

## Punctuation rules in the Toñuquq inscription?

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The sign of punctuation in the Old Turkic inscriptions consists of two points placed above each other and resembling the colon of our alphabet. Until now there has been only little research on the possible rules concerning the placement of the colon, and different grammars and articles make only short references to its use. So, for instance, VON GABAIN wrote in her Old Turkic grammar that «the punctuation is in most cases expressed by a colon, in Manichaen manuscripts these are surrounded by a loop. This sign divides word groups in the inscriptions, in the manuscripts mostly words» [GABAIN 1950.15].

The most divergent opinions about the use of the colon have been, as far as I know, expressed by TEKIN and HOVDHAUGEN. TEKIN tried to establish four rules concerning the use of the colon. According to him (i) words are generally separated by colons; (ii) very short words such as *at*, *är*, *alp* are generally written together with the following or preceding word or group of words; (iii) compounds, word groups or phrases are often placed between colons; (iv) sometimes two words which do not constitute a phrase are put between a pair of colons [TEKIN 1968.48–49, 1988.XXIII–XXIV]. On the other hand, HOVDHAUGEN, in an article dealing with the Bilge Qayan and Kül Tegin inscriptions, came to the conclusion that «in the use of the punctuation mark there are many divergencies between I (KT) and II (BQ). In THOMSEN 1896 there are more than 50. [...] The use of it in II seems more consistent than in I. [...] But also in II there are many inconsistencies [...] and it seems clear that rules for the use of the punctuation mark did not exist in Orkhon Turkic» [HOVDHAUGEN 1974.65–66].

This last statement is surprising. Although different researchers, including, for instance, RÓNA-TAS [1987b, 1991, 1998], CLAUSON [1970], TRYJARSKI [1985] and PRITSAK [1980], have expressed very different opinions about the origin of the Runic alphabet, there is a consensus that it is an ingenious creation by one or several persons who had at least some elementary linguistic understanding. In the light of this background it seems highly improbable that the system of punctuation would not have been normalized in some way. In the present paper I will try to figure out

what the actual rules of punctuation may have been in the Old Turkic inscriptions, particularly in the Toñuquq inscription.

### On the scribes of the Runic texts

Before trying to establish any rules concerning the double point, one fact has to be remembered. Since the colon is graphically less distinct and linguistically less important than the actual letters of the Runic alphabet, it must have been more liable to be omitted by various types of mistakes. It is, for instance, not clear whether the inscriptions were inscribed by Chinese or Türk stone masons. Chinese sources do not speak about stone masons, but they do report that on the occasion of Bilge Qayan's and Kül Tegin's death two Chinese officials were sent to the Türk court to erect a grave stone and compose a memorial inscription [LIU 1958.179]. These memorial inscriptions have been preserved as the Chinese part of both inscriptions up to the present day [SCHLEGEL 1892; RADLOFF 1894–95, ORKUN 1938]. If the Old Turkic text of the inscriptions was also inscribed by Chinese stone masons, who most probably would not have known Turkic and worked with a squeeze, the possibility of mistakes would have been considerable. There are, however, no real mistakes in the use of the double point—with this I mean that a doublepoint is never put wrongly in the middle of a word. This fact might point to the Türk origin of the stone masons.

The inscriptions and Runic manuscripts using the verb *bitidim* 'I wrote'—only the Toñuquq inscription has the form *bititdim* 'I let write'—give only some clues about the persons who worked as stone masons. In my opinion, the verb *biti-* refers specifically to the process of writing *down* and not to the process of composing a text. At least in later Uigur texts the verb *biti-* means 'to write down', while for the process of composing a text the verb *yarat-* is used, cf. CLAUSON *biti-* 'to write, to write (something)' [1972.299–300], as well as BODROGLIGETI [1965.98–100], RÓNA-TAS [1965.126–130], ERDAL [1991(a).184, 484, 767, 827] and BERTA [1996.92–94]. The word *yarat-*, on the other hand, has the meaning 'to make or find suitable or convenient', that is, 'to adapt', 'to approve', 'to agree with (something)'. From the earliest period it also means, more vaguely, 'to create' (especially of God creating the world), cf. CLAUSON [1972.959–960], RÓNA-TAS [1987a.36–38], ERDAL [1991(a).793], BERTA [1996.439–440].

In most cases the scribe of an inscription remains unknown, and we have therefore no information as to whether he was a Türk or a Chinese, or of some other ethnic affiliation. Nevertheless, there are a few cases in which we know the name of the scribe, and in all of these cases, at least,

his name seems to have been Turkic. So we can read, for example, in the Bilge Qayan inscription (BQ SW) [*bilge*] *qayan : bitigin : yolıy tigin : bitidim : bunča : barqıy : bedizig : uzıy : [türk] bilge qayan : atisi : yolıy tigin : men : ay artuqi : tört kün : olurup : bitidim* : «I, Yolluı Tegin, inscribed the inscription of Bilge Qayan. All these constructions, statues and pictures and (other) artistical works I, Yolluı Tegin, Bilge Qayan's nephew, inscribed and decorated, sitting one month and four days». The same person is mentioned again in the Kül Tegin inscription, where he tells that he (KT SO) *bunča : bitig : bitigme : kül tigin : atisi : yoluı tigin : bitidim : yigirmi : kün : olurup : bo taşqa : bo tamqa : qop : yoluı tigin : bitidim* : «The one who inscribed all inscriptions — I, Yolluı Tegin, the nephew of Kül Tegin, have inscribed (all these inscriptions). Having sat twenty days, I, Yolluı Tegin, inscribed all these inscriptions on this stone and this wall».

Further names of scribes are mentioned in the Küli Čor inscription (KC 27–28): *: bentir : benim bilmez : biligin : biltükimin : ödükimin : bunča : bitig : bitidim* : «I Bentir have written all this inscription (containing) information not known to me personally and things I know and remember», and in the inscription on the rockwall of Kemčik-Kaya Başı: (E 24) *anı bitigli anjın erti* «[The one who] has written this is Anjın» [MALOV 1952.24, ORKUN 1940.89–91, RADLOFF 1894–95.325–327, VASIL'EV 1983.23, 63, 97–100, AALTO 1991.46–50]. The Arkhanen inscription does not give the name of the scribe but states simply that (I.2) *ben bitig : bitidim qaya* : «I wrote the inscription (in) the stone» [KLJAŠTORNYJ & TRYJARSKI 1990.64]. The Terx-inscription does not speak about the mason of the inscription, but gives the name of the composer of the inscription: (inscription on the turtle): *bunı yaratıyma böke tutam* «[The one who] has composed this [inscription] is Böke Tutam», KATAYAMA [1999.172] translates this sentence, in my opinion wrongly, «He who inscribed this [stone] is Böke Tutam». A similar expression is found on the southern side of the eastern sarcophagus of the Ikh-Khanui-Nor inscription, where it says: */// yaratı berti a* «He (or they) constructed (//), alas!» [ŌSAWA 1999.139, 140].

The scribes of the other Old Turkic inscriptions, as well as the Runic manuscripts remain unknown, only a letter from Dunhuang gives the name of the writer: *bitidim atım batur čigši* «I wrote [this letter]; my name is Batur Čigši» [THOMSEN 1912.219]. The colophon of the İrq Bitig contains no name, it just states that the book was written by a *kıčıg dıntar*: *bars yıl ikinti ay biş yigirmike taygüntan manıstantaqı kıčıg dıntar burua guru ešidip içimiz isig saıun it ačuı üčün bitidim* «L'année du Tigre, la 2<sup>e</sup> Lune, le 15, (moi,) petit religieux du monastère *Ta-yung t'ang*, en écoutant le gourou 'Présage', j'ai écrit (ceci) pour notre frère

aîné le général 'Chaleureux' *It Ačuq*» [BAZIN 1991.235–237, ERDAL 1997.94, HAMILTON 1975, TEKIN 1993.26–27, THOMSEN 1912.209]

### Comparative aspects of punctuation

As another preliminary topic, we should take a glance at the punctuation rules of some of the writing systems surrounding the Runic alphabet. The Tibetan writing system knows two punctuation signs. A dot, Tibetan *barsheg* 'intermediate dot', is used to separate syllables from each other. It is found in the upper right-hand corner of the radical or, in cases of a more complex syllable, at the upper right-hand corner of the final element [KUIJP 1996.435]. In addition to this dot, Tibetan texts use strokes, one or two, to separate from each other sentences and parts of sentences that are considered «selbständig empfundene Perioden» [HAHN 1985.20–21; cf. also TAKEUCHI 1995.3–61 (plates)].

With regard to Tocharian texts, written in Brāhmī, SCHMIDT [1994. 244] states that «das Verständnis der Texte wird dadurch erschwert, daß sie weitgehend ohne Worttrennung geschrieben sind. Nur bei konsonantisch auslautenden Wörtern wird das Wortende häufig durch Virāmastellung gekennzeichnet». However, two economical documents dealing with the registrations of men, and published by PINAULT [1998. 13–18; Fig. 4 (SI P/117) and 5 (SI B Toch./12)], mark personal names with the help of a vertical stroke (Fig. 4) or a horizontal semicircle (Fig. 5). Similarly, the «Maitreyasamiti-Nāṭaka» in Tocharian A employs vertical strokes and points as means of punctuation [JI, WINTER & PINAULT 1998].

On the other hand, Bactrian documents from Afghanistan, written on stone or paper in the Graeco-Bactrian script [cf., for instance FUSSMAN 1974, 1998; GÖBL 1965; HUMBACH 1966, 1967; SIMS-WILLIAMS 1997/98; SIMS-WILLIAMS & CRIBB 1995/96], have no special sign for dividing words or sentences.

The only punctuation system known to me that separates words from each other can be found in the Old Persian Cuneiform texts [TESTEN 1996.135, 137]. This system of separating words is still found in the Avestan alphabet, based on the Psalter and Pahlavi script [SKJÆRVØ 1996.527–528]. The similarity of division between the Old Persian and the Runic scripts might be a pure chance, or due to the similar type of script of the two alphabets, as both are non-cursive scripts using signs that are not connected with each other. Whatever the reason may be, one should keep in mind that there seem to be, as PENTTI AALTO [1991] showed in a paper read at the Oslo PIAC (1989), strong textual and structural similarities between the Old Persian and Old Turkic inscriptions. The

thematic and linguistic parallels in Old Persian and Middle Persian inscriptions have been analysed by SKJÆRVØ [1985]. Therefore an Iranian influence on the Old Turkic script, possibly through some kind of mediation, can not be ruled out.

This mediation does not seem to have gone through the Eastern Iranian scripts. As these scripts are basically cursive they do not need a punctuation system for dividing words. In the «Ancient letters», discovered by SIR AUREL STEIN in a watchtower west of Dunhuang and in Loulan, no punctuation signs are found [REICHELDT 1931, plates I–VIII]. In the Sogdian documents of the Bibliotheque Nationale (Mission Pelliot) in Paris [BENVENISTE 1940] punctuation signs in several different shapes can be found, for example two vertical strokes with a point at the top and bottom (plate 42, 110), two vertical strokes with a horizontal stroke at both ends (plate 156, 157, 170), a group of five points (plate 180), three points (plate 180, 181, 182), and one point with or without a horizontal stroke (plate 180, 182). However, it has to be noted that the punctuation signs are used very seldom in these documents. In the «Manichäisch-sogdisches Parabelbuch» published by SUNDERMANN [1985], the most common punctuation signs are two horizontal strokes, used from time to time (for example ll. 50, 52, 58, 61, 62, 64(2) 65(2), 66, 73, 89, 90, plates V, VI). The end of a parable, ''γ'št ''z-'nt MN yny ZY sm'wtry 'Vollendet ist die Erzählung von der Religion und dem Weltmeer', is indicated by four points and two strokes on both sides of the points, before and after the sentence (plate VIII, ll. 135, 136). Some Manichaean manuscripts fill lines by using punctuation dots, as the Manichaean scribes usually avoid to split words between the end of one line and the beginning of the following one [GERSHEVITCH 1961.9–10].

A punctuation system similar to the Sogdian one, is known from Old Uigur texts. As concerns the rules of punctuation in Old Uigur, LE COQ [1919.7–8 and a footnote] writes as follows:

«An Interpunktionszeichen kennen die älteren buddhistischen Texte nur etwas gekrümmte kommaartige Haken, die einzeln oder paarweise gesetzt unsere Komma, Semikolon und Punkte ersetzen [...]. Später werden sie oft durch schräggestehende, parallele Striche ersetzt [...]. In manchen kalligraphisch geschriebenen Mss. treten am Schluß eines Abschnittes usw. zuweilen Häufungen solcher Zeichen auf [...]. Die Manichäer bedienen sich auch in uigurisch geschriebenen Mss. religiösen Inhalts der ihrer Schrift eigentümlichen Interpunktionszeichen, die von den Buddhisten niemals verwendet werden und deren bloßes Vorkommen in einem Text ungewissen Inhalts genügt, um ihn als sicherlich der manichäischen Literatur angehörig zu kennzeichnen. Die manichäischen Interpunktionszeichen sind schräggestellte kleine Ovale, oft in Mennige oder in Zinnober um einen oder zwei schwarze Tuschepunkte geführt. Sie kommen einzeln oder paarweise verbunden vor, [...], oft auch am Beginn einer

Zeile. Die Regeln, die die Einsetzung dieser Zeichen beherrschen, fallen nicht mit denen moderner europäischer Sprachen zusammen und sind noch nicht festgestellt worden.» «[...]auch die modernen Osttürken sprechen in einem Redefluß, der unserm Empfinden nicht entspricht und unserer Interpunktionszeichen, außer Frage-, Ausrufungszeichen und Punkt, wenig zu bedürfen scheint».

In the following survey of the Old Turkic punctuation rules, the texts of the Uigur empire have for the most part been left aside, as their editions, especially as far as the use of the double point, are unreliable. In this respect, the Runic texts of the Türk empire offer a considerably better basis for conclusions.

In Old Turkic it is possible to sort out three different patterns which characterize the use of the double point in connection with words and grammatical structures. First, there are words and grammatical structures that always stand alone, separated from the neighbouring words and structures by colons. Second, there are words and grammatical structures that never stand alone, being always part of a larger unit. Third, there are words and structures that are ambivalent in this respect. The rules of punctuation vary depending on what part of speech and what grammatical category is concerned.

### Punctuation in verbal phrases

Verbs, irrespective of whether they occur as converbs or finite forms, are generally separated by colons from their environment. This rule holds for a variety of structures ending in a verbal form. The more detailed picture is as follows:

particle + converb: : *yana* : *aŷitip* : 'pulling it up again' (KC 19). : *yeme* : *ölti* : 'they, too, died' (BQ O16 = KT O19). : *yana* : *birtimiz* : 'we gave back again' (KT O21).

noun + finite verb: : *bitig* : *bitidim* : 'I have written the inscription' (KC 28). : *otča* : *borča* : *kelti* : 'they came like fire and dust' (KT O37 = BQ O27) [Zieme 1999]. : *tabŷač qayanqa* : *körti* : 'they submitted to the Chinese Qayan' (BQ O39). : *bengü* : *tašqa* : *urtum* : 'I inscribed the memorial stone' (KT S11) = : *bengü tašqa* : *urtum* : (BQ N8).

finite verb + finite verb: : *bedizin* : *bediziti* : *olurti* : 'they had (the tomb chamber) decorated. They laid him (in it)' (KC 24). : *tabŷač* : *qayanda* : *bedizči* : *kelürtüm* : *bediztim* : 'I brought painters from the Chinese Qayan and let them decorate' (KT S11). : *qop anda* : *alqindiy* : *ariltiy* : 'they were completely ruined and destroyed there' (KT S9 = BQ N7). : *bodunuy* : *ečüm apam* : *törüsinče* : *yaratmiš* : *bošŷurmiš* : 'he organized and ordered the people in accordance with the laws of my ancestors' (KT O13 = BQ O12).

converb + finite verb: : *bodun : quburap : yoqladi* : ‘people came together and attended the funeral’ (KC 27). : *arqasın : sıyu : urti* : ‘he hit, breaking its back’ (KC 21). : *bunča : bodun : kelipen : sıyramış : yoqlamış* : ‘this many people came, mourned and lamented’ (KT O4 = BQ O4). : *türk : bodunuğ : ilin törüsün : tuta : birmiș : iti : birmiș* : ‘they organized and ruled the land and the institutions of the Türk people’ (KT O1); but note : *türük boduniğ : ilin : törüsün : tuta birmiș : iti birmiș* : (BQ O3). : *tadiqıñ çoruğ : boz atın : binip : tegdi* : ‘he mounted the grey horse of Tadiqıñ Čor and attacked’ (KT O32). : *ișbara yamtar : boz atıy : binip : tegdi* : ‘he mounted the grey horse [?of] İșbara Yamtar and attacked’ (KT O33). According to AALTO [1946.129] *ișbara yamtar* is the name of the horse, because the name does not have a genitive suffix. More important is that *boz at* does not have a possessive suffix. However, as will be shown later, names of horses are generally written together with the following general term, so it remains unclear if *ișbara yamtar* in this particular place is the name of the horse or that of its former owner. In BQ (O4) *yamtar* is the name of a human being: *todun : yamtarıy : itim (:)* *bardi* ‘I sent Yamtar, the Todun, and he went’.] : *yegin silig begiğ : kedimlig : toruyat : binip : tegdi* : ‘he mounted the armoured, reddish-brown horse of Yegin Silig Beg and attacked’ (KT O33).

converb + converb: : *sančip : ölürüp* : ‘piercing and killing’ (KC 5). : *bayırqunığ : aq adyırıy binip : uplayu : tegdi* : ‘he mounted the white stallion of the Bayırqu and attacked in haste’ (KT O35–36).

### Punctuation in nominal phrases

Nouns and verbs are, as already mentioned, generally written separately. Two nouns following each other are written separately in the following cases:

the possessive construction with a grammatically unmarked modifier and a possessively marked head word: : *ermelig : arqasın* : ‘the back of the swift horse’ (KC 21). : *qayan : inisi* : ‘the younger brother of the Qayan’ (KC 24). : *elteber : özi* : ‘the Elteber himself’ (KC 21). : *tabyaç : bodun : sabi* : ‘the words of the Chinese people’ (KT S5). : *türgiș : qayan : buyruqi* : ‘the Buyruq of the Türgiș Qayan’ (KT O38). : *kül tigin : atisi* : ‘Kül Tegin’s nephew’ (KT SO). : *qayan : quti* : ‘the *qut* of the Qayan’ (BQ O35).

nouns with attributes that have a clear suffix: *aziğliy : tonguz* ‘wild boar’ (KC 18), *bilmez : biligin* ‘information not known’ (KC 28). : *biligsiz : qayan* : ‘ignorant Qayans’ (KT O5).

enumerations: : *küli çor : antaq : bilgäsi : çabiși erti : alpı : bökäsi erti* : ‘Küli Čor was his counsellor and field marshall, his warrior and

champion' (KC 17). : *oγlin* : *kisisin* : 'their children and womenfolk' (KC 5). : *ögüm qatun* : *ulayu* : *öglerim* : *ekelerim* : *keligünüm* : *qunčuylarım* : 'my mother the qatun, and my step-mothers, my junior aunts/elder sisters, my younger brothers'/sons' wives, and my consorts' (KT N9). : *ulayu* : *iniyigünüm* : *oγlanım* : 'my younger brothers as well as my sons' (KT S1).

Cases of enumeration of ethnic names are not equally clear, however. Two ethnic names seem to be written separately from each other if the corresponding ethnic groups formed only a loose confederation, as in, for instance, *qitan* : *tatabi* in the Küli Čor as well as the Kül Tegin inscription. The Bilge Qayan inscription has one occurrence (O23) in which the two names are written together. An interesting case is also offered by the ethnic names *apar* and *purum* 'Avars and Byzantines', written in KT (O4) separately, but in BQ (O5) together. Generally, ethnic names are written together, when the ethnic groups formed a stronger union, as is the case with *yir bayırqu* in the Kül Tegin (O34, S4) and Bilge Qayan (N3) inscriptions, and *az qırqız* also in the Kül Tegin (O20) and Bilge Qayan (O17) inscriptions.

In connection with personal names, separation seems to mark some kind of stress. The sequence *qapγan qaγan* is usually written together, but in the Küli Čor inscription there is one occurrence (3) written separately, and this might be translated as «Qapγan, the Qaγan». Another instance (KC 24) suggesting this rule is : *el čor* : *tegin* :, to be translated as 'El Čor, the Tegin'.

### Phrases without punctuation

The punctuational status of particles (conjunctions and postpositions) shows considerable variation in the Old Turkic inscriptions. Examples include: *tapa* 'against', always separate in KC but ambivalent in KT and BQ; *tegi* 'until', always separate in KC but ambivalent in KT and BQ; *ulayu* 'and, in any case', always separate in KC, KT and BQ; *yana*, *yämä* 'again', always separate in KC but ambivalent in KT and BQ; *üčün* 'because of', ambivalent in KC, KT and BQ; *birle* 'together with', ambivalent in KT and BQ; *üze* 'on, above', always together with the preceding noun in KC but ambivalent in KT and BQ. The postposition *teg* 'like, similar to' is written together with the noun in the Kül Tegin and Bilge Qayan inscriptions. In the Küli Čor inscription, however, *teg* is written separately from its word of reference. The reason for this may lay in the fact, that the passage in the Küli Čor inscription (9) where *teg* occurs, has a strong rythmical style, forming two parallel sentences: : *süngüş bolsar* : *čärig* : *etär ärti* : *ab ablasar* : *ärmäli* : *täg ärti* : 'When

there was a fight, he marshalled the troops; when he went hunting, he was like a swift horse’.

A particle written together with its verbal headword is *erinč*, expressing presumption or doubt. Its use and function can be compared with the emphatic element *oqlök*, also written together with the main word [ERDAL 1991(b), 1998.148–149].

There are also other kinds of graphic compounds, which are always written together, without punctuation. These include the types verb + verb, noun + verb, and noun + noun. In the compounds consisting of two verbs the first verb seems to have some kind of intensifying function, as can be seen from the following examples: *uplayu teg-* ‘to attack impatiently’ (KC 19, 23), *sanča id-* ‘to rout thoroughly’ (KC 19), *ali ber-* ‘to take’ (KT O8, S7, BQ N6). Other examples from KC, notably *uplu kir-* and *ete ayu olur-*, translated by CLAUSON & TRYJARSKI as ‘to bring down’ and ‘to give orders and assume power’, respectively, are somewhat less clear.

The compounds of the type noun + verb also seem to represent fixed expressions. Interestingly, many of these compounds convey an administrative or military meaning. Examples include: *yoq bol-* ‘to die (a normal death)’ (BQ O10, 22, 33, 36, 40, S9; KT O11, 25, 26, N3; KC 3); *kergek bol-* ‘to die in battle’ (BQ O4, KC 23, in KT this compound is once (O 30) written together, and twice (O4, N10) separately); *sü šür-* ‘to lead an army’ (KC 20), and similarly *sü süle-* (KT O2, BQ O3), *sü kel-* (KT O31; BQ O25, S8), *sü yor-* (BQ SO); *ayı ber-* ‘to give gifts (of gold, silk)’, written in KT (S7(2)) together but in BQ (N5(2)) first separately, and then together; *at ber-* ‘to give a title’ (KC 1, BQ O41); and *yayı er-* ‘to be hostile’ (KT O2, 14(3); BQ O3, 12(3)); note that *yayı bol-* ‘to become hostile’ is written in KT (O9, 10, 34, 39; N1, 2, 4) always together with the noun, so also in BQ (O26, 29, 30) with the exception of a single line (O12), where the compound occurs three times written separately from the noun. Further examples are *bay qıl-* ‘to make rich’ (KT S10, O16, 19; BQ N7, O14, 23), and *üküş qıl-* ‘to make numerous’, written together in BQ (N7, O24) but in KT once (O16) together and twice (S10, 29) separately.

The compounds of the type noun + noun comprise cases in which a noun is written together with a preceding attribute, which lacks a clear suffix, as in *edgü bengi* ‘good happiness’ (KC 3), *ečüm apam* ‘my ancestor’ (BQ O3, 12, 16, this sequence is written separately in KT O1, 13), *at kü* ‘reputation’ (KT O25(2), 26; BQ O20, 21, 22, 36), *iš küč* ‘service’ (KT O8, 9, 10, 30; BQ O8, 9(2)). This last example is, however, once (W) written separately in KT, cf. also DOERFER [1993]. This group also comprises compounds designating different horse types, as in *toruy*

at 'bay horse' (KT O33), *boz at* 'grey horse' (KC 4, KT O32, 33, 37), *yegren at* 'chestnut (coloured) horse' (KC 15), *aq adyır* 'white stallion' (KT O35, 36), *aq at* 'white horse' (KT O40, N2), as well as names of horses, as in *idil aq* 'the white horse Idil' (KC 19), *azman aq* 'the white horse Azman' (KT N5, 6), *ögsüz aq* 'the white horse Ögsüz'. Interestingly all the horses having names seem to be white, cf. for these names also AALTO [1946].

Geographical names consisting of two words are mainly written together, as in *temir qapıy* [name of a pass between Samarqand and Balkh] (KC 16; KT S4, O2, 8, 17, 39; BQ N3, O4, 15, the form *temir : qapıy* in BQ (O8) is most probably an error); *beš baliq* (KC 11; BQ O28(2)); *beš kečen* (BQ SO, occurs in KC 10 as *kečen*); *keñü tarman* (KT O21) = *keñü tarban* (BQ O18); *toquz ersin* (BQ N3, in KT (S3) the two words are divided by a colon).

The punctuation of geographical names containing a general noun is twofold. If the general noun is a part of the name the two components are written together, but if the general noun defines the name it is written separately, cf., for instance: (i) *ögüz* 'river': *yinčü ögüz* 'Syr Darja' (KC 16?, KT S3, BQ N3), but *yinčü : ögüz* in KT (O39), *yašil ögüz* (KT O17, BQ 015), *irtiš ögüz* (KT O37, but in BQ (O27) divided by a colon), *tuyla : ögüz* (BQ O30); (ii) *köl* 'lake': *qara köl* (KT N2), but *türgi yarğun : köl* in KT (O34); (iii) *baš* 'mountain top, summit': *tamay iduq : baš* (KT N1, BQ O29), *iduq baš* (BQ O25); (iv) *yiš* 'mountain forest': *altun : yiš* (KT O36, BQ O27), *čuğay : yiš* (KT S6, BQ N5), *kögmen : yiš* (KT O35, BQ O27), *ötüken : yiš* (KT O23, S3, 4(2), 8; BQ N3(2), 6, O19, once not divided by a colon in BQ N2), *qadırqan : yiš* (KT O2, 21; BQ O3, 17, once without punctuation in BQ O39), *soğa yiš* in KT (O35), but *soğa : yiš* in BQ (O27); (v) *yir* 'land': *kögmen : yir sub* (KT O20, BQ O17), *ötüken : yir* (KT S8, BQ N6).

Ethnic names consisting of two appellative nouns are normally written together, as in *sayır čoluyan* (KC 5); *toquz oğuz* (KC 16; KT N4, S2, O14; BQ O29, in BQ O12, O35 the two words are written separately), *üč oğuz* (BQ O32, in enumerations the word *oğuz* is, rightly, written separately: *türk : oğuz* 'the Türk and Oğuz', KT O22, BQ O18); *on oq* (KT N13, S12, O19; BQ N15, O16); *qara türgiš* (KT O38, 39, 40); *üč quriqan* (KT O4, BQ O5); *otuz tatar* (KT O4, 14; BQ O5, 12), but *toquz : tatar* in BQ (O34).

Personal names and titles consisting of several components are written together, so for instance *bars beg* (KT O20, BQ O16), *el čor* (KC 24), *inanču čor* (KT N13), *kül čor* (BQ S13), *küli čor* (KC 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26), *tadiqıñ čoriğ* (gen.) (KT O32), *yegen čor* (KC 21, 26), *uluğ irkin* (KT O34(2)), *beg küli irkin* (BQ S14),

*baz qaγan* (KT O14, 16; BQ O12, 13), *bumin qaγan* (KT O1, BQ O3), *ištemi qaγan* (KT O1, BQ O3), *ilteriš qaγan* (KT O33, in BQ, however, separated), *il bilge qatun* (KT O33, in BQ separated), *čača seγün* (KT O32, BQ O26), *čaγ seγün* (KT N13), but: *lisün : tay seγün* (BQ S11), *neγ seγün* (KT N12), *udar seγün* (KT N12), *tabγač : oγ totuq* (KT O31, 32) = *tabγač oγ totuq* (BQ O25), *qošu totuq* (KT N1), but: *boquq : totuq* (BQ S10). The first element of such titles often indicates rank, cf., for instance, *apa tarqan* (KC 1, BQ S13), *baγa tarqan* (BQ S14), *oγul tarqan* (KT N12), *uluγ tarqan* (Terx W8) and *yarγan tarqan* (KT W) [RYBATZKI 1997.84–86:229].

### Phrases with numerals and pronouns

Numerals in the Old Turkic inscriptions are formed in two ways: either (a) the digit is followed by the numeral for the higher decade, or (b) the numeral for the lower decade is followed by *artuqı* ‘its supplement’ plus the digit [EHLERS 1983, ERDAL 1998.144]. In the former case the two numerals are written together, cf., for instance, *bir otuz* ‘21’ (KT O31), *bir qırq* ‘31’ (KT N2), *eki otuz* ‘22’ (BQ O25), *üč yegirmi* ‘13’ (KT O18, BQ O15), *tört yegirmi* ‘14’ (BQ O15), *altı yegirmi* ‘16’ (KT O31, *altı otuz* ‘26’ (KT O34–35; BQ O26, S10), *yeti yegirmi* ‘17’ (KT O11, NO; BQ O10, O24), *yeti otuz* ‘27’ [KT N1, NO(2); BQ S10, O26], *sekiz yegirmi* ‘18’ (BQ O24), *toquz yegirmi* ‘19’ (BQ S9). In the latter case *artuqı* is normally written together with the decade, while the digit is separated by a colon: *otuz artuqı : bir* ‘31’ (BQ O28–29, S9), *otuz artuqı : üč* ‘33’ (BQ O34), *otuz artuqı : tört* ‘34’ (BQ O38), *otuz artuqı : sekiz* ‘38’ (BQ S2), *otuz artuqı : toquz* ‘39’ (BQ S2).

Higher numbers are expressed multiplicatively, and written together: *sekiz on* ‘80’ (KC 3), *beš yüz* ‘500’ (BQ S11), *tört tümen* ‘40,000’ (BQ S1, 8). If a numeral is followed by a noun, the two are mainly written together, though there are many exceptions from this rule: *bir yılqa* ‘in one year’ (KT N4, BQ O30), *bir kiši* ‘one human being’ (KT S6, BQ N4), *eki erig* ‘two men’ (KT O36, N2, 8), *eki šad* ‘the two Šad’ (KT N11, O27; BQ O21, 22) *üč erig* ‘three men’ (KC 15), *üč tümen süg* ‘an army of 30,000 soldiers’ (BQ S8), *tört süngüş* ‘four fights» (KC 11), *tört tegin* ‘the four Tegin’ (KC 24), *altı yolı* ‘six times’ (BQ O28), *yeti yüz er* ‘700 men’ [KT O3(2), BQ O11(2)]. If the numeral is followed by a verb the two are always written separately, for instance *sekiz on : yašap* ‘he grew eighty years old’ (KC 3), *üč yegirmi : süngüşdümüz* ‘we fought 13 (times)’ (KT O18, BQ O15), *beš tümen : sü kelti* ‘an army of 50,000 soldiers came’ (BQ O25), *yeti yegirmike : učdi* ‘he died on the 17th (day)’ (KT NO).

Demonstrative pronouns in the unmarked nominative case are always written together with the word of reference, cf., for instance *ol tegri* ‘that God’ (KT O25), *ol at* ‘that horse’ (KT O36, BQ O27), *bu yirde* ‘in this land’ (KT S 4, BQ O36). If the demonstrative pronoun is declined, rules can also be established for most of the occurrences, but only with difficulty.

The forms *bunī*, *bunta* and *bunča*, from *bu* ‘this’, are normally written separately from both the preceding and the following word, as in : *qayan at : bunda : biz : birtimiz* : (KT O20) = : *qayan atıy : bunta : biz birtimiz* : (BQ O17) ‘there we gave (to Bars Beg) the title Qayan’, : *bunī : körü : bilig* : ‘Looking at this (inscription), know!’ (KT S12, BQ N15), : *bunča : bodun : kelipen* : ‘so many people came» (KT O4, BQ O5), : *bunča : isig küçüg* : ‘so many services’ (KT O10, BQ O9), : *bunča : törüg* : ‘so many laws’ (KT O30), : *bunča : ayır törüg* : ‘so many important laws’ (BQ O2), : *bodunıy : bunča : itmiş* : ‘thus did I order the people’ (BQ N9), : *men iniligü : bunča : başlayu : qazyanmasar* : ‘If I, together with my younger brother, had not led (the people) and had not gained so many victories’ (BQ O33).

Declined forms of *ol* ‘that’ are written in different ways, seemingly depending on the case and syntactic context in which they occur. If *ol* occurs in the dative case, both alternatives are possible: : *ağar körü : bilig* : ‘Looking at this (inscription), know!’ (BQ N8) = : *ağar körü bilig* : (KT S11), : *ağar : adınçıy : barq : yaraturtum* ‘I erected a special (grave) structure for him’ (KT S12, BQ N14). The accusative case of *ol* is written together with the following word: : *anı anıtayın : tip : süledim* : ‘In order to frighten them, I started a campaign’ (BQ O41), : *anı ögtürtüm* : ‘I made them praise’ (KT W), : *anı körüp* : ‘See this!’ (KT S13). The equative case of *ol* is also written together with the following verb: : *anča üdümüz* : ‘thus we sent’ [KT O21(2), BQ O18(2)], : *anča qazyanıp* : ‘thus we gained victories’ (BQ O22, 34). However, if the declined form of *ol* is preceded by a noun and followed by a verb, it is written together with the former and separated by a colon from the latter, as in : *süsin anta : sančđim* : ‘there I routed their army’ (BQ O31), : *qop anta : alqındıy : ariltıy* : ‘you all exhausted yourselves and wearied there’ (KT S9, BQ N7), : *ol at anta : ölti* : ‘that horse died there’ [KT O32, 33(2)], : *ol at anta : tüşdi* : ‘that horse fell there’ (KT N4), : *özi anča : kergek bolmiş* : ‘thus they passed away’ (KT O3–4, BQ O4), : *bodunuy anča : qonturtumuz : anča üdümüz* : ‘we thus settled the people, and organized (them)’ (KT O21, BQ O17).

Personal pronouns immediately preceding or following a verb are written together with the latter, as in : *birür men* : ‘I gave’ (KT O9, BQ O8), : *men qazyantıp* : ‘I gained victories’ (BQ O33), : *ölteçi sen* : ‘you

will die' (KT S8, BQ N6), : *körteči sen* : 'you will see' (BQ N14), : *biz birtimiz* : 'we gave' (BQ O17, in KT O20 wrongly divided by a colon), : *yağildači siz* : 'you will make a mistake' (KT S11, in BQ N8–9 wrongly divided by a colon), : *qop bilir siz* : 'you all know' (KT O34). In nearly all other occurrences personal pronouns and their declined forms are written separately, as in : *men* : *ay artuqi* : *tört kün* : *olurup* : *bitidim* : 'I sat for one month and four days, and wrote' (BQ SW), : *meniğ* : *bodunim* : 'my people' (BQ O29), : *qop* : *mağa* : *körür* : 'all are my subjects' (KT S2–3, O30; BQ N2, O24), : *biziğ sü* : *atı* : 'the horses of our army' (KT O39), : *biziğe* : *yağıltuğın üçün* : 'because they misbehaved against us' (KT O18–19, BQ O16), : *alp er* : *biziğe* : *tegmiş erti* : 'those who attacked us were brave men' (KT O40).

### Sources of irregular punctuation

The category of ambivalent punctuation is very large in the Kül Tegin and Bilge Qayan inscriptions, but considerably smaller in the Küli Čor inscription. Most actual cases of variation can be explained as being due to orthographical rules. Some problematic cases remain, however. These may partly be due to mistakes made in the process of writing, but there may be also other underlying reasons. In the following, only examples from the Küli Čor inscription are quoted.

A simple example is offered by the word *alpi*. In this particular case, the variants with and without punctuation are connected with the fact that the word is used in two different functions. In the example involving punctuation *alpi* (KC 17) means 'his champion'. In its other occurrences, however, *alpi* (KC 1, 4, 7, 12) is written without a following sign of punctuation because it forms an inseparable part of the compound *alpi erdemi* meaning 'his manly qualities'.

A less transparent example is offered by the word *bodun* 'people', which occurs both with and without a preceding sign of punctuation. The preceding word is in these cases an ethnic name (cf. KC 4, 5, 14). It is possible that the presence of punctuation (KC 4, 14) implies a genitive bond, in spite of the absence of a possessive suffix in the head noun, as in *türk* : *bodunuy* 'the people of the Türk'. This translation could be corroborated by the forms *tarduš* : *küli čor* : *oqli* 'the son of Küli Čor of the Tarduš' (KC 26) or *šir* : *irkin* : *oqli* 'the son of the Irkin of the Šir' (KC 21). When the ethnic name is written together with *bodun* (KC 5) it should be analyzed as a simple attribute and translated accordingly, for instance: 'the Türk people', 'the Chinese people'.

There are other examples that are even more problematic. For instance, the several different variant forms of the name *išbara bilge küli*

*čor* (KC 8, 14, 22, 24) cannot really be explained. Another similar example is *yegren* ‘chestnut’. In one case (KC 15), as already stated, this word is used in combination with *at* ‘horse’ to design a certain horse type. The fact that the two words are written together is in line with the rules observed in the other inscriptions. In combination with *ermeli* ‘swift horse’ (KC 21) no sign of punctuation is used, however. This may be simply due to a writing mistake.

Generally, the rules elaborated above work for most sections of the Orkhon inscriptions, although one cannot avoid the impression that, for some details, every inscription has its own rules of punctuation. A source that shows less conformity with the general rules is, however, the Toñuquq inscription. The reason for this may lie in the fact that the content and textual structure of the Toñuquq inscription differs considerably from that of the other inscriptions. Whereas the Orkhon inscriptions contain mainly narrations, the Toñuquq inscription contains a large amount of direct speech and dialogue, as well as formulaic prose such as riddles and proverbs.

### Punctuation in the Toñuquq inscription

We do find several examples of punctuation in the Toñuquq inscription that are in accordance with the rules of the other inscriptions. Consider, for instance: *: tarduš : šadra : udi* : ‘following the Šad of the Tarduš’ (41), *: yabyusın : šadın* : ‘their Yabyu and their Šad’ (41), *: tabyačda : adriłti : qanlantı* : ‘they separated from the Chinese and took a qan for themselves’ (2). The sequences *: kögmen : yoli* : (23) and *: bodun : boqzi* : (8) are written separately because the head word has a possessive suffix, whereas *: kögmen yisıy* : (28) is written together because the head word does not have a possessive suffix. The form *ol yolın* ‘that way’ (24) is written together because demonstrative pronouns in the nominative case are always written together with the following word of reference. Geographical names containing an appellative noun, like *kök öng* (15) or *qara qum* (7), are written together, as are also other constructions with a suffixally unmarked attribute, like *ingek kölok* ‘oxcard’ (15), *egri tebe* ‘dromedar’ (48), *sariy altun* and *ürüng kümüş* (48) ‘pure gold’ and ‘pure silver’. The same is true of numerals followed by a noun, as in *üç otuz balıq* ‘23 cities’ (19).

On the other hand, we find many instances in which the established rules do not seem to work. So, for instance, the sequence *ölti alqinti* ‘they died and perished’ (3) is written together, as is also *tügünlüg at* ‘war horse’ (54), although the first component has a clear suffix. Further violations are present in: (possessive construction with a possessive suffix)

: *bir at oruqi* : ‘a path where a horse can walk’ (24), (suffixally marked attribute) : *beñülüg ek tayıy* : ‘the holy Ek Tay’ (44), (numeral + verb) *eki biğ ertimiz* : ‘we were 2,000 (men)’ (18), (postpositional particle) : *ben : ök ertim* : «was I» (50).

In the Toñuquq inscription no rules of punctuation based on grammar or orthography can be established. However, this does not mean that the punctuation of the inscription is arbitrary. In some cases, punctuation seems to have a semantic basis. This is the case, for instance, on lines 6–7, which read: : *bilge toñuquq : boyla bayā tarqan / birle : elteriš qayan : bolayın* :. This passage has to be translated, according to its punctuation, ‘zusammen mit Bilge Toñuquq, dem Boyla Bayā Tarqan, will ich Elteriš Qayan werden’, and not as DOERFER proposed ‘I Elteriš, want to become Qayan’. Similar examples are involved in (48) *sarıy altun : ürüg kümüş : qız quduz : egri tebe : arı buñsız kelürti* : ‘sie brachten Gold [und] Silber, Frauen [und] Dromedare, [solcherart] grenzenlos viele Schätze’, (52–53) *ben özüm : uzun yelmeg : yeme : itim oq / arquy qarquy : obırtıdum oq : yanırma : yaıy : kelürir ertim* : ‘ich schickte Erkundigungstruppen für entfernte [Länder] aus, ich errichtete den Wachturm am Arquy, ich ließ den drohenden Feind [in ein für uns passendes Gebiet] kommen’ [RYBATZKI 1997.84–85:229, 119–120:311–312, 121–122:317–318].

The Küli Čor inscription includes one passage (KC 23) of direct speech that is separated by colons from the following text [HAYASHI & ŌSAWA 1999.152 (E 11)]. The Toñuquq inscription also contains long passages of monologues and dialogues, but there seems to be corresponding regularity. However, in those parts of the text that contain dialogues, a system of dividing different parts of the conversation is visible. Consider, for instance, the conversation between Toñuquq and the guide from the Az-people on lines 23–24:

: *yerči tiledim : čölüg az eri : bultum : ešidtim : az yer yaqını bir ... ermiš : bir at oruqi : ermiš : anın barmış : añar aytıp : bir atlıy barmış teyin : ol yolın : yorısar : unč tedim* :

‘Ich suchte einen Führer [und] fand einen Mann der Az aus Čöl. Ich hörte von ihm: «In der Nähe des Az-Landes soll ein ... sein. [Dies] soll ein Pfad, den ein Pferd betreten kann, sein.» «Kann man jenen [Pfad] entlang gehen?», habe ich ihn gefragt. «Ein Reiter kann [auf jenem Pfad] gehen,» hat er gesagt, «auf jenem Weg ist es möglich zu gehen,» [sagte er].’

or the conversation between Toñuquq and the Begs before the fight against the On Oq on lines 36–39:

: *ol sabıy ešidip : begler : qop : yanalım : arıy ubutı yeg : tedı : ben anča* :

*termen : ben : bilge toñuquq : altun yišiy : aša keltimiz : ertiš ögüzüg / keče keltimiz : kelmiši : alp tedi : tuymadi : tegri umay : iduq yer sub : basa berti erinč : neke tezer biz : üküš teyin : neke qorqur biz : az teyin : ne basinalim : tegelim tedim : tegdimiz : yulidimiz :*

‘Als sie jene Aussage gehört hatten, sagten die Bege: «Wir wollen alle zurückkehren...». Darauf erwidere ich Bilge Toñuquq. Den Altun-Yiš überschreitend kamen wir, den Ertiš-Fluß überquerend kamen wir. «Das Kommen des [Heeres] war heldenhaft,» sagten sie. «[Und ihr] habt [all dieses] nicht bemerkt. Teğri, Umay und die heilige Yer-Sub waren so gnädig, daß sie die Möglichkeit zum Angriff gegeben haben. Warum laufen wir [jetzt] weg? [Nur] weil sie viele sind? Warum fürchten wir uns [jetzt]? [Nur] weil wir wenige sind? Warum sollten wir überwältigt werden? Laßt uns angreifen,» sagte ich. Wir griffen [sie] an, wir plünderten [sie].’ [RYBATZKI 1997.104–106, 113–115].

Considering all the differences that exist between the Toñuquq inscription and the other Old Turkic inscriptions, and taking an overall look at the Toñuquq inscription, we may conclude that there is a pattern of punctuation that is neither grammatical nor orthographical. This pattern seems to be connected with factors such as semantics, stress, recitation, and oral presentation. It is, however, not possible to establish any kind of what is in German called «Stabreim» for the Toñuquq inscription (for a discussion of the rhythmical structure of the Old Turkic inscriptions, cf. DOERFER [1996], for rhymes in Tocharian and Mongolian texts cf. HITCH [1993] and VIETZE [1993]).

The hypothesis concerning the relevance of oral presentation leads, however, to new questions: What was the purpose of the Old Turkic inscriptions? Were they just stones of eternity, *beñü taš*, immortalizing the memory of important persons, or did they have another function? Were the texts intended to be recited? Were they read right from the stones? Taking into consideration the external structure of the stones as well as of the texts, this seems technically impossible. Did there, then, exist handwritten versions of the texts? What was the script used in such handwritten copies?

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