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Revisiting the Ongi inscription of Mongolia from the Second Turkic Qayanate on the basis of rubbings by G. J. Ramstedt

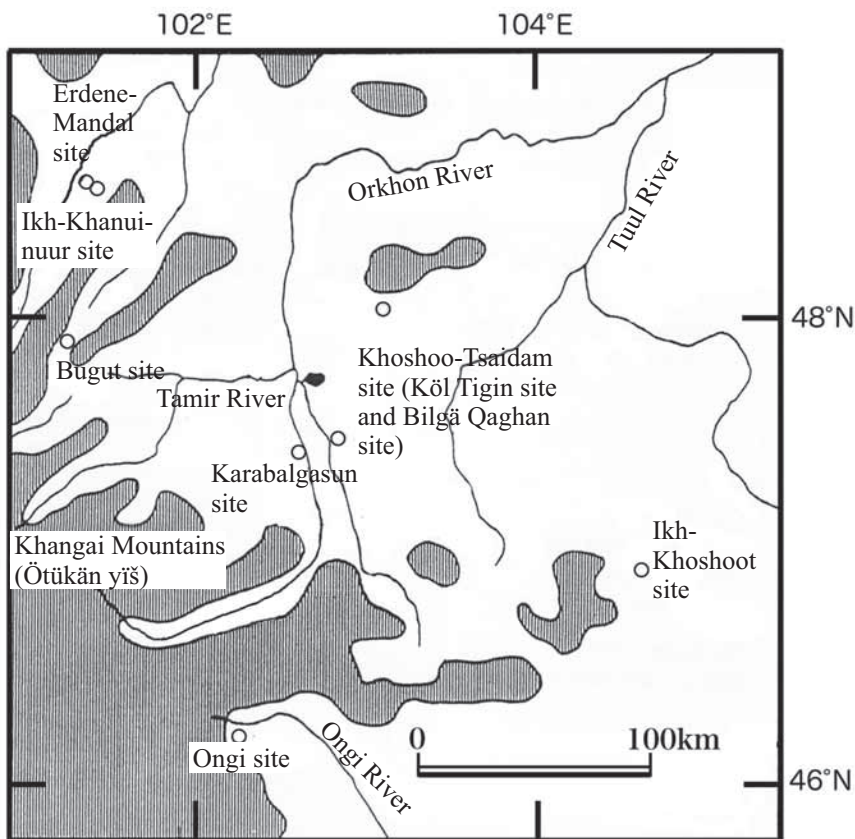
Since its discovery in the late 19th century, the Ongi inscription is well known as one of the Old Turkic inscriptions in Mongolia. In the early 20th century, however, the inscribed stele was badly destroyed and only partly conserved, which makes it difficult to research the original text. It is therefore noteworthy that the rubbings and photographs taken by G. J. Ramstedt and S. Pälsi in the excavation of the site in 1909 are still preserved in the collections of the Finno-Ugrian Society in Helsinki. This paper aims to reconstruct the original orientation of the inscription and to analyse philologically the new texts, and to resolve historically the purpose and dating of the stele and by whom it was established, with reference to new materials and the original data of the author's fieldwork.

I. Preface

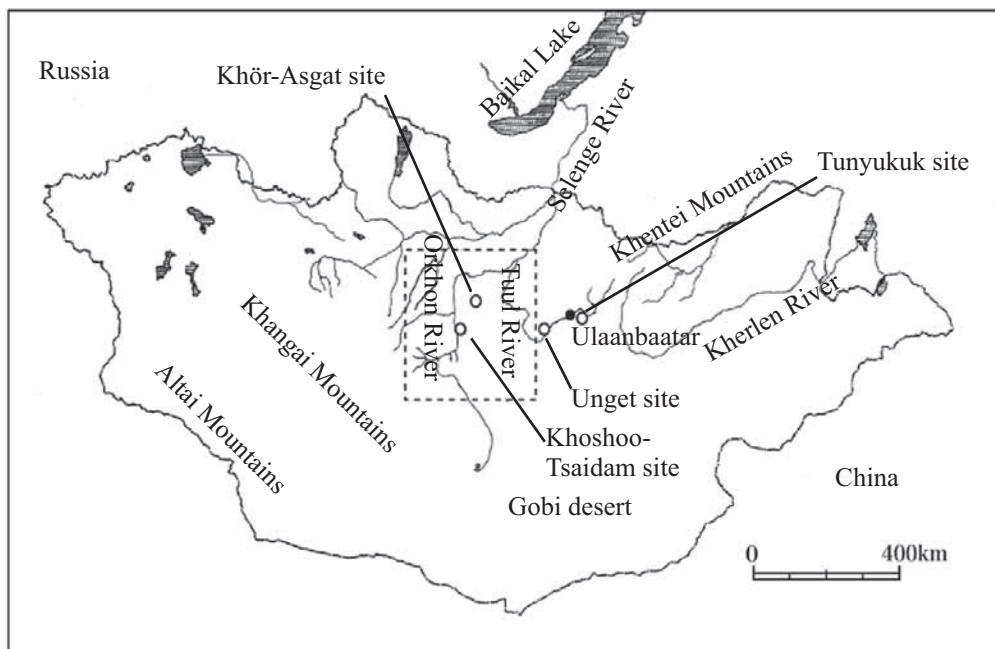
I.1. The discovery of the Ongi site and stele

As is known, the history of discovery and research of the Ongi¹ site and inscription can be dated back to the period of the Orkhon Expedition, which was organized and executed under the supervision of V. V. Radloff in the last quarter of the 19th century. N. M. Jadrincev, a Russian archaeologist and ethnologist of Irkutsk, also participated in this expedition along with other members. Radloff himself stayed in the Khosho Tsaidam Basin between 28 July and 7 August 1891. Jadrincev, however, continued to research old kurgans, stone statues and so-called deer stones from Erdeni-zuu to Oyanga som of Ubur Khangai along the Khökshin Orkhon River. On the way from Erdeni-zuu to the Sayin Noyan Buddhist Temple, he was informed by Chinese traders that there was an unknown site and epigraphic stone near the Maanit Steppe. With help from local nomad Mongolians, he then looked for the unknown site and inscription. At last on 20 August 1891, Jadrincev discovered this site in the Maanit steppe along the Tarimal River (Jadrincev 1901: 42–44; cf. Kljaštornyj 1964: 63; Kljaštornyj 2003: 75–78)

1 This name is based on native Mongolian usage. In the modern Mongolian road map, the river is given as Ongi gol (Mongolia, Road ATLAS gazryn Zurag, 2005, p. 42).



Map 1. Old Turkic sites and steles in the Orkhon valley.



Map 2. Old Turkic sites near the eastern Khangai Mountains in Mongolia.

1.2. The location of the site

With regard to the investigation of the Ongi site and stele, the Japanese-Mongolian International Joint Expedition of 2–21 August of 2007, defined the location of the centre of the sarcophagus at the site at latitude 46° 20' 20.3" North, longitude 102° 11' 02.5" East and at an elevation of 2110 metres (see Map 1 & 2).

Generally speaking, this site is positioned at the point where the Tarimal River pours into the Ongi River on the right, and it is located at a distance of approximately 17 kilometres from Oyanya som in Ubur-Hangai Aymak, southern Mongolia. This site is 300 m from the right bank of the Maanit River and in the centre of the basin of the Ongi Steppe, which is not large. The site is close to the low Maanit-Ula Mountain in the north and Xosh-Ula Mountain in the east. From the entrance to this site, a line of the *balbal* stones extends eastwards to a small stone circle at an elevation of 2030–2040 metres (Ōsawa & Katayama 1999: 126–127, Pl. 2a, 2b, 2d; Ōsawa 1999b: 281–282; 1999c: 281–281; 2000: 197–198; 2008: 164–166; MNTSD: 112).

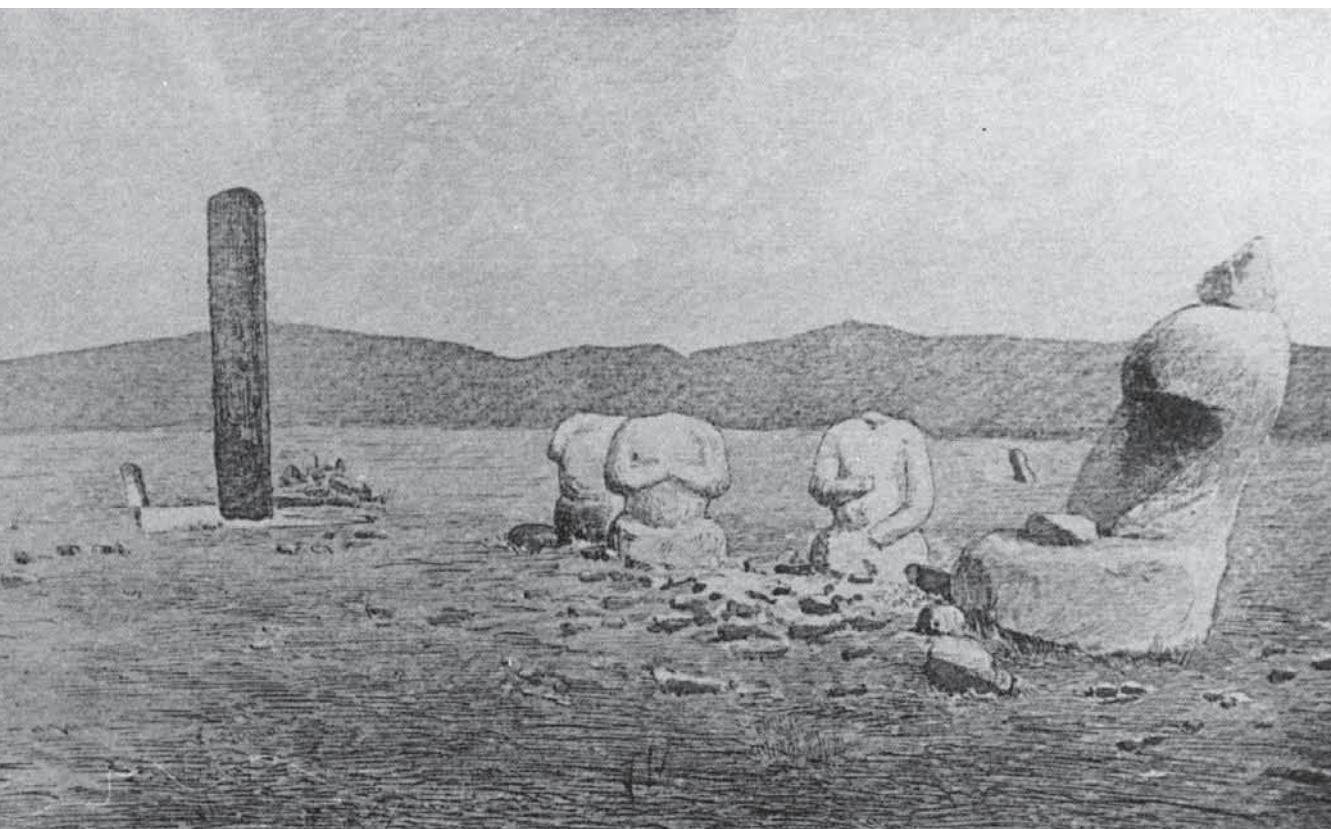


Figure 1. Sketch of the Ongi site by N. M. Jadrincev 1891 (Atlas: Pl. XIV).



Figure 2. Four stone statues of the Ongi site from the front (eastern) side (MSSP: 131, Pl. 80).

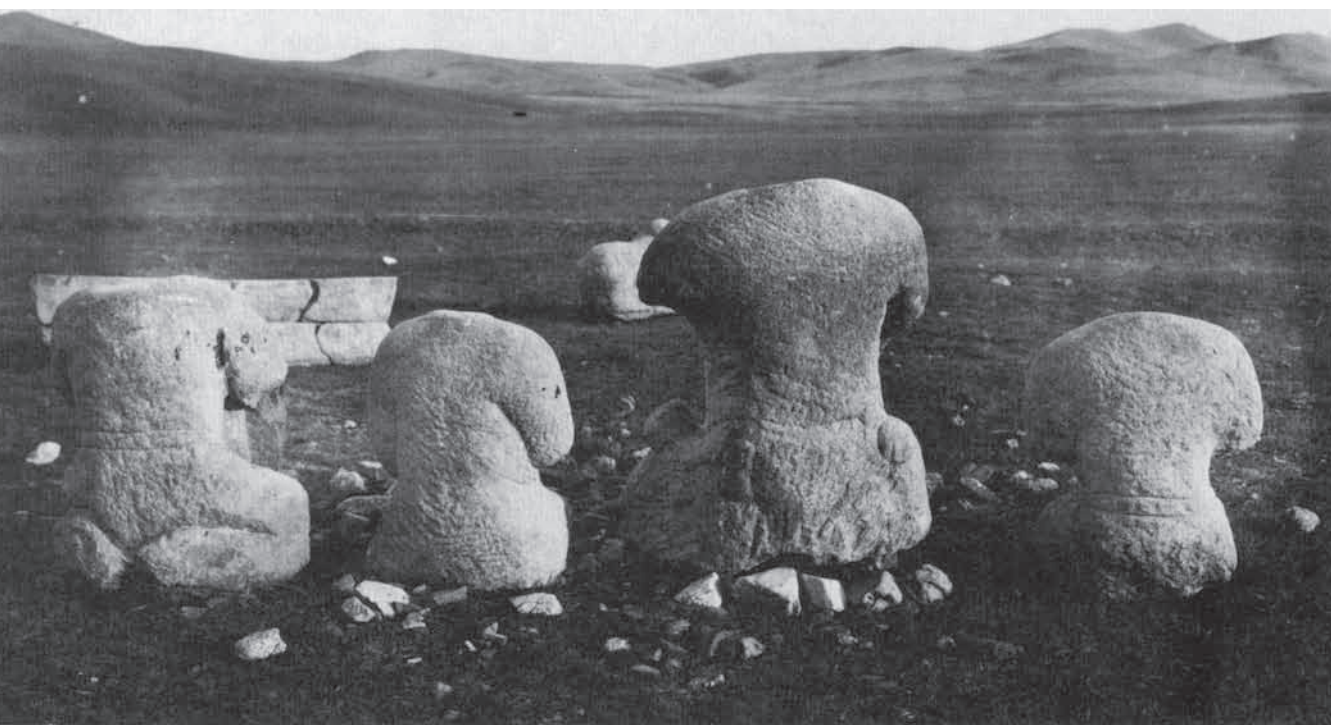


Figure 3. Four stone statues of the Ongi site from the rear (western) side (MSSP: 131, Pl. 81).



Figure 4. Tortoise stone of the Ongi stele (145–150–143–148 cm; the hole is 43 cm wide and 28 cm long, cf. MSSR: 130, Pl. 79) (Photograph No. VKK 5382 from the Ramstedt collection, National Board of Antiquities of Finland (NBA).

1.3. Investigation of the site and the inscription

According to Jadrincev's diary, he first surveyed this site and inscription, after which he sent sketches and photographs of the site and rubbings of the inscriptions to V. V. Radloff. On the basis of these materials, Radloff published the sketches of the general view and some remains in 1893 (Atlas: XIV; cf. Figure 1(a) of this paper). Radloff described each side and part in his mouldings of Ongi as follows: the wider side has 8 lines (O), the narrow side has 4 lines (Oa), this same side having small letters of 7 horizontal lines over the part of (Oa)–(Ob) and a *balbal* stone with the letter (Oc) (Atlas: XVI, LXXXIII–1). In the same year, the Orkhon Expedition under the supervision of D. A. Klemenc also visited his site and took many photographs, which however have not been published until now (cf. Klemenc 1895; ATIM: 244). On 10 September 1909, Ramstedt and Pälssi then visited the Ongi monument, surveyed it, took photographs and made rubbings. Some of these photographs and a sketch of the site were published by H. Halén of the University of Helsinki (Figures 2, 3 and 5). It is especially noteworthy that we can see the Ongi stele lying behind a stone statue on the left side in Figure 3. This photograph verifies the existence of the Ongi stele until 10 September 1909.

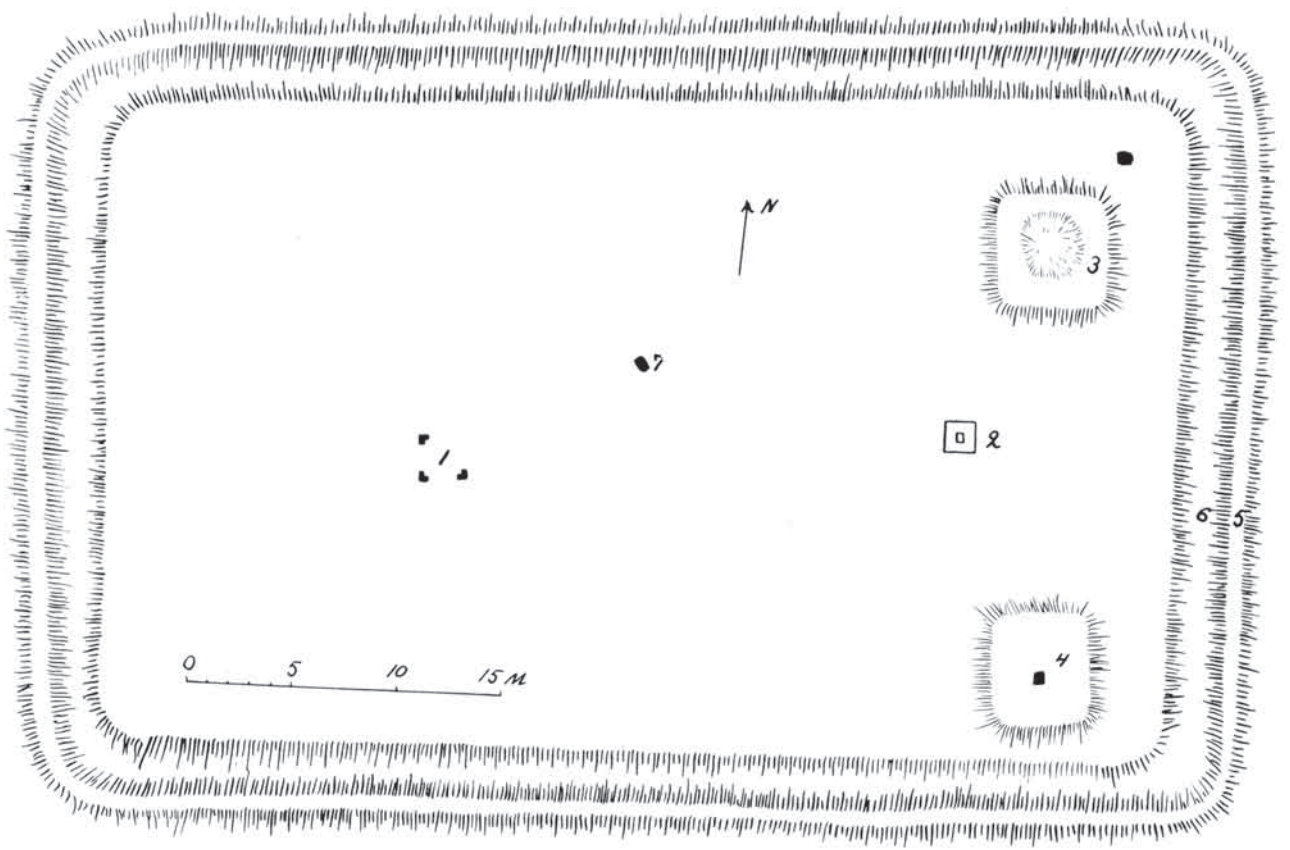


Figure 5. Layout of the Ongi site; 1 = sarcophagus of granite, 2 = the tortoise stone and stele, 3 & 4 = cairn, 5 = ditch, 6 = bank (MSSP: 64, Pl. 10)

They excavated and found a tortoise stone and bricks under the central area, and some sheep bones in the west part of the mound (MSSP: 63–64, 130, 132, Pl. 80–83; Figure 4 of this paper).

In 1926, Kozlov visited the site and recorded that there were three stone statues and two sheep figures of granite that had been broken and were placed in the tomb, a frame of slabs of granite in the hole that had been dug in the ground, and stone *balbals* in a line running east from the mound etc. (Kozlov 1949: 117; Vojtov 1989: 36–38). His photographs, however, have not been published until now. In 1962, Tryjarski surveyed the plan of this monument, measuring it and taking photographs of three stone statues and two stone figures of sheep (Tryjarski 1966: 166–168, Fig. 11–14, 23–25; 1971: Fig. 20; 1972: 37–39, Pl. 1a, 1b, 4, 5). Namhaidagwa of the Arbaikheer National Museum, however, informed Tryjarski that Buddhist monks (Lama) had secretly dug up and destroyed this monument in the period between 1909 and 1962. Silver plates, the skull of a horse, a harness and earthenware vessels etc. had been excavated from there. In early period before 1962, Namhaidagwa himself told Tryjarski that he had discovered 37 sherds of broken earthenware vessels carved in relief of the flower pattern under the sarcophagus, and had added them as new acquisitions to this museum (cf. Tryjarski 1966: 167). At present, there are about eight holes which can be identified as traces of excavations by the grave-robbers at the time. In 1969, Namhaidagwa discovered two pieces of a broken inscription, and Rintchen informed Tryjarski of

this. Academic research, however, had not been done on this site and stele until the investigation by Vojtov and Bajar in 1987 (Vojtov & Bajar 1989).

1.4. The rubbings of the Ongi inscription

This site and inscription are recognized as a monument of the 8th century AD, although even now it seems that there are many arguments on the points of the date of construction, the party originally responsible for the site and the stele, and the historical background. Some researchers have subsequently surveyed the site and the stele. Since this discovery, many scholars tried to solve the problematic issues from philological, historical and archaeological perspectives. It is especially noteworthy that V. V. Radloff published the original rubbings by Jadrincev along with rubbings retouched by Radloff in 1893 (Atlas: XIV, XVI, LXXXIII–1), after which Radloff published his interpretation (ATIM: 243–256). From this interpretation we know that Orkun and Malov basically approved his reading (Orkun 1936: 125–132; Malov 1959: 7–11). G. Clauson, however, criticized Radloff's retouched rubbings, and reconstructed the runic text of this inscription and tried to present new readings, revising the first rubbings by Jadrincev (Clauson 1957: 177–192). Clauson's copies made by hand have been regarded as the basic sources as well as Jadrincev's rubbings in the Atlas. A Hungarian colleague recently published a critical work on Old Turkic runic inscriptions in detail (Berta 2004: 209–225), but unfortunately he could not investigate the original rubbings and materials. Regarding the identification of Ongi fragments that we researched in the new rubbings in Mongolia, I have reported the transliteration, transcription and translation and related notes previously (Ōsawa 1999; 1999b; 1999c; 2000; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2010). Visiting Helsinki in 2004 and 2005, I was able to study previously unknown rubbings of the Ongi stele and other materials in photographs by Ramstedt and Pälssi. I then investigated three rubbings of Ongi by Jadrincev in Saint Petersburg in 2006. Accordingly, in this paper I reconsider the orientation of the Ongi stele and the original text on the basis of new rubbings and our new fieldwork with Mongolian and Japanese colleagues in 1996 and 2007.

2. New views on the orientation of the tortoise stone and the stele

When Jadrincev discovered the site in 1891, he reported that “the tortoise stone was turned toward a southern orientation ... we can see a stone slab installed on the base of the stone stele, the stele itself being of granite ... and erected on the stone slab which can be regarded as in the style of a tortoise” (Jadrincev 1901: 43; Vojtov 1989: 34–35). From this report, we can conclude that the so-called tortoise stone was turned southwards, and thus the wide side of the stone pillar must also have faced southwards. But 18 years later when Ramstedt and Pälssi visited the site, the tortoise stone was buried facing westwards under the ground (Figure 3 of this paper). We thus understand that

the tortoise stone must have changed orientation from south to west. This change of position reflects the fact that the remains had been broken into three fragments around 1900. What then was the original orientation of the tortoise stone at Ongi?

The Russian archaeologist Novgorodova analysed this problem on the basis of L. Jisl and S. Odzhav's joint archaeological expedition to the Kōl Tigin site in 1958. She concluded that the tortoise stone originally faced east. This is based on traditional sun cult beliefs of Old Turkic peoples, who revered the east, the direction where the sun rises. From this, Novgorodova concluded that the tortoise had been turned to the west in later periods, but originally had an eastern orientation (Novgorodova 1980: 240; 1981: 210, Pl. 3). There is no doubt that the Old Turkic words *öñrā* and *ilgārū* means "in the east, eastwards" as well as "in front, forwards" (ED: 189a, 144a; Tekin 1988: 165, 138).

As far as I know, according to the archaeological evidence of L. Jisl and S. Odzhav's excavation at the Kōl Tigin site in 1958 and research by the Turkish and Mongolian joint archaeological expedition at the Bilgä Qayan site, the tortoise stones at both sites were excavated in a position in which the heads were turned to the western side (Jisl 1963: 392; Pl. 7; TIKa 2003: 391; TIKa 2005: 205; Bajar 2004: 77, Pl. 7). As I analysed, the Chinese texts of the western side of the Kōl Tigin and Bilgä Qayan sites had been first carved before the other parts except other runic texts of 2 lines on the same side. It can be recognized that the western side can be considered to be the most important part from the viewpoints of political and cultural relationships between the Tang Emperor *Xuanzong* 玄宗 and the Turkic Bilgä Qayan with reference to the expression of the relationship of *Father* 父 and *Son* 息子. This reflects the Sinocentric political relationship of the Tang Dynasty towards foreign countries which can be called symbolically the regime of *Ce feng* 冊封. The runic text was then carved secondly after finishing the Chinese text of the western side (Ōsawa 2007a: 23–29). This position suggests that the tortoise stone and the inscription had been originally established so that the western side was turned to the soul of the deceased, which can return to the stone statues and the sarcophagus or the shrine that were constructed in the western part of the mound.

I therefore consider that in the case of the Ongi site, the tortoise stone and the inscription would first have been arranged so that the head and the part with the first line of the runic letters faced in the same direction. In the Orkhon inscription, we can see that the Chinese part was the most important side of all from the viewpoint of the political relationship between both countries. The western side of the stele is traditionally regarded as the most important side, and accordingly the Chinese text was carved on the western side of the stele. The fact the first line was carved on the western side can be confirmed by the fact that in the Tunyukuk and Ikh Khoshoot inscriptions the first line had been carved on the western sides (Ōsawa 2007a). According to the general position of the Old Turkic inscriptions of the Second Eastern Turkic Qayanate, in the case of the tortoise stone and the inscription of Ongi, we can consider that the first line was carved on the western side also here, and that the tortoise stone was positioned with the head facing west. Therefore we can say that the wider side of the Ongi inscription faced westwards, and the narrower side faced southwards.

3. Reconstruction of the stele on the basis of the Ramstedt collection and my fieldwork

Regarding the names of the sides in the Ongi stele, in the explanation of Jadrincev's squeeze mouldings, Radloff said that on the front side of this stele there was the sign (i.e. *tamyā*) for Qan, and on the right side vertical lines that began from a location of the same height as the lines of the front side. Moreover, in the upper part of these lines, at the same height as one of the signs for Qan (i.e. *tamyā*) there were 7 horizontal lines. In the preface to the decipherment (ATIM 1895: 244), and regarding position of these lines, he noted that this stele had 8 lines on the front side and 4 lines on the right side. Radloff also named the side with 8 lines the wide side (O), the side with 4 lines the narrow side (Oa), and the side with 7 horizontal lines the upper part (Oc). He did not, however, mention where this can be placed on the Ongi stele. Clauson, for example, also named the front side (O) the (right) side (Oa) according to Radloff (Clauson 1957: 177; GOT: 291–292). On the contrary, after Onogawa named (O) the east side, (Oa) the south side without doubt, subsequent researchers continued to support him (Onogawa 1950: 442–444; Sawada 1983a: 54; 1983b: 79; 1984: 94). This name, however, should be corrected. That the letters had been carved in the wide side and the right side of the original stele can be supported by the state of the large fragment as mentioned above. Moreover, according to the description of the stone tortoise plate (MSSP: 130), we can understand that the navel hole of the stone tortoise is 43 cm long and 28 cm wide, and accordingly it seems undoubted that the wide side of the stele faced the head or the tail. In his journal, Jadrincev, who inspected this site in 1891 recorded that the stele faced southwards (Jadrincev 1901: 43; cf. Vojtov 1989: 43). Therefore at that time, the wider side of this stele faced southwards, and the narrower side faced eastwards. As a result, the south side can be regarded the wider side of the stele, and the east side as its narrower side. It seems doubtful, however, that the stele had not been altered since its initial construction, because there was a cut gate in the east side of the mound, and a shrine and sarcophagus positioned in its western part. As analysed above, we can maintain in the case of the Orkhon, Tunyukuk and Ikh-Khoshoot (Kūli Čor) inscriptions that the first line of the inscription originally faced west.

It can thus be considered that the inscription had been made to show respect to the sarcophagus and shrine or the stone statue of the buried person in front of the shrine (Ōsawa 2007a: 22–30). Accordingly, we cannot deny that the beginning part of this stele of 8 lines is turned to the west as its front side. This is the same in the Orkhon inscriptions and Tunyukuk and Ikh Khoshoot inscriptions of the Second Eastern Turkic Qayanate periods. From these viewpoints, I researched the journals of travelers in Mongolia and the squeeze mouldings made by G. Ramstedt and S. Pālsi on 9 September 1909. From these materials, I can confirm that G. Ramstedt and S. Pālsi considered that the beginning part of the 8 lines can be the western side, although this was only based on the fact that the stele was lying on the ground in three parts in the eastern part of this mound, and the beginning part of this stele was turned to the western side. Regarding the position of the fragments of this stele, I can say that

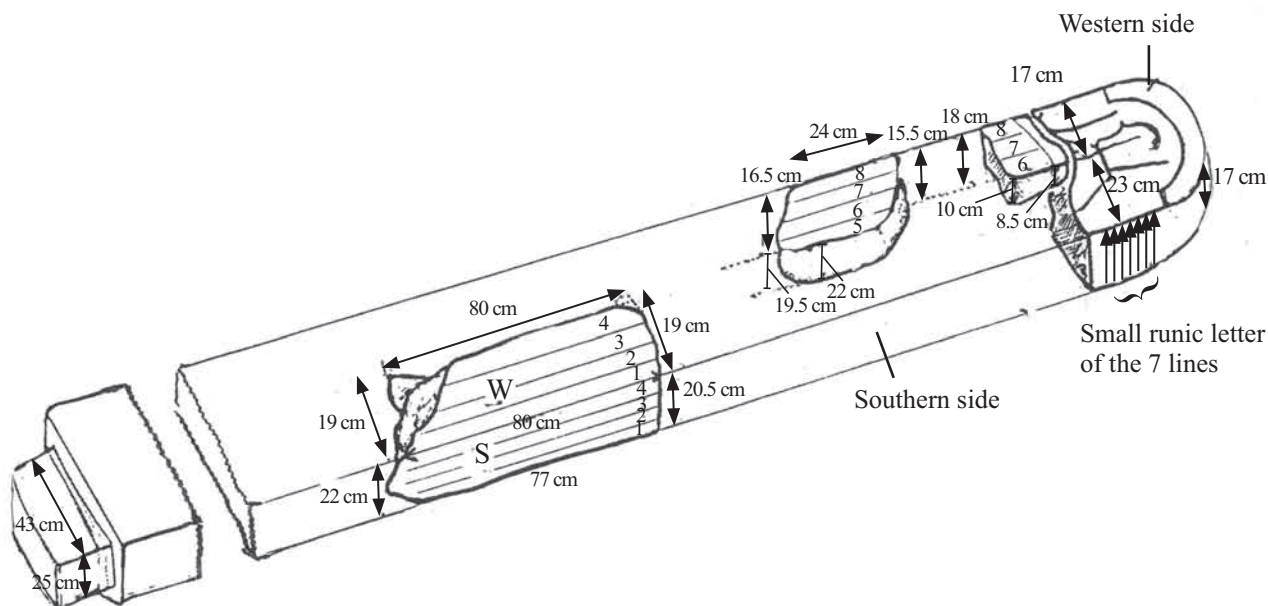


Figure 6. The identification of the headstone and the small, medium-sized and large fragments of the Ongi stele. Reconstruction by Takashi Ōsawa.

Ramstedt's view on this orientation of this stele is completely correct. At present, I would like to suggest that the initial part of the 8 lines can be the western side and the tortoise stone was positioned so that it turned its head towards the west and faced the sarcophagus, shrine and the stone statue of the person buried at this site. The narrow side of the bottom part of the 4 lines is the southern side (Figure 6).

4. Identification of the fragments of the Ongi stele in my fieldwork

At present, the Ongi stele is preserved as only four small fragments in the Arbaikheer museum and at the Ongi site. In 1996 and 2007, I could investigate (1) a fragment of the headstone of the stele lying near a pile of bricks in the mound of the Ongi site, (2) a small fragment, (3) a medium-sized fragment and (4) a large fragment. The three fragments of the stele with runic letters are kept in the local museum of Arbaikheer in Ubur-Hangai Aymak, while the other fragments of the Ongi stele have not been discovered until now. It seems obvious that we can no longer restore this stele to its original shape.

The fragments were measured in our survey as follows:

- (1) The fragment of the headstone: There are runic letters of small scale on one side. The front side is 40 cm high while the middle part of the reverse side is 33 cm high. The bottom part is 40 cm wide and 17–18.5 cm thick. A *tamya* design consisting of a ram and a snake is carved on the surface of the front side (W). Along its outside, the headstone has two simple ornaments of two facing dragons in relief. On the narrower side (S) there are small horizontal runic letters of 7 lines. On the surface of the reverse side (E) a couple of *tamya* designs consisting of a ram and a snake were carved (Figure 7).
- (2) Small fragment: There are runic letters of three lines on one side. The fragment is 11.5 cm long, 16 cm wide and 8.5–10 cm thick. The front side (W) has three letters



Figure 7. The headstone of the Ongi stele with tamya designs of a ram and a snake. From the left, west, east and south sides (Takashi Ōsawa 1996).



Figure 8. Small and medium-sized fragments from Ongi. Arvaikheer Museum, Mongolia (Takashi Ōsawa 1996).

in each line. These letters are indicated by three lines in the 6th–8th lines. In 2007, we took rubbings of the narrow side (i.e. the northern side) of this fragment, discovering a slight trace of a ruled line. There is thus no doubt that there are runic letters also on the northern side of the Ongi stele, but, unfortunately, we cannot attest the letters because other parts of this stele were broken and have disappeared.

(3) Medium-sized fragment: There are runic letters of four lines on one side. The fragment is 24–30 cm long, 15.5–16.5 cm wide and 19.5–22 cm thick. The front side (W) of this fragment has a runic letters on four lines from the 5th to the 8th line (Figure 8).

(4) Large fragment: There are runic letters of four lines on one side and ones of four lines on the other side. The fragment is 77–80 cm long, 19 cm wide and 20.5–22 cm thick. The front side (W) of this fragment has runic letters on the 1st–4th lines and the narrow side (S) has runic letters on the 1st–4th lines.

As I have analysed previously (Ōsawa 1999b: 130–131; 2007b: 330–332), the small fragment can be shown to be the top part of the western side of the original stele, the medium-sized one can be identified as part of the western side, and the large fragment can be identified as the bottom part of the western side and the top part of the southern side (Figure 9).

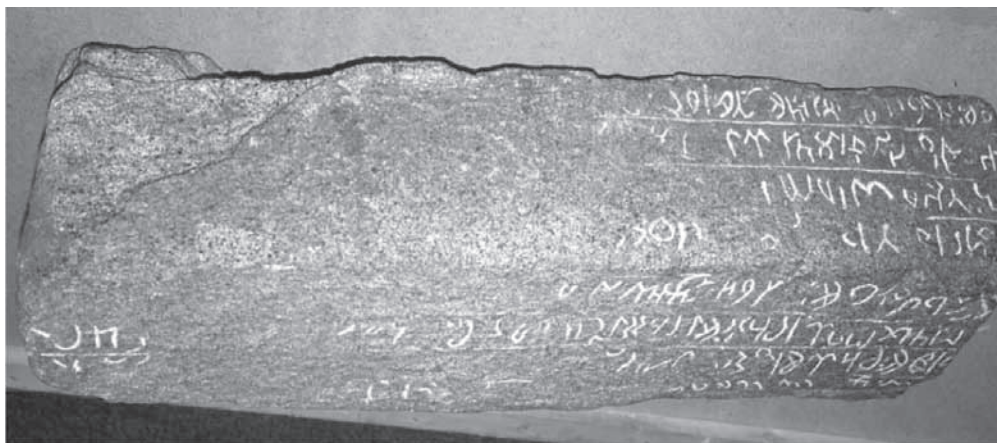


Figure 9. The large fragment in the Arvaikheer Museum, Mongolia (Takashi Ōsawa 1996).

(5) A balbal stone with a runic inscription and a tamya design of a ram and a snake:
 As mentioned above, a balbal stone of *Bilgä Īšbara Tamyan balbali* with a tamya design of a ram and a snake was the eleventh of the balbal stones extending in a straight line from the eastern border of this site, and this stone is thought to have been in this position since it was erected (as based on our comparative fieldwork at the site in 1997 and 2007), i.e. the balbal can be identified with the shape and the position of the surrounding mountains landscape towards the north (this is based on a photograph taken by S. Pälsi in 1909). Accordingly, we cannot regard this balbal of *Bilgä Īšbara Tamyan balbali* as the first balbal of this site as considered by Radloff, Pälsi, Tryjarski, Vojtov, Xaržaubaj, Bazylxan and others (ATIM: 244; MSSP: 63; Tryjarski & Aalto 1973: 417; 418, Fig. 3; Vojtov 1989: 36; Xaržaubaj 2003: 143; Bazylxan 2005: 58, n. 114; Xaržaubaj & Myrzataj 2006: 96). This tamya is identical on each side of the headstone. As I have analysed before, this balbal stone was built by the *Bilgä Īšbara Tamyan Tarqan*, who can be identified as the younger son of *Eletmiš yabyu* in W-4 (Figures 10, 11a, 11b).

5. Rubbings of the Ongi stele taken by Ramstedt on 10 September 1909

Ramstedt and Pälsi reported as follows on the condition of the stele. The basic, 56 cm-long fragment of this stele stood in the eastern mound. The other part was made up of two fragments, a middle part 154 cm in length and an upper part 104 cm long, which were lying in the mound. The inscription of which Kozlov made a rubbing had been buried under the ground, and when Pälsi tried to dig up the fragment sheep bones were recovered from among the bricks. The main stone had been carved in the shape of a tortoise, with its face to the west (MSSP: 63). From this, we can assume that Ramstedt and Pälsi had taken three rubbings from the original stele.



Figure 10. A balbal stone with runic letters on the right side and a tamya of a ram and a snake on the left side at the bottom in a photograph by S. Pälvi (MSSP: 132, Pl. 83).

In March 2004, following the information presented by Halén (1978: 99) and a note from my report on the Ongi stele (Ōsawa 1999: 130), my Japanese colleague Dr. Kousetsu Suzuki visited Finland and tried to research the rubbings of the Tunyukuk inscription in Ramstedt's materials in the National Archives of Finland. He was able



Figure 11a. Balbal stones in the east part of the Ongi site.



Figure 11b. The 11th balbal stone with runic letters (Takashi Ōsawa 1996).

to confirm the rubbings of the inscriptions of Ongi and Šine-Uš, but could not confirm the rubbings of Tunyukuk, although they are registered under the list of (343) SUS 2.20 in the collection of the Finno-Ugrian Society (Halén 1978: 99). At that time he only estimated the sizes of rubbings and investigated some letters of several lines.²

I tried to confirm the condition of their rubbings, and after receiving permission to conduct research from the Finno-Ugrian Society, I visited the National Archives of Finland and the National Board of Antiquities of Finland in March and April 2005 and February and March of 2006. There I confirmed the rubbings of the Ongi and Šine-Uš steles made by G. Ramstedt and S. Pälsi during their Mongolian expedition with financial assistance from the Finno-Ugrian Society under the director Prof. O. Donner in 1909 (cf. Ramstedt 1978; Aalto 1971; Halén 1998: 143–147).³ In the top part of the western side of the Ongi rubbing, we can confirm the handwritten note “TAMIR 10/ IX 1908” in black ink. The rubbings consisted of 1–3 thin and light brown paraffin papers. The orientations are noted W(est)-1, W-2, W-3, S(outh)-1, S-2, S-3, E(ast)-1, E-2, E-3. We can see additional epitaphs of the horizontal 7 lines in the southern side of the headstone (Figure 12)

2 I am deeply grateful to Dr. Kousetu Suzuki for his permission and help to use his important data.

3 With regard to my research in Helsinki, I express my deep gratitude to H. Halén, Doctor of Honour, and Dr. V. Rybatzki who helped me obtain permission to investigate the materials of Ramstedt and Pälsi from the Finno-Ugrian Society and the National Board of Antiquities of Finland.

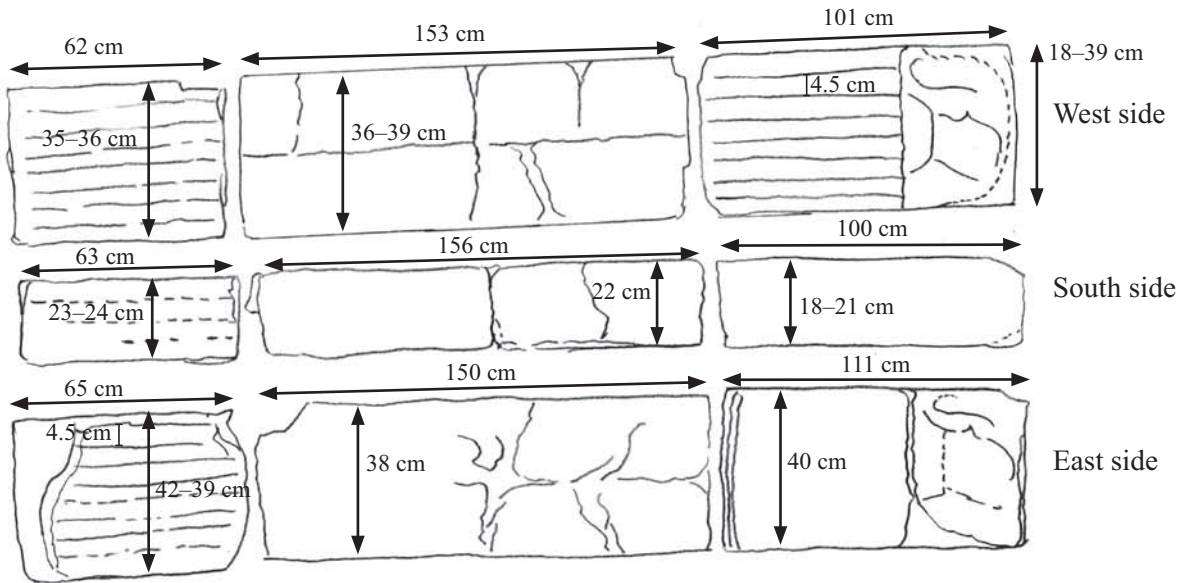


Figure 12. Sketches of Ramstedt's rubbings of the west, south and east sides of the Ongi stele (measured by Takashi Ōsawa).

These rubbings were made using the western squeeze moulding method by attaching the stone with adhesive and tearing off the paper after drying. This is not the same method as the traditional Chinese rubbing as used by Jadrincev, which makes it too hard to read and understand the real rune shape than when reading the text from the Jadrincev version. In addition, I would like to emphasize that they took rubbings of the three sides (west, south and east). The rubbings consist of the following:

West side: The upper part of the stone pillar has runic letters of 8 lines measuring 101 cm x 38–39 cm. The middle part of the stone pillar measures 153 cm x 35–37 cm and bears runic letters of 8 lines. The bottom part of stone pillar has runic letters of 8 lines, and measures 62 cm x 35–36 cm. Overall dimensions of the west side: 316 cm x 35–39 cm.

South side: The upper part of the stone pillar has runic letters of 4 lines and measures 100 cm x 18–21 cm. The middle part of the stone pillar has runic letters of 4 lines, with dimensions of 156 cm x 22 cm. The bottom part of stone pillar has runic letters of 4 lines, measuring 63 cm x 23–24.5 cm. Overall dimensions of the south side: 319 cm x 18–24.5 cm.

East side: The upper part of the stone pillar has runic letters of 8 lines and measures 111 cm x 38–39 cm. The bottom part has runic letters of 4 lines, with dimensions of 150 cm x and 38 cm. The bottom part of stone pillar has runic letters of 8 lines, dimensions 65 cm x 39–42 cm. Overall dimensions of the south side: 326 cm x 38–42 c.



Figure 13. Photographs of parts of the headstone and W-1 (bottom), E-1 (top) of the Ongi stele from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5325, NBA).

The data of our survey shows the Ongi stele to be roughly 320 cm high and 35–39 cm wide on the west and east sides, and about 18–24 cm wide on the south and north sides. When compared with the Køl Tigin stele (334 cm in height, 124–132 cm in width on the west and east sides, 42 cm wide on the north and south sides), this stele is the almost same size in height while the Ongi stele is not as wide. If the text is also confirmed on the north side as I suppose, the style is very similar to the Køl Tigin and Bilgä Qayan steles.

Moreover, from Ramstedt's rubbing we can confirm that a pair of *tamya* design consisting of a ram and a snake was carved on the western and eastern sides of this stele. This can be fitted to our investigation in which rubbings were taken from the both sides of this headstone in 1997. When Ramstedt and Pälsi surveyed this site in 1909, this stele remained, but was broken into three fragments with the head part and the second part lying down and the bottom part was lodged in the ground. Ramstedt noted that the tortoise stone was buried near the eastern location starting from the bottom part of stele. As mentioned above, when Jadrincev discovered it in July 1891, this stele was built on the tortoise stone with the head oriented south. In 2005, I could confirm Jadrincev's statement in his own handwriting noting "the southern side of Ongi monument" in Russian in the border of his original rubbing (Oa) that is conserved at the Institute for Oriental Studies of Saint Petersburg. From this, we can conclude



Figure 14. Photographs of the rubbings of W-1/2(bottom), E-1/2(top) of the Ongi stele, from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5322, NBA).

that this stele was moved from the place where Jadrincev had discovered it to the east side of the mound, and the tortoise stone was also buried in the ground in the place discovered by in 1909. As I stated above, the Ongi stele had been the only one erected since the period of construction of this site (Ōsawa 1999a: 129–130; 1999c: 284–286; 2007b: 329–330) although Vojtov, Xaržaubaj and Bold mentioned that this site had two steles on the basis of Pälsi's suggestion (Vojtov 1989: 44; Xaržaubaj 2003: 132, 146; Bold 2006: 102). We cannot, however, confirm Pälsi's statement from his layout of this site (Figure 5 of this paper) or from Xaržaubaj (MSSP: 64, Fig. 10; Xaržaubaj 2003: 358, Pl.).

6. The revised runic texts of the Ongi inscription based on Ramstedt's rubbings

I would now like to mention Old Turkic texts according to my investigation of Ramstedt's rubbings that I carried out in 2004 and 2005 at the National Archives of Finland and National Board of Antiquities of Finland, and the Institute for Oriental Studies of Saint Petersburg of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2006. I added some lines based on my assumptions to the northern and southern side of this stele. In transliteration and transcription, I followed the system of Moriyasu & Ochir (1999: 119–10).



Figure 15.
Photographs of the rubbings in W-2/2 (bottom), E-2/2 (top) of the Onga stele from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5321, NBA).



Figure 16.
Photographs of the rubbings in W-3 (bottom), E-3 (top) of the Onga stele from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5323, NBA).



Figure 17. Photographs of the rubbings on the south side(1) of the Ongi stele from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5226, NBA).



Figure 18. Photographs of the rubbings of the south side (2) of the Ongi stele from the Ramstedt collection (VKK 5324, NBA).

6.1. Transliteration

Table giving the transliteration system from Old Turkic letters to Latin letters:

Vowels		
Front	Double	Back
	a (for a / ä) ᠠ	
	i (for i / i/ ä / e) ᠢ	
ü (for ü / ü) ᠨ		W (for u / o) ᠤ
Consonants		
Front	Double	Back
b (for b / v) ᠪ		B (for b / v) ᠪ
	č ᠯ	
	ič ᠮ	
d X		D ᠳ
g €		G ᠬ
k ᠊		Q ᠵ
ük Ɔ, B		uQ ᠬ
		iQ ᠬ
l Y		L ᠬ
	lt M	
	m ᠮ	
n Ɔ		N ᠨ
	nč ʒ	
	ŋ ᠨ	
	nt ᠋, ᠋	
	ñ ʒ	
	p ᠮ	
r ᠬ		R ᠬ
s (for s / š) I		S (for s / š) ᠰ
	š (for s / š) ᠰ	
t Ɔ		T Ɔ
y ʒ		Y Ɔ
	z Ɔ	

General rules

Transliteration

- # Severed part of the inscription.
 : Punctuation.
 [aBč] Letters completely restored.
 (aBč) Letters partly damaged but restored with certainty.
 /// Damaged and illegible letters.
 ... Illegible letters with some traces. Number known, indicated by points.

Transcription

- # Severed point of the inscription (placed after a word where it extends over two fragments).
 [aBč] Words completely restored.
 (aBč) Letters omitted by mistake, but restored by the editors.
 /// Damaged and illegible parts.

Translation

- [aBč] Words completely restored.
 (aBč) Words not in the text but added to improve the English, or explanatory remarks by the translator.

6.2. Transliteration and transcription

W-1 č ü m z : p a m z : Y m a Q G N : t ü r t : b W L η G : (Q s) m s # (:) Y i G m s :
 Y Y m s : B s m s : W L Q N : Y W u Q : B W L T u Q D a : k s r a : l y (i) t m s : Q
 č š (m s) : Q a : // // // // : L t m s : t g m s : // // // // : // // // // # // // // // // // //
 // : l b g l r : T B G č :
 äçümüz apamız : yama qayan : tört : buluşuğ : qismiş # : yigmiş : yaymış :
 basmış : ol qan : yoq : boltuqda : kesrâ : elyitmiş : qačış(miş) : qa : // // // // :
 altmış : tägmış : // // // // : // // // // # // // // // // // // // // // // // : elbägler : tabyaç :

W-2 Q G N L d u Q : Q G N n : i č G N i : i d m s : t ü r k B W D N : ü η # r a : k ü n :
 T W G s Q η a : k s r a : k ü n : B T S Q η a : t g i : b r y a : T B G č Q a : Y i R a
 y a : y i S Q a : (t) g (i) : // // // // : // // // // // // // // // // # : // // // // : Q Z G n t u Q : ü č
 n : W L : i Q z W G L n : ü k ü r t i :
 qayanladuğ qayanın içyini : idmiş : türk bodun : öη # rä : kün : tuysuqıña : kesrâ
 : kün : batsıqıña : tägi : beriyä : tabyaçqa : yıraya : yışqa(tä)g(i) : // // // // : // // // //
 // // // // // // // # : // // // // : qazıantıq : üçün : ol qız oylın körti :

E-7 // # g //
 // # //
 // # g //
 // # //
 //

E-8 // # (l) t (r) s : Q G N : //
 // # //
 // # elteriš
 : qayan : //
 // # //

(N-1~4) The number of letters is uncertain, but it is possible that they were carved in the original stele (cf. Bichees 68).

Transliteration of the south side of the headstone

- 1 T(č)m Q a : b i t g : T š G
atačimqa : bitig : taši
- 2 Q i L D m : b ŋ i g ü
qıldım : bāñigü
- 3 Q G N m : T č m
qayanım : atačım
- 4 b l g a : T č m : l ü
bilgä : atačım : lü
- 5 y i L Q a : b i l g a :
yılqa : bilgä:
- 6 W L G : L p r : d g ü Q N :
uluγ : alp är : ädgü qan:
- 7 T č m : ü l t i
atačım : ölti

6.3. Translation

- W-1 It was said that my ancestor, my forefather Yama Qaγan compressed, assembled, enlarged and made a surprise attack on the four corners (of the world). It was said that when that qaγan died, his peoples lost their way and they were scattered. And it is said that he organized the peoples and attached to //////,//////,/// ///////////////. It is said that leaders (Begs) of the Turkic country
- W-2 completely lost the qaγan whom the Tang Dynasty had made their ruler. Up to the front (eastern) side where sun rises, up to the back (western) side where sun sets, up to the right (southern) side where the Tang Dynasty existed, up to the left (northern) side where the wooden Mountains existed, Turkic peoples were victorious (against the //////, and ////////////////). His daughters and sons (i.e. Turkic daughters and sons) served him (i.e. the Tang Dynasty) (literally, he saw his daughters and sons).
- W-3 They constructed brave warriors as Balbal stones. “The fame of the Turkic peoples has vanished. You, Turkic peoples, don’t go to ruin!” and “You, Turkic peoples, don’t scatter”, the God Tāγri said above. They///// warriors.//////// //, there,////////:
- W-4 I was born in the country of Qaγan, Elteriš Qaγan. I was a son of Eletmiš Yabγu, and the younger brother of Īšbara Tamγan Čor Yoγa, and I had the name of Bilge Īšbara Tamγan Tarqan Yoγa. (I and) my 65 uncles younger than my father and nephews (or grandsons),////////,/////////,/////, “Make the military go ahead in a hurry!”. It was said that his son Tamγan
- W-5 became the enemy with the seven warriors among Oγuz tribes up to the northern regions of this Tabyač (China). It was narrated that my father went to march taking side with Baγa Tāγrikān, and he served (Baγa Tāγrikān) and he has passed. / //,////////, when he became the Tarduš,
- W-6 “You served the Tāγrikān” it was said that (Tāγrikān) told and appointed him a title of Šad at that time. It was said that when he became Šad, he opposed up to the Toquz Oγuz. It was said (the enemy) was strong. It was said that Qaγan went ahead.////////:////////:////////: “We are strong. We don’t have advantage. We
- W-7 are in a bad way and worth very little. You have seen how few we are and how many they are. They were annoyed. We marched”, he had said. “Now, my lord (beg), ah!” he had said. “We are a small forth, aren’t we” he said and “We were exhausted: //, I want to march, I want our army to march”

E-3 //He entered (or He was subjugated): //#/ //
 //
 //#/ I made attack (the enemy ?), and then ran after him and
 speared him://://://

E-4 // (I) served : kü // : // # //
 //
 //:// : n g // : // for . . . : // I did . . . : //

E-5 // D s // my dear father : // # //
 // # // m : B
 // n : : išbara : tarqan such as . . . : //

E-6 // # g //
 // # //
 //

E-7 // # g //
 // # //
 //

E-8 // # elteriš : qayan : //
 // # //
 //

(N-1~4) The number of letters is uncertain, but it is possible they were carved in the original stele.

Additional inscription

- 1 For my dear father, stone epitaph
- 2 I constructed. Eternal,
- 3 my Qayan, my dear father
- 4 wise and my dear father, in the
- 5 Lü (Dragon) year, wise,
- 6 great and brave warrior, good Qan,
- 7 my dear father died.

6.4. Philological and historical considerations

W-I :yama qayan:

When Radloff first read this word, he transliterated it as *Y m i* (*Yami*), not *Y m a* (*Yama*).⁴ However, as far as I investigated in Ramstedt's rubbing in the National Archives of Finland in Helsinki in the winter season of 2004–2005, this word should be read *Y m a*, and this could also be confirmed by one of Jadrincev's rubbings when I visited the Institute for Oriental Studies of Saint Petersburg in the summer of 2006. As to the identification of *Yama Qayan*, I would like to identify him with *Shemo hehan* 射摩可汗 from an Old Chinese source and *Zhama* of the Old Tibetan document (Pelliot Tibetan No. 1283 of Tunhuang Documents collection; cf. Moriyasu 1977: 3, n. 5, 6).⁵ The Chinese letters *Shemo* 射摩 can be pronounced as **Dzia*, **Mua* in Middle Era Chinese (MEC) (GSR: No. 807a, 17e). Furthermore, according to Pulleyblank, the first character can be also reconstructed as **shia* or **jia* and the second one is reconstructed as **mua* in LMC (Pulleyblank 1991: 279, 364, 217). At a glance, there is a difference between the *Yama* of Ongi and the **Dzia-Nua* of the reconstructed phonology of EMC. How can we explain this difference? I would bring your attention to a variant of the title of *Yehu* 葉護, **iäp*, **γuo* (GSR: No. 633d, 783k). This suggests two kinds of sounds such as *yabyu* and *jabyu* in the Turkic Qayanate period. Especially regarding the second sound, *jabyu* can be attested in a variant of *yabyu* such as 蛇婆護 *She/yi, po, hu*, **d'ie/ts'ie*, **b'ua*, **γuo* (GSR: No. 31, No. 25q, No. 41i) from Old Chinese documents unearthed from the Astana tombs (No. 329) of the 6th–7th centuries AD of the Turfan Basin of Xinjiang Uigur regions of China (TAM60: 23/1, 23/2; TFCW III: 342–343; TFCWF I: 461; cf. Ōsawa 2002: 84, 87, n. 41). As another example, we can point out that the same phonology is found on Old Turkish coins in the 6–7th centuries AD unearthed from Tashkent, Samarkand and other regions of Sogdiana in modern Uzbekistan, in which the title of *yabyu* was carved in the form of *čapγu* in Old Sogdian cursive letters. This *č* was used in the place of *j*, because in Sogdian letters there were no letters reflecting *j*, and *p* was used in the place of *b*. Therefore, we can reconstruct *jabyu* as the correct phonological form (Babayar 2007: 19–22). From this, we can say of the title *yabyu* that there were two phonetic variants such as *yabyu* and *jabyu* in the Turkic Qayanate period.⁶ Thus we can assume that there was another variant that had a *y* sound in the head part in the place of the pronunciation of **Dzia-mua* in Old Turkic period. This form can be attested as *Yama*.

4 Bold reads this as *yumi qayan* (Bold 2006: 111, 116).

5 On the basis of Radloff and Clauson's reading of *Yami Qayan* on the Ongi stele, V. Rybatzki considered that this name can be attested as *ža-ma-moñan* in the Tibetan documents of No. 1283 of the Pelliot Collection (Rybatzki 2000: 209). The Chinese researcher Rui presumes that *Yami qayan* on the Ongi stele is *Shemo qayan* of a Chinese romance (YYZZ-4) of the Tang period (Rui 1998: 297). But both researchers' identifications are hard to accept as there is a difference between *i* and *a* of the last vowel of this name. Regarding this proper name, I have proposed a new view (Ōsawa 2009: 401, n. 2).

6 This phenomenon can be confirmed by the fact that the title of <šad> has other phonological form such as <čad> in the runic letters of the Terkh (Tariat) inscription and Šine-us inscriptions of the early Uigur nomad Qayanate in Mongolia.

From this, I can suggest that *Yama Qayan* can be identified with the **Dzia-mua* Qayan of Old Chinese sources and the *Zhama* of Old Tibetan documents. We cannot thus support the view that the *Yami* of Ongi could be *istemi* as Clauson has suggested. Who was he then? As to this problem, I can say only that he can be identified with *Bumïn Qayan* of the Orkhon inscription, as almost all researchers such as Radloff, Marquart, Onogawa and Sawada have assumed (ATIM 1895: 253; Marquart 1898: 39; Onogawa 1950: 444, n. 1; Sawada 1984: 102–103, n. 10). Regarding this problem, I have presented my view of the cultic-cultural relation between the Sogdians and Turks from philological and historical points of views (Ōsawa 2007b).

W-1 qïsmiš.

The verb *qïš-* is a variant of *qïš-* ‘to compress, to squeeze’ (ED: 665b-666a).

W-1 : il bāgler : tabyač : W-2: qayanladuq qayanin ičyini : idmiš :

This last part of W-1 can be read in Ramstedt’s rubbing. This can be directly connected to the first line of W-2. The phrase *il bāglār* means high-ranking aristocratic people of the Old Turkic tribes. In Orkhon Turkic, *id-* has a function of an aspectual verb and means ‘to do something completely’ (Erdal 2004: 247), so *ičyini id-* means ‘lost (trans.) completely’ (Erdal 1991: 257). As to the sentence involving *qayanladuq*, we can refer to the same expression from the Köl Tigin inscription reading as follows: (D6) *begleri : boduni : tüz süz üçün : tabyač : tebligin : kürlüg<in> üçün : armaqčisin : üçün : inili : ečili : kikšürtükün : üçün : begli : bodunli : yoñaşurtuqin : üçün : türük : bodun : illedük : ilin : ičyinu : idmiš* (D7) *qayanladuq : qayanin : yitürü : idmiš : tabyač : bodunqa : beglik : urı oçilin : qul boltı : ešilik : qiz oçilin : küng boltı : türük* (D8) *körmuş, elig yıl : işig kücüg birmiš* (KT-E: 6–8; Tekin 1988: 10–11).

I can also mention the same contents in the Tunyukuk inscription as follows: (2) *Tür(ü)k bodun : qanin bulmayin : tabyačda : adrilti : qanlantı : qanin qodup : tabyačqa : yana içikdi* : (T: 2; Tekin 1994: 2–3).

In my view, this sentence indicates the historical situation in which their Qayanate was subjugated by the Tang Dynasty in 630. As a result, the Turkic peoples served the Tang emperor as his subjects. In 679 the *Ashite* tribal leaders *Wenchuan* and *Fengzhi* and the *Ashinas*’ tribal leader **Nizhuk bāg* mounted a rebellion against the Tang Dynasty, which, however, was suppressed by the Tang army. Accordingly, this part of this stele can be dated to AD 630–679. As is well known, the First Turkic Qayanate was ruined in 630. They then moved into the regions of the Ordus and the *Hunag-hua* River of northern China and served the Tang emperor in a traditional tribal system under the Tang Dynasty. This sentence is written with the evidential marker *-miš*, meaning that this is hearsay knowledge reflecting an independent war against the Tang Dynasty. Who was “the qayan that the Tang Dynasty made ascend to the throne”? From the historical point of view, this can remind us of *Ashina Sima* 阿史那思摩 that was called *Lisima* 李思摩 as its Chinese surname. According to

sources (TD: 197: 5415, cf. XTS 215: 6039), at first when *Qimin kehan* (qayan) 啓民可汗 was subjugated to the Sui Dynasty, the Turkic tribes of the northern steppe (i.e. Mongolia) supported and appointed *Ashina Sima* to be their qayan. *Qimin* qayan, however, returned to his country and *Sima* abandoned his title.⁷ Then after the destruction of the First Turkic Qayanate, *Sima* surrendered to the Tang Dynasty with Illig qayan. But the Tang emperor praised his loyalty to his lord. Thus, in 639 when the Turkic tribes rose in rebellion in the Ordus region, Taizong gave *Sima* the title of *Yimi Nishu, silibi, hehan* 乙彌泥孰俟利苾可汗 **iet*, **mjie*, **niei*, **ziuk*, **d'zi*, **lji*, **b'iet* (*Yama? Nizhuk, Iltäbär*) qayan (GSR: No. 505a, 359m, 563d, 1026a, 976m, 519a, 405g) in the government-general of *Doudufu* 都督府 of *Dingxiang* 定襄 that had been organized earlier in the northern regions of the *Hunag-hua* River. *Sima* was expected to control the Turkic tribes, but he did not have the ability to organize the Turkic peoples that wanted him to be a qayan independent of the Tang Dynasty. He feared the attack of the *Siyantou* 薛延陀 tribes of Tokuz Oγuz in Mongolia. He escaped to the capital of the Tang Dynasty and served *Taizong*. However, he died from a battle wound in the *Liaotong* region (cf. Suzuki 2005). The Tang Dynasty then gave the *Siyantou*'s tribal leader the title of *Yincü Bilgä qayan* and awarded him control over the Tokuz Oγuz peoples of Mongolia. However, they also failed to organize, and many Tokuz Oγuz escaped to the Tang Dynasty. These historical accidents of Old Chinese chronicles must be reflected in this inscription (JTS-194: 5163–5166; XTS-215: 6039–6043; KT-E: 5–10; BK-E: 6–10; T: 1–4; Tekin 1988: 2–5, 38–41; 1994: 2–3).

W-2: türk bodun : öñrä : kün : tusuqıña : kisträ : kün : batsıqıña : tägi : beriyä : tabyaçqa : yıraya : yiş(qa) : (tägi :) // // // //

From the context, as I mentioned above, this sentence can be identified with the historical fact that Turkic peoples could not assist in campaigns as a part of the Chinese army under the control of the Tang Empire after the destruction of the First Turkic Qayanate. This phrase *beriyä tabyaçqa : yıraya yişqa tägi* ‘in the south as far as the

7 According to the Chinese epitaph of *Ashina Sima*'s tomb named *datang qu youwuwei da jiang jun zeng bing bu shan shu yi yue shun Li junmuzhiming bingxu* 大唐故右武衛大將軍贈兵部尚書諡曰順李君墓誌銘并序 (that is, Epigraphic text and introduction of the Sir *Li* that was appointed Great Commander of the right wing of the Tang army and secretary of the Tang court), the father of the grandfather of *Ashina Sima* was 伊力可汗 *yili kehan* (Illig qayan) and *Sima*'s grandfather was 闐跋可汗 *daba *d'at b'wät* (GSR: No. 271, 276h) *kehan* (= Qayan), that can be identified with 他鉢可汗 *Tatpar Qayan* that was the fourth qayan of the First Old Turkic Qayanate. *Sima* was appointed as 波斯特勤 *bosi teqin* (Pars Tigin). Then he suddenly sat on the throne as 俱陸可汗 *julu kehan* (Küllüg Qayan) and he controlled the tribes of 薛延陀 *Xueyantuo*, 迴紇 *Huihe* (Uigur), 暴骨 *Baogu* (Bogug), 同羅 *Tongluo* (Tongra) and similar ones. But then he was defeated by 頡利可汗 *Jieli kehan *Illig qayan*, and then he was captured by the Sui Dynasty. The Emperor 煬帝 *Yangdi* granted freedom from Sui control and gave many gifts such as 500 *tan* of silk cloths, and made him to come back to his country. Then the 始畢可汗 *shibi *Shipi Qayan* gave him the title of 伽苾特勤 *jiabi teqin *khia b'jēt* (Pulleyblank 1991: 253; GSR: No. 405g) Tigin that can be same as 夾畢特勤 *gabi *kăp pjēt* (GSR: No. 630a, 407b) Tigin might be reconstructed as *Qapir Tigin in my view, and after this qayan's death, when 頡利可汗 *Jieli Qayan* sat on the throne, he (*Sima*) was appointed 羅失特勤 *Luoshi teqin, *las jēt* (GSR: No. 6a, 402a) *Yariš (?) Tigin. (The remaining sentence is omitted.) (ZLBS 1993: 112; Suzuki 2005: 45–50.)

Tang Dynasty, in the north as far as the wooded mountains' can remind us that Turkic tribes were settled in northern China and engaged in campaigns of war in surrounding areas. In fact, as mentioned above, since 644, the Tang Dynasty conquered the Tokuz Oğuz peoples as far as the Mongolian Steppe near the Hangai Mountains, and reorganized the nomad peoples, giving the tribal leaders Chinese administrative titles such as *totoq*, *šiči*, *čañšī* under the control of the government-general of *Doudufu* 都督府 of *Dingxiang* 定襄 and the government-general of *Doudufu* of *Yunzhong* 雲中. Moreover, when the Tokuz Oğuz peoples rose in rebellion in 660, the Tang Dynasty sent a military force to the Selenge Steppe and suppressed it, and established an administrative centre named the protectorate-general 都護府 *Douhufu* of *Hanghai* 瀚海 in the Orkhon Steppe and the protectorate-general of *Yunzhong* 雲中 in Inner Mongolia in 663. The first one can be identified with *Tuγo baliq* (i.e. *Douhucheng* 都護城 means Protecting General administrative of the City) (KT-N: 4; BK-E: 30). Under the Tang policy that controlled foreign peoples with foreign soldiers, the Turkic peoples were appointed to a high-ranking official with military titles serving the Tang emperor. At that time under the Tang commanders, Turkic peoples engaged in campaigns of war to the west as far as the northern steppe of the *Tianshan* Mountains in the rebellion of the *Ashina Helo* of the Western Turkic Qayanate in 640 years and eastwards as far as the northern Korean areas in the rebellion of the *Gaogouli* 高句麗 peoples in 650, northwards as far as the Mongolian Steppe in the rebellion of Tokuz Oğuz. So this *yış* is to be read as *Ötükan Yiş* (The Hangai Mountains). A similar situation is narrated in the Orkhon Turkic text, as noted in W-1 (KT-E: 8; Tekin 1988: 10–11).

W-2: : qazyantuuq : üçün : ol qız oylin körti : W-3: alp ärin balbal : qışdı:

This part of W-2 can be attested to only in Ramstedt's rubbing, being connected to the beginning part of the next line. Before the word *qazyantuk: üçün*, we cannot read the letters from Ramstedt's rubbing, but from the context it is possible that they stand for *ilig*, which is comparable with the expression with same details in KT-E (9–10). As I mentioned above, these incidents are closely related to the campaigns against surrounding enemies. But it is remarkable that these two sentences are narrated in the style of the direct past suffix *-ti/-di*. In my view, this verb form also has the function of narrating a historical fact. This fact must have been a shameful and unforgettable memory among the Turkic people.

Secondly, regarding the word *ärin*, Radloff read it as *ärin* as derived from *är* (man, warrior) + an accusative suffix *-in* (ATIM 1895: 247), but Clauson read *ärän* as consisting of *är* (man, warrior) + a plural suffix *-än* (Clauson 1957: Pl. V, 182; Tryjarski & Aalto 1973: 419). But in Old Turkic, the term *balbal* is used as a singular form with an accusative suffix *-(i)n*, *-(i)g* or without a suffix: *alp ärin ölürip balbal qili bertim* (BK-S: 7), *quγ säñünüg balbal bertim* (BK-S: 9), *qiryüz qayan balbal tikdim* (KT: E-25). Thus, in this case, the form *är* can be also a singular form. Here, I would like to analyse *-in* as an accusative suffix as done by Radloff.⁸

8 Regarding this problem, Bold also analysed this as *är + -in* (Bold 2006: 112, 117).

Regarding *qış-*, Clauson considered it to mean ‘to thrust’ (Clauson 1957: 182). This verb is used in the Tunyukuk inscription, meaning ‘birlikte yapmak, etmek, kılmak’ (T: 5, 6, 11, 21; Tekin 1994: 61). It is, however, hard to say why the “*balbal* stone” is mentioned. This fact can be dated to the periods under the control of the Tang Dynasty. From the context, *alp är* (brave warrior) was a tribal leader of their enemy killed by Turkic peoples in campaigns around them in the period AD 630–679. And this description indicates that even under the control of the Tang Dynasty, Turkic peoples maintained their traditional burial customs since the First Turkic Qaγanate. This has been confirmed in Old Chinese chronicles (ZS-50: 910; SS-84: 1864), and archaeologically confirmed in the Bugut site, the Tsetsuuv site (Idel site), and the Bayin-Tsagaan Khöndii site (Gindin-Bulak I site) of the First Turkic Qaγanate period (Vojtov 1996: 27–30, 33–34; Moriyasu & Ochir 1999: 121; Ōsawa & Suzuki 2008: 84–85, 88–89, 129–131).

W-3: türk bodun : atı yoq : bolu : barmış : ärti : türk bodun yitmäzün : teyin : yulup ärmäzün : teyin : üzä : täñri : temiş : ärig / / /

This part can be considered to be the words of Täñri (a god), and the first sentence can be compared with the following expression: *türük : begler : türük : atin : itti* (KT-E: 7; Tekin 1988: 10–11). Here the God Täñri ordered the Turks to take a new ruler to be independent from Tang rule. A similar expression can be confirmed as follows: *üzä: türük: täñrиси: türk iduk yiri: subī: anča ätmiş: türük: bodun: yok: bolmazun: tiyin: bodun: bolčun tiyin:* (KT-E: 11; Tekin 1988: 10–11). This is followed by the enthronement of *Elteriş qaγan* and *El bilgä qatun* (KT-E: 11; Tekin 1988: 10–11). Thus in this context, it is expected that a Turkic qaγan’s name (possibly Elteriş qaγan) that was admitted by the God Täñri was carved in the space that followed, which is hard to read now.

W-4: qapγan : elteriş : qaγan : elinä qilintim :

This part has keywords to resolve the date of this stele. First, *elinä* has the basic meaning ‘in the country’ (cf. GOT: 132). As far as we know, the usage of /// *elinä* can be also confirmed in T: 1, 58; SU-N: 4. Gabain regarded *elinä* as ‘for the country’, and as a result Clauson translated it as ‘I grew for (i.e. as a subject of) the realm of Qapγan and Elteriş’. However, Bazin insisted that in Old Turkic the dative suffix *-qa/-ka* has the basic function of date, but this expression can mean ‘royal country’ and ‘the reign’ with *el* ‘empire’ (Bazin 1991: 159). Giraud (1961: 66, 120) thus analysed that a ruler’s name + *-elinä* means ‘in the reign of (ruler)’. Tekin also translates *elinä* of T (1) as ‘yönetimi sırasında’ (‘in the reign of’) (Tekin 1994: 2–3), which means that this part can be ‘I was born (and grew up) in the reign of Qapγan Elteriş qaγan’ (GOT: 291; Moriyasu 2009: 47–48). But the last phrase *Qapγan Elteriş qaγan* is uncertain. As is well known, “Qapγan” and “Elteriş” are titles of rulers of the Second Turkic Qaγanate, and Clauson thus translated it as ‘I grew up in the reign of Qapγan Elteriş qaγan’. But

as Bazin explained, the word *qilintī* has the basic meaning of ‘he was born’ or ‘he grew up’, but for a person, the first one is preferred. Accordingly, I select the meaning of ‘he was born’.⁹ In this case as Bazin told (Bazin 1991: 159–160), a person cannot be born in the reigns, of two qaγan, so we must consider either one of the two titles as an epithet. It thus means ‘I was born in the reign of Elteriš qaγan who was a conqueror’ or ‘I was born in the reign of qaγyan qaγan who organized the people’. Bazin considered qaγyan to be an epithet of *Elteriš*, but there are no historical sources to attest his view (Bazin 1991: 160). Regarding this problem, Japanese colleagues Onogawa and Sawada have pointed out that *Mochuo* 默啜, Bögü Čor also had the title of *elteriš*, *Xiedielishi* 頡跌利施 **xhjiat*, **thiat*, **li*, **si* in LMC (Pulleyblank 1991: 341, 79, 188, 282; Onogawa 1950: 435–436; Sawada 1983b: 80–85).¹⁰ Qaγyan qaγan was given the title *Xiedielishi*, *danyu*, *libaoguo*, *hehan* 頡跌利施大單于立報國可汗 by the Chinese empress (*Wuzetian* 武則天) in 696 (ZZTJ-205: 6510; JTS-194: 5167; XTS-215: 6044; TD-198: 5434). Contrary to this, Elteriš qaγan did not bear the title of *qaγyan*. Thus, in this case, *Qaγyan Elteriš qaγan elinā qiliñtim* can be considered as ‘I was born in the reign of Qaγyan qaγan who organized the tribal peoples’. This means that the writer of this sentence shown with a personal suffix *-m* was born in the reign of Qaγyan qaγan (691–716).

W-4: eletmiš yabyu : oylī : išbara : tamyan čor : yoya : inisi : bilgä : išbara : tamyan : tarqan : yoya : atī : beš : yetmiš : äčim atīm :

Here are names of *Eletmiš yabyu*’s family. His son was named *Išbara Tamyan Čor Yoya* and his younger brother was named *Bilgä Išbara Tamyan Tarqan Yoya*. Here, this writer of the Ongi site stele introduced his family. In my investigations of Ramstedt’s rubbing and Jadrincev’s original rubbing in 2005, I could not confirm the letters such as *Y B G W : i n s i* and *Y M G L G : (. . L) t m s*: as Clauson transliterated (Clauson 1957: Pl. 7, 182).

As to this title *Eletmiš yabyu*, as Sawada stated, it can be a proper name having the basic meaning ‘organizer of tribe’, and the proper name *Elteriš qaγan* basically means ‘qaγan that assembled the tribal people’. Regarding the historical background of this naming, I have to state the related historical facts. As we know from the Tunyukuk inscription (T: 5; Tekin 1994: 3–4), Qutluy 骨咄祿 launched an independent war against the Tang Dynasty; he had a *šad*. After he ascended to the throne as *Elteriš Qaγan* with the help of his adviser Tunyukuk, he settled in a camp named *Baidaochuan* (White road steppe) of the northern steppe of the Yinshan Mountains

9 Rybatzki considered *qilin-* to derive from *qil-* + *-n-*; usually meaning in a passive sense ‘to be made, created’ and the like, but in the early period also (of a child) ‘to form its own character, to grow up’ (Rybatzki 1997: 75, n. 216).

10 P. Pelliot reconstructed *Mochuo* from the Chinese expression as *Bäg čor* on the basis of Old Tibetan sources. But this title should be revised as *Bögü čor* of *Dru-gu*, not as *bäg čor* (Moriyasu 1977: 3, 9, n. 17). This *Qaγan* can be identified as *Bögü Qaγan* that can be attested with Qaγyan qaγan in T: 34, 50 (Tekin 1994: 14–15, n. 44, 20–21).

(Čuγay yīš). In KT-E (13–14), it is mentioned as follows: *ečüm apam : törüsinče : yaratmīš : boşyurmīš : tölis : tarduŝ (bodun : anta etmiš) yabyu : šadı : anta bermiŝ* (Tekin 1988: 10–13). From here, when on the basis of the traditional law Elteriŝ qaγan could conquer the eastern regions named *tölis*, and the western regions named *tarduŝ*, he appointed a *yabyu* to be the leader of the former regions, and a *šad* to be another leader of the latter ones (Tekin 1988: 10–13). According to information from Old Chinese chronicles, Elteriŝ qaγan gave the title of *šad* to his younger brother *Mochuo* (Bögü Čor), later *Qapγan Qaγan* and gave the title of *yabyu* to another younger brother named *Duoxifu* 咄悉匐, **tuəət*, **siet*, **b’iuk* (GSR: No. 496h, 1257a, 933m), **Turs Bäg* (JTS-194: 5166; XTS-215: 6044).¹¹ From these records it appears that *tölis yabyu* as told in the inscription was *Duoxifu*, and *tarduŝ yabyu* was his elder brother *Mochuo*. The *Eletmiš yabyu* of the Ongi text was thus the *tölis yabyu* that Elteriŝ qaγan appointed to organize the eastern regions of the Second Turkic Qaγanate. Then after Elteriŝ qaγan died in AD 691 and *Mochuo* became a Turkic ruler as his successor, *Mochuo qaγan* gave the appointment of *tölis šad* to his younger brother *Duoxifu*, and *tarduŝ šad* to his nephew, and the first son of Elteriŝ qaγan *Moju* 默矩, later *Bilgä Qaγan* (JTS-194: 5169; XTS-215: 6046). But according to the Orkhon text, *Moju* was appointed *tarduŝ šad* at the age of 14 (KT-E: 17; BK-E: 14–15), thus gaining this title in AD 697. It is generally presumed that *Duoxifu* became *tölis šad* at the beginning of the enthronement of *Mochuo* (Onogawa 1950: 440–441), but he may have gained this title in the same year, 697, in addition to appointing *Moju* to be *tarduŝ šad*. In this case, it is possible that *Duoxifu* was *tölis yabyu* during the periods AD 687 to 697.

Then in 716 *Qapγan qaγan* was killed by a warrior named *Xiezhilüe* of the Bayirku tribe of Tokuz Oγuz in the steppe along the Tula River of Mongolia. His head was sent by a Chinese officer named *Haolingcho* to the capital city of the Tang Dynasty (Changan) in June 716 (JTS 8: 176; XTS-215: 6049; TD-198: 5439).

When the lesser qaγan *Inäl*, son of *Qapγan qaγan* was about to become a great qaγan, *Köl Tigin*, the second son of Elteriŝ Qaγan arose in rebellion against *Inäl qaγan* and murdered him, his younger brothers and relatives (JTS-194: 5137; XTS-215: 6049; TD-198: 5439). In the confusion, *Inäl’s* relatives and the Tokuz Oγuz tribes escaped from Mongolia to the northern Chinese regions along the *Huang-hu* River (XTS-215: 6052; TFCW 986: 11583; cf. Iwami 1998: 226–278), and he was head of the *Shier Xing Tujue* 十二姓突厥 (Union of twelve Turkic tribes) (Haneda 1957: 374–375; Moriyasu 1977: 3, 13–14; Iwami 1998: 217). But we cannot find *Duoxifu* among Turkic peoples that escaped into northern China. Thus we can only admit that *Duoxifu*

11 The *Eletmiš Yabyu* of this inscription can be attested as the man buried at the site and named *Duoxifu*, who had been appointed *tölis yabyu* during the reign of *elteriŝ Qaγan* as a founder of the Second Old Turkic Qaγanate. The third letter 匐 **b’iuk* can be attested with the Turkic title *bäg*, but the first and second words seem hard to reconstruct until now. Hamilton reconstructed the first Chinese letter as <-dr-> in the Old Turkic periods (Hamilton 1988: 168). The second letter *si* is reconstructed by Karlgren as **siet*, whereby the Old Turkic name *duoxifu* can be reconstructed as **Turs bäg* while Marquart considered it to be *Tusik bäg* (Marquart 1898: 37).

must have been killed by Kōl Tigin as one of the close relatives of Ināl qaγan's family in 716.

The word *Bilgä* can be an Old Turkic title meaning 'counsellor' (Clauson 1957: 188), but not the adjective 'wise' as regarded by Radloff, Onogawa (ATIM 1895: 248; Onogawa 1950: 442). This title can be attested in many instances in Old Turkic periods as "Tun Bilgä" (Čoir inscription), 'İšbara Bilgä Küli Čor' (KČ-W: 4) etc. (cf. Rybatzki 1997: 75, n. 215).

Onogawa regarded the personal name *Yoya* of *İšbara Tamγan Tarqan Yoya* to mean a son of Qaγan qaγan (Onogawa 1950: 440), *Yangwoshi teqin*, 楊我支特勤 **Yoyači Tigin* who had been sent as an ambassador to the Tang Dynasty in AD 713 and had died there according to Old Chinese chronicles (ZZTJ-210: 6686; XTS-215: 6047). Sawada (1983b: 88) doubted this, but I cannot agree with him because this part can be positioned as the introduction of sons of *Eletmiš Yabyu*, i.e. the younger brother of Qaγan, *Duoxifu*, and his family. Moreover, *Yoya* lacks the last onomastic suffix *Shi* 支 of **Yoyači*. *Yoya* is also recorded as his younger brother's name as *İšbara Tamγan Tarqan Yoya*, who was the second son of *Eletmiš yabyu*. From this situation it appears that this word can be a personal name or an Old Turkic title that has never been attested. As to the title of Tamγan, it can be attested in the first line of the eastern side and other lines of the Khör-Asgat inscription, and it seems that it means 'having a tamγa' (Ōsawa 2010: 22–23, 36).

W-4: : sü: äšij : oylī : tamγan W-5: bu : tabγačda : yīriyā : täg oγuz : ara : yeti ärin : yayī : bolmiš :

This part of W-4 can be read only in Ramstedt's rubbing and it is connected with the beginning of line W-5. I translated *a s η* as *äšij* consisting of the verb *äš-* meaning 'to amble' (ED: 255b) + infinitive suffix of the second person singular *-η*. It seems possible that *oylī* of *oylī Tamγan* indicates 'son of *Eletmiš yabyu*'. The *Tamγan* can mean (*İšbara*) *Tamγan* (*Čor Yoya*) or his younger brother (*Bilgä İšbara*) *Tamγan* (*Tarqan Yoya*) in line W-4. But it is questionable that he would have been the younger brother who was also the writer of this stele, because their campaign against their enemy between northern China and Oγuz can be dated to the period of AD 686–687 in the reign of Qutluγ, Elteriš qaγan. This situation does not suit the fact that his younger brother was born in the reign of Qaγan qaγan. The *Tamγan* of this part can thus be his elder brother (*İšbara*) *Tamγan* (*Čor Yoya*). This view can be supported by the usage of the *-miš* style. This use of *-miš* indicates that this writer happened to hear this from another person, possibly his father or from relatives. This person having the title of *tamγan* must have been more than 15 years old during the reign of Elteriš qaγan, and thus must have been born in the period AD 630–667, because a boy could bear the "adult name" *är at* at the age of at least 15 at that time (Bazin 1991: 107–108).

Regarding the word *bu*, although Clauson regards *B (s a) (basa)* 'then', I cannot confirm this letter. From Ramstedt's rubbing, we can read *B W*, as read in Jadrincev's original rubbing. This is to be read as a demonstrative adjective of *Tabγač*.

Until now, the passage *T g* has been discussed and the proposed hypothesis among philologists is a problematic issue as Clauson and Sawada have pointed out (Clauson 1957: 185–186; Sawada 1983a: 60–61).¹² The first letter *T* is a back consonant with a back vowel as *T W G* (*tu*) ‘engel (barrier)’ in T: 26 (Tekin 1994: 12–13; cf. Alyılmaz 2005: 212). However, in this stele, the following letter is shown with the front consonant *g* that is contrary to the vowel harmony of the Old Turkic language. As far as we know, there is no evidence of such a combination in old runic inscriptions. According to the context, however, it must be a kind of postposition because the preceding word has a dative suffix such as *-(y)a* of *yür*. Some researchers have thus translated *täg* and the postposition *tapa* as ‘up to’ (Onogawa 1950: 446, n. 13). This, however, is still a problematic issue. This can be a mistaken form in runic spelling, as Mori pointed out that there are some mistaken spellings or forgotten sounds in the runic inscription (Mori 1992: 515, n. 15, 587–595). In this text, this curious usage of *T g* is confirmed three times. In my view, this can be considered as the postposition *täg* (Orkun 1936: 128). In this case, the back consonant *T* might be used in the place of the front consonant *t* to coincide with the back vowel sound /a/ of *yüraya*. In my view, if this word is transcribed as *täg* ‘up to’, this can be regarded as a variant of the postposition *tägi* ‘up to; as far as’ (ED: 477; Tekin 2003: 154, No. 358) of Old Turkic with differences between Turkic dialects or the periods. For example, it is well known that there are some kinds of *tägi* such as *degin, dek, degi, dak* ‘-e kadar’ in Old Anatolian Turkish, *değın, dek, dak* ‘-e kadar’ in Osmanlı Turkish, *değın, dek* ‘-e kadar’ in the Turkmen language, *-dan/-dän/-dak/-däk* ‘-e kadar’ (cf. Li 2004: 471–472) and *tek* ‘kadar, değın’ in the Çorum dialect (TDK, *Derleme Sözlüğü* XII, 1982: 4747) in colloquial Turkish. Because until now this word had not been analysed from this viewpoint, I would like to suggest that this word is a variant of *tegi* that reflects the colloquial pronunciation at that time.

With regard to *yäti ärin*, Radloff read *yäti ärän* as the subject of this sentence, and Clauson and Sawada concurred (ATIM 1895: 248–249; Clauson 1957: 182; Sawada 1984: 98). Onogawa, on the other hand, regarded it as an instructive form, reading it as ‘by seven warriors’ (Onogawa 1950: 443). I agree with Onogawa’s view, because, as is well known from old runic inscriptions, it is seldom that a certain numeral is added to a plural noun, and thus *yeti ärän* (seven warriors) cannot fit this rule, although *+än* might be an Old Mongolian loan word with a plural suffix. At present, I would like to consider this function of the suffix *-in* as the comitative form ‘with’.

This sentence as a whole can thus be interpreted as ‘my son, (Bilgä İšbara) Tamyan Tarqan (Çor Yoğa) became enemy with seven warriors among Oğuz tribes as far as the northern regions of this Tabyač (China)’. This situation reminds us of expressions such as *qañim qayan : yiti yegirmi ärin : taşikmiş : taşra yorıyur : tiyin : kü eşidip : baliqdaqı : tayıqmış : taydaqı : inmiş : tirilip yetmiş är bolmış* (KT-E:

12 Bazyłxan (2005: 56, n. 110) made transcriptions such as *at eg* in the W-5, 6 and 10 lines of this stele and interpreted the ethnoses as having had horses and animals for transport, although there is no evidence of this in historical sources of the Old Turkic peoples.

11–12; Tekin 1988: 10–11) and *yeti yüz : kišig : uduzuyma : uluyu : šad ärti : ayγil tidi : ayγimasi : bän ärtim : bilgä tunyuquq* (T: 4–5; Tekin 1994: 2–3; Onogawa 1950: 440). From this description, we can regard that this incident can be dated to the years AD 682–686 at the beginning of the reign of Elteriš qaγan, and the enemy of that time could be the Tang Dynasty. Accordingly, this description points to the rebellion of Turkic tribes against the Tang Dynasty.

W-5: qaγim baya : täñrikän : yan : anta : yorimış : işig : küčin : bermiş : ärtmiş :

Regarding *qaγim*, Bazylxan's transcription as *aqaγim* is generally accepted, considering *aqa* as the cognate of *ake* 'father' in the Kazakh language (Bazylxan 2005: 56, n. 111). But this analysis entails a problem because he neglected the existence of the sound *η*, so I cannot agree with him.

As mentioned above in the note on W-4, *qaγim* (my father) can be identified with *Eletmiş yabyu* that was the father of two sons. *Baya täñrikän*, in turn, must be the one that appointed *tölis yabyu*, i.e. Qutluγ, Elteriš qaγan, as suggested by Onogawa (1950: 437).

Concerning this, V. Rybatzki mentioned that "the hitherto accepted dating of the Ongi inscription to the year 720 or 730 might not be correct, as for palaeographic as well as onomastic reasons the inscription might belong to the beginning of the period of the Uigur Steppe empire" (Rybatzki 2000: 209). Here, he considered that the title *täñrikän* could not have been from the Second Turkic Qaγanate period although we can confirm this word in the runic part of the headstone of the Qarabalgasun inscription (Moriyasu & Ochir 1999: 219) and other Old Uigur documents (Rybatzki 2000: 210–211). Rybatzki's viewpoint, however, is disproved by the existence of a *tamyä* consisting of a ram and a snake. As well known, this *tamyä* belonged to the collateral line of the Ashinas family of the Second Turkic Qaγanate as confirmed in the Čoir inscription (Kljaštornyj 1971: 250–253; Alyılmaz 2005: 20, photo 13), both sides of the tortoise stone of the Mukhar inscription (Ösawa 1999d: 146, Pl. 7a–c) and the second Qarabalgasun inscription (Ösawa 1999e: 133–134, Pl. 6; Alyılmaz 2005: 20, photo 14). Moreover, the word *täñrikän* can be attested in the Hangita Hat inscription on a rock near Dashinchiren som at Bulgan aymak in Mongolia. This rock inscription had been investigated by Rintchen, Bazylxan, Shinekhüü, Kljaštornyj and TIKÄ (Rintchen 1968: 37; Bazylxan 1968; Shinekhüü 1979; Kljaštornyj 1975; TIKÄ 2003: 340–342; cf. Battulga 2005: 75). I also researched this rock in August 2008. There I could read a phrase such as *Baz Qan Oγli Täñri uçmiş* '(It is said that) the son of Baz qan went away to the sky (i.e. died)' on the second line and *Bäg är, Täñrikänim . . .* (Bäg är, my Täñrikän on the fourth line. A ram-styled *tamyä* for the Ashinas royal family was carved evidently on the left over the inscription. Moreover I could confirm the Old Turkic runic text from the eastern, northern and cover boards of sarcophagus of the Olonnuur Khöndii site of Galuut som of Bayankhongor aymak in Mongolia in 2008. This site has the typical features on the Second Turkic Qaγanate period as evidently suggested by three stone statues, balbal stones and sarcophagus

with runic text. From the top of the eastern sarcophagus, I could read *üzä täņrikänim, a. yayız yärim, a* ('My Täņrikän, ah! My brown Earth, ah!') (Ōsawa 2009: 197–198). From this, we can date this inscription to the first half of the 8th century, that is, to the Second Turkic Qaγanate as suggested by Kljaštornyj. We can thus say that this Ongi stele can be dated to the Second Turkic Qaγanate. But until now it is unresolved whether *täņrikän* can be attested as *Tian nan* 天男, 'son of *Täņri*' or *Täņri Qan* (cf. Haneda 1957: 372–374; Sawada 1983a: 71, n. 29; Rybatzki 2000: 210–211; Moriyasu et al. 1999: 220). At present, it is clear that this title was a special epithet of *qaγan* from the similar uses of this title in the runic inscriptions of the Old Uigur Qaγanate and Old Uigur documents of Kočo Uigur. I do not discuss this etymology any further here, but, as Onogawa presumed (Onogawa 1950: 441–442), this word must have been a special title for indicating respect to a ruler, i.e. Qutluγ, Elteriš Qaγan of the Second Old Qaγanate..

Historically, the campaign against Tokuz Oγuz mentioned in this sentence can be dated to 686–687 from the Turkic Ordu in the steppe named *Baidaochuan* (White road steppe) of *Kara Qum* (Black desert) in the northern steppe of the *Yinshen* Mountains (Čuyay yiš) to the steppe around the Hangai Mountains (Ötükän yiš; Ötükän yer) of Mongolia across the Gobi Desert and the Ongi River (Iwasa 1936: 130–131).

W-5: : *tarduš* : *boltuqda* : W-6: *täņrikänkä išig bertij* : *teyin* : *yarliqamiš* : *šad atij* : *anta* : *bermiš* : *boltuqda*

This part of W-5 could be first confirmed in Ramstedt's rubbing, and it is connected with the beginning part of line W-6.

The word *tarduš* means firstly 'the western territory of the Turkic Qaγanate', and *tarduš boltuqda* accordingly 'when the western regions (*tarduš*) were formed (or organized)'. This phrase reminds us of a similar phrase such as *tölis* : *tarduš* (*bodunu* : *anta etmiš*) *yabyu* : *šadi* : *anta* : *bermiš* (KT-E: 13–14). So in this place, *tarduš* could be an omission of *tarduš* (*bodun*). Who then organized *tarduš bodun* (the peoples of the western regions) at that time? According to Old Chinese sources, it was *Mochuo* (later Qaγan qaγan), or *Moju* (later Bilgä qaγan) who became *šad* of *tarduš* (the western regions of the Qaγanate), not *Duoxifu*, i.e. *Eletmiš yabyu*. In Chinese sources, *Duoxifu* was never given the title of *tarduš šad*. As a result, this view does not find support.

Is a different translation possible? We can often read *tarduš* as a personal name deriving from the original meaning such as *tarduš*, *köl tarduš*, *tarduš šad* etc. From this usage, this *tarduš* can be part of a personal name or a title. If so, *tarduš boltuqda* means 'when a man named *tarduš* became a ruler' or 'when he became *tarduš* (*šad*)'. In the following place, *täņrikän* gives the title of *šad* to *Eletmiš yabyu*, i.e. *Duoxifu*. On the basis of Chinese chronicles, it was *Qaγan qaγan* who gave the title of *šad* to *Duoxifu* in 699. Thus, *täņrikän* can be identified with *Mochuo*, Qaγan qaγan. According to the first translation, a man named *tarduš* can be *Mochuo* who became a ruler in 691, not *Moju* (later Bilgä qaγan). In the latter translation, he was *Moju* who became *tarduš šad* in 697. I cannot say which translation is better. At this point, I would like to translate

it literally as ‘the peoples of the western regions of the Qaγanate were organized’, but this means *tarduš šad* ‘(i.e. *Mochuo*) became a ruler’. This part can thus be dated to 691, when *Mochuo* became Qaγan qaγan (Sawada 1983a: 57–59).

The one who “yarliqamiš (commanded)” can be Qapan qaγan although it is also possible that this is “Täjri (God)” if we compare it with the phrase Täjri yarliqaduqin üçün (KT-S: 9; BK-N: 11; T: 40; Tekin 1988: 4–5, 28–29; 1994: 16–17).

W-6: : toquz : oγuz : tæg : yayı ärmiş : bedük ärmiş : qaγan : tæg(miš)

Tæg is carved as *T g* and it seems problematic because there is no dative suffix in the preceding word *oγuz*. If *tæg* is a postposition, it requires a dative suffix *-qa/-a* in the preceding word. Clauson, Tekin and Sawada considered it to be a tribal name that cannot be attested in other Turkic inscriptions. At present, I would like to consider it to be a variant of a postposition *tägi* ‘up to’ as I mentioned above in the note of W-5.

This scene can be dated to the reign of Qaγan qaγan as I mentioned above. So this accident can be related to the campaigns against Tokuz Oγuz in the reign of Qaγan qaγan.

W-6: biz bädük biz : biz bat biz : biz : W-7: yabüz bat biz : azı üküšüg : körtüg :

This part of W-6 can be read only in Ramstedt’s rubbing and can be connected with the first part of the line W-7. This part can be divided as *biz bädük biz*, *biz bat biz*, *biz yabüz bat biz*, *azı üküšüg körtüg*. From this, we can read that Qaγan qaγan’s warriors were psychologically afraid of marching against the strong Touz Oγuz army because of their lack of warriors. But *Eletmiş yabγu* who had the title of *tölis šad* commanded them not to be afraid and marched to Tokuz Oγuz.

W-7: irti : sülätim : ter ermiş :

According to Clauson, the verb *ir-* means ‘to mope, feel lonely or bored’ (ED: 194a). I regard this verb as an expression of the Turkic peoples’ being despondent possibly because their army had few warriors. However, the subject of *sülätim* (I marched) can be *Eletmiş yabγu* and from this we can understand that he wanted to tell of his great contribution to his country.

W-7: amtı bağlärım a : ter ärmiş : biz az biz : teyin : alqonur : (ärtimiz) :

These addressing words can be also attested in the Orkhon inscription when Bilgä qaγan ascended to the throne in Ötükän yış in 716. Tekin regarded it as *matı* meaning ‘royal, faithful’ with a question mark (GOT: 355). But he also translated *amtı* as ‘now’ in KT-S: 3; KT-E: 9; BK-N: 2; GOT: 302. He also translated the same spelling *matı* as ‘royal, faithful’ in (BK-S: 13, 14), while he changed this word to *amtı* as ‘now’ in the same place (Tekin 1988: 54–55). In my view, *m t i* can be regarded as a part of

tōlis yabyu's address to his soldiers who were despondent from marching, and I would like to regard it as the word *amtī*, meaning 'now'. The word *a* can be the interjection *a* (Tekin 2003: 161), not a dative suffix as stated by Radloff, Onogawa and others (ATIM 1895: 249; Onogawa 1950: 443). The word *alqon-* can be considered as a variant of the verb *alqin-* 'to use oneself up, exhaust oneself; to be used up, exhausted' (ED: 138b). In the context, this part indicates that Qapγan's army exhausted themselves on this campaign. In the next place, it is possible that three or four letters were carved but there is no evidence of what letters were inscribed. *Ārtimiz*, however, is to be expected.

W-7: : yoriγin : sū : sūläyin : W-8: qaγim : š(ad) : anča : ötünmiš : täγrikän : almazin teyin :

This passage of W-7 can be attested only in Ramstedt's rubbing, and it is connected with the beginning part of the next W-8 line. *Qaγim šad* (my father šad) indicates that the father of *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan* has the title of *šad*. This situation supports the view that this incident can be dated to the reign of Qapγan qaγan as I clarified in the note to W-6. This *täγrikän* can be Qapγan qaγan.

W-8: bodun : anta bermäziγ ä : tusul är

This part can belong to *Duoxifu*'s saying. And the word *ä* following *bermäzin* is an interjection, not a dative suffix as other researchers have considered until now.

W-8: (atačim) a

Regarding *atačim*, I discussed this identification in connection with the first line of the horizontal inscription of the Ongi stele.

S-1: qamuq : balıqqa : (t)ägdim :

Clauson transliterated *Q M /* from Radloff's Atlas, and he interpreted the uncertain third letter as *L*, not as *uQ*, and read *qamul; hami* named 'yiwu 伊吾' **i-nguo* (MEC) (GSR : No. 604a, 58f) as an oasis country of Chinese Turkestan from the context (Clauson 1957: Pl. VI, 182, 186). However, from Ramstedt's rubbing we can read *Q m uQ*, which I could also confirm from Jadrincev's original rubbing at the Institute for Oriental Studies of Saint Petersburg in 2005. So this part should be read *qamuq* as a variant of *kamay* 'all' (ED: 627a). According to Clauson, the form *qamuq* with labial vowel attraction does, however, occur as early as the Turkic inscriptions. As to this sentence, I can assume that it can be considered as a historical fact that Turkic peoples went on warring campaigns against enemies in surrounding regions between *Kadırkan yış* 'the *Daxinanling* Mountains' in the East and *Tämir Qapıγ* 'The Iron Gate' in the West. There were campaigns against the Tang Dynasty and the Qıryız as

mentioned in the Orkhon inscription (KT, BK, and T). *Eletmiš yabyu*, however, had the title of *tölis šad* with control over the Eastern territories of the Turkic Qaγanate, which suggests the possibility that he conquered Chinese cities.

S-1: qonuldīm :

Regarding this verb, Radloff read *aqunladīm* to mean ‘I attacked’, and Onogawa read *uqunladīm* as ‘I plundered’ (Onogawa 1950: 443, 447, n. 15). In historical terms, I can remember an expression such as *ötükän yerig konmiš* (‘they settled down in the Ötükän country’) (T: 17; ED: 632b). This description tells us that the Turkic army occupied the north or northwestern regions under the Tang Dynasty and laid siege to all the cities of these regions, as I mentioned in the note on the same line of the Ongi stele.

S-1: mäs : äriñč : išig küçig bert(im) S-2: ekin ara : täg yaγı : bolmiš : tägmäçi teyin : saqıntım :

This part of S-1 can be read in Ramstedt’s rubbing, and it is connected with the beginning of line S-2. In this, the one that “served” can be the writer of this stele, *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan*. He is written with a pronoun suffix of the first singular *-m*. The one whom he served can be Bilgä Qaγan, the son of Elteriš Qaγan. This can be suggested by the context of the next lines. The word *Tg* is regarded as the variant *täg* of the postposition *tägi* (‘up to’) as in line W-5.

S-2: täñri bilgä : qaγanqa :

Täñri Bilgä Qaγan can be the elder son of Elteriš qaγan, Muju, Bilgä Qaγan as Onogawa and Bazin considered (Onogawa 1950: 438–439; Bazin 1991: 153). Bilgä Qaγan was indeed recorded as *Täñri Bilgä Qaγan*, as Dobrovits points out (Dobrovits 2000: 150). In this inscription, however, as *Täñrikän* can be suggested as the epithet for Elteriš Qaγan, it is possible that the title *Täñri* is used as the epithet for Bilgä Qaγan who was the son of Elteriš Qaγan as an honorific title (Onogawa 1950: 438). In my view, the epithet *täñri* is a shortened expression of *täñri tä : täñridä bolmiš : türük bilgä qaγan* (BK-N: 1; Tekin 1988: 28–29).

S-2: ančaqıña : išig küçüg : bersäğim : bar ärimiš : äriñč :

The adverb *ančaqıña* can be read in Ramstedt’s rubbing. I would like to express my gratitude to my Japanese colleague Kousetsu Suzuki who advised me of the possibility of this word in 2005. It means ‘a very little’ (ED: 175a). Until now, everyone have read *anča* ‘like this’ since Radloff (ATIM 1895: 250–251). This reading makes the unresolved meaning of *bärsigim bar* clear (Ösawa 1999a: 135–136). Erdal considered *bärsigim* impossible from the viewpoint of Turkic grammar, because this form can

be attested in an Old Uigur document (OTWF: 527, n. 147). In general terms, this sentence expresses with hesitation that *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* intends to join the army of Bilgä Qayan, because *Eletmiş Yabyu* who was the father of *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan*, the builder of the Ongi site and stele was killed by Köl Tigin, the younger brother of Bilgä Qayan in June 716. However, he finally decided to go on a campaign on the side of Bilgä Qayan's army. From this, we can understand that he was in a complex political condition under Bilgä Qayan.

S-2: äbimä tägdüküm : urlï qanli : adrïmalim : täyin : qayanda : adrïmalim : teyin : tägdim.

This part can be read in Ramstedt's rubbing and is connected with *tägip : inima oylima : anča ötlädim* of S-3. The *-li* of *urlï qanli* is regarded as the coordinating conjunctive suffix *-li* 'with, and' (GOT: 124). We can confirm the same from examples such as *ini-li äči-li* 'younger and elder brothers' (KT-E: 6), *bägli bodunliḡ* 'the lords and people' (KT-E: 6), *toruq buqa-li sämiz buqa-li* 'lean bulls and fat bulls' (T: 5), *tün-li kün-li* 'night and day' (BK-SE). This means that *urlï qanli* can be literally interpreted as 'son and father'. But as I stated, the father of the writer *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* had already died, and this *qanli* can be understood as meaning 'the people of the father's generation'. Furthermore, *urlï* is also understood as 'the people of the son's generation' belonging to his family.

It is also noteworthy that the last letter a of the word *qayanda* is in the last position in S-3, and the following phrase *adrïmalim : teyin : tägdim* goes from the right to the left and then reaching the left margin in S-4. Reaching the left margin of the surface, the row of letters curves upwards, making a complete about-turn and running eventually in the opposite direction and turning the letters upside down. In my view, this part narrates that when *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* returned to his camp along the Ongi River, he requested his companions and his father's companions to join the side of Bilgä Qayan's army.

S-3: qaḡ yoriḡ : elteriḡ qayanqa : adrïmaduḡ : yaḡilmaduḡ :

This part is related to the historical contribution of *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan's* father *Elteriḡ yabyu* to the construction of the Second Turkic Qayanate under Qutluḡ, Elteriḡ Qayan. This part also indicates that this builder, *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan*, wanted to maintain a political position in the Bilgä Qayan's government.

S-3: täḡri bilgä : qayanta : adrïmalim : azmalim : teyin : anča : ötlädim :

Täḡri Bilgä Qayan can be Bilgä Qayan (716–734 AD) as I mentioned above in the note to S-2. This sentence tells us that *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* advised his family to follow Bilgä Qayan and to guard his political position.

S-3: ilgärü barïyma : bardï : bilgä qaγan : bodunï

This part can be first read in our rubbing of the large fragment of the Ongi stele that is kept at Osaka University (Ōsawa 1999a: 136). This reading can also be confirmed in Ramstedt's rubbing.

S-3: : bardï : ölügin : atqa : işig küčig : bertim : adrïlmaz : teyin : tägdim

This part can be read only in Ramstedt's rubbing, and it explains that the builder of this stele also served Bilgä Qaγan to guard his political position. The expression *ölügin atqa*, meaning literally 'to die, for his fame', tells that the writer of this stele *Bilgä İşbara Tamγan Tarqan* served Tāñri Bilgä Qaγan to defend his political stand, and he went to the front prepared to die. This phrase can be compared with the expression *ölü yitü* 'ölesiye yitesiye çalıştım' (KT-E: 27; Tekin 1988: 14).

S-3: adrïlmaz : teyin : tägdim

This part is reversely carved, i.e differently from the normal order of runic letters, in the following order from left to right and joining the former sentence in the last circular corner as in *m d g t : n y t : z m L R D : .* This is to be read in reverse order as *D R L m z : t y n : t g d m.*

S-4: üzä : täñri : qan : lüi : yïlqa : yetinč : ay : küčlüg : alp är : qaγanïmda : adrïlu : bardïñiz :

Regarding *üzä täñri qan*, as Onogawa (1950: 439) analysed, *täñri qan* should be identified as the subject shown in the verbal suffix of the second person plural *-ñiz* of the verb *adrïlu bardïñiz*, that is, *Eletmiş yabγu*. As I mentioned and as far as we know, *Duoxifu* named *Eletmiş yabγu* did not become *qaγan*. Accordingly, this verbal suffix *-ñiz* should be interpreted as a respectful expression referring to his father *Eletmiş yabγu* by the writer of the stele. From this we know that *Eletmiş yabγu* was also addressed with *Täñri Qan* as a title of respect. The same use of *qan/qaγan* can be confirmed as *bāñigü qaγanïm* in the 2–3rd lines and *bilgä külüg är ädgü qan* in the 5–6th lines.¹³

Concerning *lüi yïlqa* which have been regarded as uncertain words by Clauson, these letters are, however, evidently read in Ramstedt's rubbing and Jadrincev's original rubbing conserved in St. Petersburg. The word *lüi* from the Chinese character 龍

13 The words *üzä täñri qan* were considered by Sawada to mean 'To the sky where Tāñri Qan lived', and he also interpreted *Täñri Qan* as term of *Täñrikän*. He considered the verbal suffix *-ñiz* as a plural form, i.e., he interpreted that these peoples were the Turkic peoples following the *Duoxifu*'s son's family that became the enemy forces of Bilgä Qaγan. This, however, should be not interpreted in such a complex manner as suggested by Sawada. This passage should be read more simply as '*Eletmiş yabγu* died in the reign of *Bilgä Qaγan*'.

long, **liwong* in MEC (GSR: No. 1193a) means ‘dragon’, which is featured in the traditional Chinese calendar. This term is also recorded as *W L W Yi l iQ* (*ulu yilqa*) in the Terkh inscription (W-2) of the Old Uigur Qayanate. On this part of the Ongi stele, Bazylxan read it as *ülüi* (Bazylxan 2005: 57, n. 112), but there is no letter *ü* in this stele. It is therefore to be read literally as *lūi yilqa*. With regard to history, I can definitely say that *Eletmiš yabyu*, the father of *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* who was the writer of this stele died in June of the Year of the Dragon (AD 716) when Köl Tigin launched a coup d’état against the successor, İnäl Qayan, the son of *Mochuo*, Qapyan Qayan and his relatives as assumed by Radloff, Marquart, Onogawa and Sawada (ATIM 1899: IX; Marquart 1898: 38; Onogawa 1950: 438; Sawada 1983a: 68–69), although Bazylxan considered the “Year of the Dragon” to have been 703 between 681 and 716. As to *är* in *küčlüg alp är qayan*, this letter can only be read in Ramstedt’s rubbing. This qayan can be identified with *Bilgä Qayan* whom *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* served after the death of his father *Eletmiš yabyu*.

S-4: bilgä : atačim : yoγuγ : qorıyının : qazyantim : el yetti :

This passage can be read only in Ramstedt’s rubbing. It indicates that the son, *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* held a funeral ceremony, received his father’s territory, and organized his camp. It indicates that *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* was publicly admitted as the legitimate successor of his father *Eletmiš yabyu*.

S-4: täñri : üzä : täñrikän : tabyač : körür : ärti :

This part can be read only in Ramstedt’s rubbing, and *täñri : üzä : täñrikän* can be identified as Qutluγ, Elteriš Qayan as mentioned above. This part indicates that around AD 686–687 in the reign of the father of *Bilgä Qayan*, Turkic peoples could be independent of the Tang dynasty.

S-4: (tabya)č körür : ärtim : ädgü : atačim :

This part can be read only in Ramstedt’s rubbing. It indicates that *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* under the rule of *Bilgä Qayan* engaged in a warring campaign against Northern China although it seems that there is no record of battles between Turks and the Tang Dynasty in Old Chinese chronicles. Here, the son *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* held the territory of his father, *Eletmiš yabyu*, and kept his *ordu* near the Ongi Steppe in southern Mongolia.

E-2: toqädimiz : äčim boyla :

As is well known, the word *äči* means junior paternal uncle or elder brother, and *Boyla* is a high officer’s title of the Turkic Qayanate. For example, we can remember the title *Boyla Baya Tarqan* that Tunyukuk had in the last period of his life as mentioned in

BK-S 14; T. 6 (Tekin 1988: 54–55; Tekin 1994: 4–5) and *Boyla Qutluγ Yaryan* in the second line of the Suji inscription (Mori 1992: 158, 162). This part may indicate that his uncle or his elder brother was a high officer bearing the title of *Boyla*.

E-3: basatip ärig : udušuru : sančdim :

This phrase reminds us of the scene of a warrior and it can be supported by the sentences such as *bir ärig oqun urti : eki : ärig udušuru sančti* (he shot one man with an arrow and speared two men sending them one after the other) in KT-E: 36; KT-N: 2. In the transcription of *W D š R W*, I follow Clauson, although T. Tekin transcribed this word as *udš(u)ru* (Tekin 1988: 82, n. 99; ED: 73b).

E-5: n : täg : išbara : tarqaniγ :

The first element *-n* can be an animal name such as *arслан*, *yılan* that symbolizes bravery and manliness because after the postpositional term *täg* (‘like’), a high-ranking officer *İšbara Tarqan* is mentioned. Accordingly, *///n täg* should be an adjective modifier of a man having the title *İšbara Tarqan*. As mentioned above, this title can be identified with a young son having the formal title *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan of Eletmiš yabyu* in W-4 of this inscription. This person can be also identified as having constructed the site and as a person having the title *İšbara tarqan* in the 11th *balbal* stone of this site, with the short phrase *Bilgä İšbara Tarqan balbalı* and a couple of *tamγa* designs of a ram and a snake (Ösawa 1999b: 278–282).

E-8: elteriš : qaγan :

This name can be *Qutluγ, Elteriš qaγan* of the Second Turkic Qaγanate, but the title is also an element of the title of *Qaγan elteriš qaγan* in W-4. If so, *elteriš Qaγan* may be a title of *Mochuo hehan* 默啜 **muək*, **tš^hyat* in LMC (Pulleyblank 1991: 218, 63).

Notes concerning the horizontal lines on the south side of the headstone

(I) *atačimqa* :

The word *atačim* can be confirmed in W-8 and W-4. Radloff read it as the proper name *Tačam* (ATIM 1895: 252), but A. V. Gabain has suggested a new reading (Gabain 1953: 543). Clauson, Tekin and others accepted her view (Clauson 1957: 187; GOT: 256), although Bold read the word as *atačim*. Gabain’s view can resolve the relationship between *Eletmiš yabyu* and *atačim* as the same person, and this reading can be supported by the historical situation and relationship between the father (*Eletmiš yabyu*) and his second son (*Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan*) in this runic text. Briefly put, in W-4 *atačim* was an expression with which the writer addressed his father (*Eletmiš yabyu*), and the Ongi site was constructed to honour his father by his younger son

Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan. Moreover, as I mentioned above, *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* had the runic inscription of *İšbara tarqan balbalı* carved in the twelfth line of balbal stones of this site. This balbal stone had a tamya consisting of a ram and a snake that is same as the one on the headstone. This indicates that he belonged to the *Eletmiş yabyu* family of the Ashina's tribe (Ōsawa 1999c: 278–282).

(2) bāñigü

As is well known, with reference to the Orkhon Turkic form *b η g ü* in the Orkhon inscription (KT-S: 8, 11, 12, 13; BK-N: 6, 8, 15; Tekin 1988: 4–7, 30–35), there is no similar example of evidence of the letter *i* between *η* and *g* that can be confirmed from the rubbings of either Ramstedt or Jadrincev. However, from the Manichean documents of the Qočo Uigur period we can confirm that *māñigü* ‘vechnyj (eternal)’ (cf. DT: 342a) can be considered as a variant of *bāñigü*. I cannot say, however, why this spelling was carved in this stele, and it may also be a mistaken spelling. As well known, there is form *b η k ü* (*bāñkü*) that was a variant of *bāngü* in the Sulek inscription of Khakassia, and in the old Turkic epitaphs of the upper and middle regions of the Yenisei Basin (E20–1; E48–14, 15; E48–9, E27–8; cf. Kormušin 1997: 285; 2008: 318). In addition, *b η ü* (*bāñü*) is also attested in the Yenisei inscription (E42, 3; E30, 2; Kormušin 1997: 285; 318).¹⁴ In my view, Old Turkic peoples did not have the same orthography. Turkic spelling reflects the local pronunciation and dialects at that time. This form can be considered such an example.

(3) qayanım :

This word can be confirmed in both Ramstedt's rubbing and Jadrincev's original rubbing in Saint Petersburg. It seems strange that Douxifu was addressed as *qayan* although there is no record as such that he became *qayan*. This should therefore be regarded as unusual usage. In my view, it is worth noting that the term *tāñri qan* can be used as a respectful expression on the part of his son as I mentioned in connection with S-4. In this case, we should understand that this term was written for the dead father in honour of whom this stele was erected. In my view, *qayan* and *qan* were respectful expressions denoting the same amount of significance. As stated by M. Mori, since the middle of the 7th century, there were very few leaders that had the title “lesser qayan” in the Turkic Qayanate, which can be explained by the fact that political matters were centralized under a great qayan at that time. So the title of *šad* was used in the place of “little qayan” (Mori 1967: 274–277, 374–379). Accordingly, *qayanım* cannot show that he became a qayan as a matter of fact. Instead, this should be the respectful expression referring to his dead father.

¹⁴ Regarding this variety, my colleague Hiroaki Fujiie of Osaka University has remarked that today's Karachay pronounce an unnoticed sound *g* between *bāñ* and *ü* although they recognize the form *bāñü* at the phonological level. From this, Fujiie supposes that this may be caused by the difference between phonology and pronunciation.

(4)–(5) lü yīlqa :

This year can be attested with the expression *liii yīlqa* (the Year of the Dragon) of S-4. Previously, Clauson assumed that the man buried at this site died in *Qon yīlqa* (the Year of the Sheep). I cannot, however, read the letters such as *Q ny* in the main text or the additional text of Ramstedt's rubbing and Jadrincev's original rubbing conserved in St. Petersburg. As a result, we cannot accept the date of construction of this stele that Clauson insisted on (Clauson 1957: Pl. VI, 183).

7. Conclusions

From philological points of view, these runic texts of the Ongi stele can be generally described as follows.

7.1. Arrangement of the contents in text

(W-1) Yama qaγan establishing the First Turkic Qaγanate, his successful campaigns in the four directions and the ruin of his country after his death (552–630).

(W-2) Deserting their qaγan, Turkic aristocratic people served the Tang Dynasty as warriors (630–679).

(W-3) The God Tājri addressed the Turkic peoples who had lost his own qaγan and commanded them to be independent from the Tang Dynasty (679–681).

(W-4) The statement on family lineage of the writer *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan*.

(W-5) The war against the Tang Dynasty under Elteriš qaγan and participation in this war (682–691 AD).

(W-6) The granting of the title of *šad* for contributing to the campaigns in the reign of Qaγan qaγan.

(W-7, 8) The father *Eletmiš yabyu*'s contribution to the campaigns against their enemies in weak condition during the reign of Qaγan qaγan.

(S-1) *Eletmiš yabyu* and his younger son's participation in the campaign against "all cities" under the Tang Dynasty.

(S-2) The Bilgä Qaγan's enthronement, and the writer's addressing his family to serve Tājri Bilgä Qaγan, and hesitation to participate in campaigns under Bilgä Qaγan.

(S-3) The writer commanding his sons and his younger brothers to join Bilgä Qaγan's army.

(S-4) The death of *Eletmiš yabyu* and his funeral ceremony, and the succession of his son *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan*.

(E-1~8) The writer commanding his son and younger brother to serve Tājri Bilgä Qaγan and to strengthen his contribution to his country.

I can generally say that the Ongi text has many characteristic expressions as well as other Orkhon inscriptions (KT; BK, T and KČ). Similarities with other runic inscriptions indicate that this text was carved in the Second Turkic Qaγanate.

7.2. The lineage of *Eletmiš yabyu* and the writer of this stele

As mentioned above, *Duoxifu* **Turs Bäg* named *Eletmiš yabyu* was the youngest brother of *Qutluy*, *Elteriš qaγan* and *Mochuo*, *Qapγan qaγan*. *Duoxifu* had two sons named *İšbara Tamγan Čor Yoγa* and his younger brother *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan Yoγa*. The second man also had a son and a younger brother. The person for whom this stele was built can be *Duoxifu*, i.e. *Eletmiš yabyu*, and the writer of this stele can be his young son and successor *Bilgä İšbara Taman Tarqan*. Regarding *Bilgä İšbara Tamγan Tarqan Yoγa*, as I mentioned above, it is doubtful that he was the one who erected the eleventh balbal stone with the phrase *İšbara Tarqan* and a tamγas design consisting of ram and a snake sign. He could thus be named *İšbara Tarqan*. According to information from old Chinese sources, this named person can be identified with a high-ranking officer named under the *Bilgä Qaγan* government as follows: on the date of *Boshin* (the 7th), July of the *Kaiyuan* 11th year (AD 723), Turkic ambassadors of 阿史那慧鉢達干 **’â-š-nâ šiet-puat d’ât yân* in MEC¹⁵, that is, *İšbara Tarqan* of the *Ashina*’s clan and his 32 companions visited the Tang dynasty. The Tang government gave him the title of great general, and gave his companions the titles of general followers, and then the Tang dynasty let them return to their native country, i.e. the Turkic *Qaγanate*.¹⁶ From this, we can know that *İšbara Tarqan* made *Bilgä Qaγan* one of the elite members of higher-ranking officials in 727 AD. This attestation can support my following suggestion regarding the date of construction of the Ongi site and the age of the inscription.

7.3. Date of construction of this site and stele

Bazin first analysed this text from philological and other viewpoints, and created a hypothesis. According to him, the Turkic expressions of this text are almost attested in Orkhon Turkic (T: KČ, KT, and BK). The syntax has archaic features, permitting a date earlier than that of the Tunyukuk inscription (AD 725–726). From the contents of this text, the deceased of this stele was buried in the Year of the Sheep, as based on Clauson’s reading, i.e. AD 719 or 732. This text has many words of the God *Täñri* or the father *Eletmiš yabyu* advising his younger brother and sons to join with *Täñri Bilgä Qaγan*, not to part from this *qaγan*, and not to betray him. Bazin thought this reflected the killing of the son of *Qapγan qaγan* and his intimate relatives by *Köl Tigin* in July 716. For these reasons, Bazin regarded that this stele was built in 719 (the Year

15 GSR: No. 1m, 975a, 350a, 411a, 275d, 271b, 157a. Concerning the reconstruction of this name, cf. Ōsawa 2010: 50–51.

16 In the original source, it is recorded as 開元十一（723 AD.）年七月戊辰条:突厥大首領阿史那慧鉢達干等三十二人來朝，授慧鉢達干大將，其屬並授郎將，放還蕃（‘On the *Boshin* of November in *Kaiyuan* periods, the great tribal leader of *Tujüe* named *Ashina-Ishbar Tarqan* brought a tribute to the Tang dynasty with his thirty-two companions. Tang emperor gifted the title of General in chief to *Ishbara Tarqan* and the title of the general of palace horsemen to his attendants, and then the Emperor let them to go back to their country’.) (CFYG-974: 3875.)

of the Sheep) or in the following year (720) (Bazin 1991: 159–161). In Bazin’s view, as I mentioned above, “the Year of the Sheep” cannot be confirmed from Ramstedt’s and Jadrincev’s rubbings. This should be the “Lüi” year, whereby *Eletmiš yabyu* must have been buried in “the Year of the Dragon”. In the 8th century during the Second Turkic Qaγanate, the Dragon year could have been 704, 716, 728 or 740. In the contents of this stele, as Bazin pointed out, the text reflects the killing of the son of Qaγyan qaγan and his intimate relatives by Kōl Tigin, making it possible that it was carved in 716, 728 or 740. As I mentioned above, from Chinese sources, it seems that Qaγyan qaγan’s younger brother *Eletmiš yabyu* was also killed by Kōl Tigin, which can be supported by the description on this stele noting: “You (*Eletmiš yabyu*) went away from my strong and brave warrior and wise qaγan in the June of the Year of the Dragon (*lüi*)” (S-4). Accordingly “the Year of the Dragon” can suit the time of death, July 716, when the head of the dead Qaγyan qaγan was brought to the Tang Dynasty. From this, Kōl Tigin’s coup d’état can be dated to May or June of 716, after Qaγyan qaγan’s death. Thus, *Eletmiš yabyu* also died in July as a result of the battle between the successors of Qaγyan (Inäl qaγan) and Qutluγ (Kōl Tigin). *Eletmiš yabyu*’s burial ceremony and funeral ceremony (*Yoγ*) must then have been held in the month of July in 716 or 717. From this stele, however, we can confirm that *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* was “*Eletmiš yabyu*’s successor” serving with much hesitation Bilgä Qaγan who was an elder brother of Kōl Tigin. He followed Bilgä Qaγan and went on campaign against the Tang Dynasty. This hesitation tells us that *Bilgä İšbara Tamyan tarqan* was suspected by Bilgä Qaγan’s relatives of serving Bilgä qaγan, because his father was killed by Kōl Tigin in 716. He thus had to strengthen and emphasize his service to Bilgä Qaγan to defend his political position in the Second Turkic Qaγanate under Bilgä Qaγan. *İšbara Tamyan Tarqan* was then appointed as a high-ranking officer by Bilgä Qaγan as a result of serving the latter with loyalty. This meant that he could build the stele to honour his father in the reign of Bilgä Qaγan.

At present, I cannot find the key to resolve the date of building this stele, because we no longer know what was carved on the eastern and northern sides. The stele was carved from the western side, to the southern, eastern side and northern side, in the order W→S→E→N. From the viewpoint of the direction of lines, the Ongi text was carved from the bottom to the top on all sides. This writing method is different from that of the Tunyukuk inscription (ca. AD 725), Kōl Tigin inscription (732), that is, W (Chinese) → S → E → N. From the viewpoint of the direction in which the line proceeds, the Ongi text can be read from the bottom to the upper part. This is similar to the Kōl Tigin inscription (made in July 732). As a result, from a chronological viewpoint, the stele can be placed between the Tunyukuk inscription and Kōl Tigin inscription, placing it in the periods from 726 to 732. This assumption can be supported by the contents of this stele referring to campaigns in the reign of Bilgä Qaγan (716–734). From the palaeographical viewpoint, the verbal suffix *-miš* consisted of the two letters of *m s* in *T*, not of *m š* as well as KT, BK. At present, in my view the Ongi stele can be dated to 725–732. The seven-line inscription of this headstone can be regarded as a supplementary inscription on this stele. There is also a supplement to the side of the tortoise stone of Kōl Tigin’s stele and on the upper side of the western

(Chinese) side of the same stele. On the western and eastern sides of the headstone of this stele, there are a tamya design consisting of a ram and a snake. The figures of dragons of this headstone can be regarded as simplifications of those on the Kōl Tigin and Bilgä Qayan steles, which can be evidently confirmed in the rubbings of Ramstedt and Jadrincev. This stele was also built on the tortoise stone like KT and BK. Dragon ornaments of the headstone and a tortoise stone could be used for the most high-ranking aristocratic people of the Turkic Qayanate (Ōsawa 1999a: 128; 2007a: 29–30). This symbol, however, has Chinese cultural influences, as the traditional stele of the Tang Dynasty was built for high-ranking officers or high-ranking warriors of the Tang emperors, never for the emperor himself. Regarding this difference, we can say that Turkic peoples created the new style of inscription for their Qayans and the most high-ranking aristocratic rulers of the Ashinas' royal family. As mentioned above, these features indicated that the man buried at the site can be attested to have been an aristocratic individual such as a qayan or qan of the Ashinas' royal family. This can be supported by the fact that *Duoxifu* named *Eletmiş yabyu* was called “qan” or “qayan” on this stele.

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- T = *Tunyukuk inscription*.
- TAM = Turfan Astāna Monjo (Old Chinese manuscripts unearthed from the Astāna tombs in the Turfan Basin).
- TAM60: 23/1, 23/2 = The first & second parts of the 23rd fragments of the 60th Turfan Astāna manuscript.
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- Tujue = 突厥: The name of old Turkic clan, tribe and country under rule of the royal family of the Ashinas.
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- ZLBS = Zhaoling Museum & Chang, Pei (eds) 1993: *Zhaoling beishi*. Xianyang: Sanqin Press.
- ZS = Linghu, Defen & Fang, Xuanling & Cen, Wenben (eds) 1971: *Zhou-shu*. Beijing: Zhonghua Press.
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