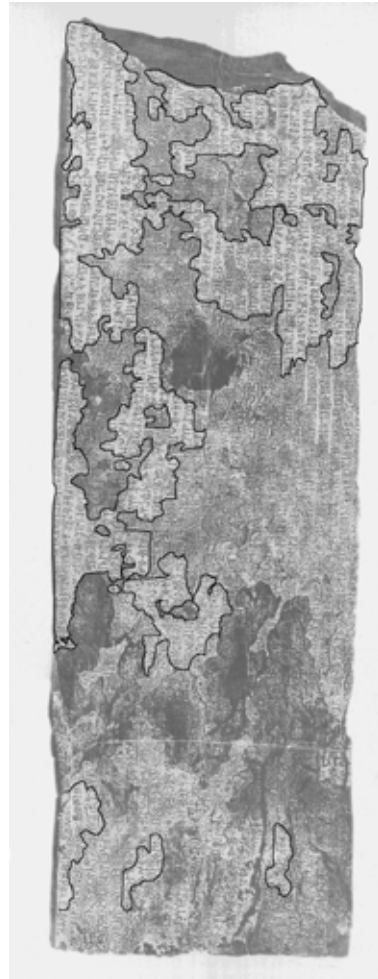
[Plate 1]

(The partly retouched rubbing of a part of East side of Bilgä Qayan Inscription [*Orhun*, p. 32])

↓Original Images



↓The image emphasizing retouched parts



[Plate 2] (The Southern and Northern side of Bilgä Qayan Inscription [Atlas, XXIV])

