

## Werk

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# The first *Altınkök* inscription

## Talât Tekin

Tekin, Talât 1997. The first *Altınkök* inscription. *Turkic Languages* 1, 210-226.

To date, the first *Altınkök* inscription has been studied and edited by Radloff, Orkun, Malov, Kljaštornyj, Vasil'ev and Mori. In their editions some misread words and phrases have been corrected. Yet, they still contain a number of misread and misconstrued words and phrases. In this paper, many new readings and interpretations are offered: *yirildim* 'I was separated', *qaymatın* 'without turning away', *ilâz* 'pain, sorrow', *atsar alp ârtiğiz i tutsar küç ârtiğiz ä* 'O, you were tough in throwing (arrows) and you were powerful in capturing (the enemies)', *inilig bört* 'young wolf with younger brothers', *oça bars* 'little tiger', *botomuz* 'our camel colt', *sâçlinmä* 'don't be parted', *bars täğim ä* 'O, my tiger-like one!', *altun soğa yış* 'the Altay and Songa mountains', *art oğul taş oğul* '(my) last son, my son abroad', *tad çına barsım* 'my young and little tiger', etc.

*Talât Tekin, Gülden Sokak 16/10, Kavaklıdere, Ankara, TR-06690 Turkey.*

The two *Altınkök* monuments were discovered in 1878 by Korčakov and Markov in an old graveyard near the small *Altınkök* Lake which is located on the right of the Abakan River, ten km away from Bondarevo. In 1881, the two monuments were brought to the Minusinsk Museum by Mart'janov and registered under the numbers 27 and 28.

The steles are of brown sandstone, rectangular in shape, the upper parts of which are curved.

The measurements of the first monument are 136.54 x 43.5 x 25 cm. It contains nine lines written vertically on the three sides of the monument, the lines being separated from one another by raised furrows. On the front side, the lines run in a U-shape (Radloff 1895: 332; Kljaštornyj 1976: 258-259; Vasil'ev 1983: 25).

The first *Altınkök* inscription was studied and published by Radloff, Orkun, Malov, Kljaštornyj, Vasil'ev and Mori.

It has not been easy to determine the right order of the sides and lines of the inscription. Radloff, Orkun and Malov wrongly followed the front-right-left sides sequence. According to Kljaštornyj and Vasil'ev the appropriate order of the sides is left-front-right, which, I believe, is correct. Mori, on the other hand, preferred the order right-front-left side.

As for the order of the lines on the right side, Radloff, Orkun, Malov and Mori read them in reverse order, i.e. from the bottom to the top. Kljaštornyj and Vasil'ev, on the other hand, read these lines correctly, i.e. from the top to the bottom.

Furthermore, Vasil'ev and Kljaštornyj read the lines on the front side in the following order: The top outer line + the bottom outer line + the top inner line. In my opinion, the true order of the lines on the front side is as follows: The bottom outer line + the top inner line + the top outer line.

### Transcription of the text

- L1. on (a)y : iltđi : ög(ü)m ä : k(ä)l(ü)rti : il(i)mkä : (ä)rd(ä)m üč(ü)n : m[(ä)n] y(1)r(i)ld(i)m [ä]  
 L2. (e)l(i)m ök(ü)nč(i)ñä : q(a)l(1)n : y(a)γ(1)qa : q(a)ym(a)t(i)n : t(ä)g(i)p(ä)n : (a)dr(1)ld(1)m a : y(1)ta  
 L3. in(i)ñ(i)zkä : ič(i)ñ(i)zkä : ing(ä)n yūki : il(ä)z : tüş(ü)rt(ü)ñ(ü)z  
 F1. (a)ts(a)r (a)lp : (ä)rt(i)ñ(i)z i tuts(a)r küč : (ä)rt(i)ñ(i)z ä : (i)n(i)l(i)g bört oča b(a)rs : (a)dr(1)lm(a) yitu  
 F2. bot(o)m(u)z um(a)y b(ä)g(i)m(i)z : biz uya : (a)lp (ä)r : özin : (a)l(1)tı qılm(a)d(1)ñ : özl(ü)k (a)t : öz:(i)n : üc (ä)r(i)g (a)lm(a)d(1)ñ : yita : (e)z(ä)nč(ü)m ä : küz(ä)nč(ü)m ä : (a)dr(1)lma : s(ä)čl(i)nm[ä] : ögürd(i)m  
 F3. y(e)rd(ä)ki b(a)rs t(ä)g(i)m ä : (ä)rd(ä)ml(i)g(i)m ä : bökm[(ä)d(i)m]  
 R1. (a)ltun soña y(1)š k(e)y(i)ki : (a)rt (o)γ(u)l t(a)š (o)γ(u)l t(a)d čına b(a)rs(1)m (a)dr(1)lu b(a)rd[1] : y(1)ta  
 R2. tört (i)n(i)l(i)gü (ä)rt(i)m(i)z : b(i)zni : (ä)rkl(i)g : (a)d(1)rtı : y(1)ta  
 R3. (ä)r (ä)r<d>(ä)m (ü)č(ü)n : in(i)m (e)č(i)m : uy(u)r(1)n üč(ü)n : b(ä)ñ:güm(i)n : tikä : b(e)rti

### Translation

- L1. 'O, my mother! She carried me for ten months (in her womb), (and then) brought (me) forth. In order to (display my) manly qualities to my people, I have been separated (from this world)!'

- L2. 'To the regret of my people, I attacked the numerous enemy without turning away from it and (thus) was parted (from this world)! Alas!'
- L3. '(With your death) you placed a female camel's load of grief on (the shoulders of) your younger and elder brothers.'
- F1. 'O, you were tough in throwing arrows! O, you were powerful in capturing (the enemy)! (O, you,) wolf cub with younger brothers! (O, you,) little tiger! Do not be parted (from us)! Alas!'
- F2. '(O,) our camel colt! (O,) our Umay(-like) beg! You did not let our lives, the lives of (your) brave kinsmen, be taken. You did not take (with you) the life of (your) favorite horse and the three (kins)men. Alas! O, my advance guard! O, my protector! Do not be parted and separated (from us)! (O), my joy (in life)!'
- F3. 'O, my tiger-like one on the earth! O, my virtuous one! (I did) not have enough of (you)!'
- R1. 'The wild animal of the Altay and Songa mountains, (my) last son, (my) son abroad, my young and little tiger, having been parted (from us), he went away. Alas!'
- R2. 'We were four younger brothers all together. Erklig, (the god of the underworld,) parted us. Alas!'
- R3. 'Because of (my) manly qualities and because of their capability, my younger and elder brothers erected (this) everlasting monument of mine.'

### Explanations

1. L 1. *iltdi*: The final letter is /I/ in the Finnish and in Radloff's atlases, but it is /A/ in Vasil'ev (1983: 65), and it is transliterated as /ä/ on p. 25. But the letter is clearly /I/ in the photograph on p. 103.

2. L 1. *ög(ü)m ä*: Radloff, Orkun and Malov regarded the final letter /A/ as a separation mark. But in this inscription the words are separated from one another by a colon. Kljaštornyj and Mori rightly regarded the final /A/ here as the Old Turkic interjection of address.

3. L 1. *k(ä)l(ü)rti*: The labial vowel sign of the second syllable is lacking.

4. L 1. *m(ä)n*: This word is found in Radloff's runic text, and following him, in Orkun's, Malov's, Kljaštornyj's and Mori's editions. It is not found in Vasil'ev's copy and transliteration, however. But a letter resembling /m/ is clearly visible in the photograph on p. 102.

5. L.1. *y(i)r(i)ld(i)m ä*: In Radloff's runic text this word is spelt *YrldmA*. Radloff (1895: 334), Orkun (III: 103), Malov (1952: 25) and Kljaštornyj (1976: 261) read this word *yerledim* and translated it as 'I settled down'. Mori read the same word as *yerildim* and translated it as 'I have been separated (from my homeland)' (1986: 5); Vasil'ev has a lacuna in his transliteration (1983: 25), but in the photograph on p. 102 we find the group of letters /rSdmA/ which can be read *(ä)r (a)s (ä)d(i)m ä* and this can be understood as 'O, my men, women and properties!'. But such a phrase does not complete the sentence which begins as *il(i)mkä (ä)rd(ä)m üč(ü)n ...*

Furthermore, Vasil'ev put the group of letters /rSdmA/ at the end of line 8 (1983: 25). But in the photograph on p. 102 this group of letters can be seen at the end of the first line of the inscription.

If this group of letters is really /Yrldm/, it can be read *yirildim* or *yirildim* and be understood as 'I have been separated'. The verb *yiril-* 'to be split apart, be parted' occurs in the Uyghur texts and in some cases it forms a binary with its synonym *adril-*, e.g. *adrılıyali yirilgäli* 'since we parted and separated' (Ht VII 2064) etc.

The same verb form occurs as /yrłtm/, i.e. *y(i)r(i)lt(i)m* (wrongly read *yärlitim* by Malov) on the Xemčik-Čırgakı inscription (back side, line 1).

The verb *yiril-* survives in modern languages: Uzb. *yiril-*, NUyg. *žiril-*, Kzk. *žiril-*, Kirg. *žiril-*, etc. Its base *yir-*, too, survives in some modern languages, e.g. Yak. *si:r-* 'to split, crack, break off, break into two pieces' < \**yi:r-*, Trk. *yir-* id., *yirik* 'split, cracked', etc. The New Uyghur, Kazakh and Kirghiz forms of the verb suggest that it was back-vocalic originally (cf. OAT *ırıl-* 'ayrılmak, uzaklaşmak') and the Yakut form shows that the vowel /i/ of this word was long. The forms *yer-*, *yeril-*, *yerük* / *yerök* in EDPT (955, 965) and OTWF (256, 295, 686, 815) should therefore be corrected.

6. L.2. *(e)l(i)m*. In the two atlases and in Orkun, Malov and Mori the word is spelt /llm/, i.e. *il(i)m*; but in the photograph on p. 103 the letters under discussion are clearly /lm/. In Vasil'ev's copy and transliteration, too, the word is spelt /lm/.

7. L.2. *q(a)ym(a)t(i)n*. The word is spelt /KYmTN/ in the two atlases and in Vasil'ev. But Radloff read this word *kıymitu*, and Orkun, Malov and Kljaštornyj read the word as *qıymatın* and translated it as 'with courage'. All these readings and interpretations are wrong.

It was Mori (1986: 5) who found the appropriate solution: *qaymatın* 'without turning away'. As is known, the verb *qay-* with this meaning is

attested in the Uyğur texts. It is also found in Karakhanid Turkic: *qay-* 'to turn away or back', *qay-a kör-* 'to look back, look behind someone', *qaytar-* 'to turn back' (tr.) < \**qay-t-t-ar-* (EDPT: 674, 675).

8. L 3. *ing(ä)n* 'female camel'. Radloff read this word *ingän (?)* with a question mark, but he could not explain it. Orkun read it *in?ğın*, but he did not give a translation. It was Malov who first read and explained the word correctly: *ingän yüki* 'verbljužij v'juk' (1952: 55). Kljaštornyj and Mori read and interpreted the phrase in the same way.

9. L 3. *il(ä)z*. FAtlas /Ilz/; RAtlas /Iŋz/; Vasil'ev: /İld/.

Radloff wrongly regarded this word as the 2nd p. possessive suffix of the plural, i.e. *-iŋiz*, and added it to the preceding *yüki*, reading this as *yükiŋiz* 'eure gewaltige Last' (p. 334). Orkun: *iŋiz* 'idiniz' (?); Malov: *iŋäz* 'v nerešitel'nosti, v zamešatel'stve'; Kljaštornyj: *ild* 'spuskat', snimat'', Mori: *eš[s]iz* (together with *ingän yüki*) 'deve yükü (kadar) yalnızlığı'.

These readings and interpretations cannot be accepted.

The runic letters /d/ and /z/ closely resemble each other, especially when they are small. Accepting the spelling /Ilz/ as true, I read this word *iläz* and connect it with Khak. *iles* 'pain, sorrow, distress'. *ing(ä)n yüki il(ä)z* 'a female camel's load of grief' is a good metaphor expressing the grief suffered by the brothers of the deceased warrior upon his death. Khak. *iles* seems to have been derived from Khak. *ile-* 'to suffer pain' < \**elä-*.

10. F 1. *(a)ts(a)r (a)lp (ä)rt(i)ŋ(i)z i*. Radloff: /TSRLp:rtŋzI/; Vasil'ev: /TSzLp : rtŋz/.

In the Finnish Atlas and in Radloff the first three letters are /TSR/. But Radloff read the clause as *at ašar alp (atsar alp) ärtiŋiz* and translated it as 'ihr waret ein Held, der Pferde verzehrte (ein schiessender Held)' (p. 333). Orkun read this passage in the same way, i.e. as *at ašar alp ertiŋiz* and translated it into Turkish as 'At aşan kahraman idiniz'.

These readings and translations are wrong. Since there is a special sign for /š/ in this inscription, the back-vocalic sign /S/ cannot be read /š/.

Malov read this passage correctly as *atsar alp ärtiŋiz* and translated it as 'Vy byli geroem-strel'kom' (1952: 53). Mori read this group of letters in the same way and translated it as 'Ok atarsanız cesur idiniz' (1986: 6).

According to Vasil'ev and Kljaštornyj, however, the first three letters are /TSz/, and not /TSR/. It is for this reason that Kljaštornyj read the first word as *atasız* and translated the whole sentence as 'Bez otca Vy

geroem byli' (1976: 261). But if this were the case, the word would have been spelt /TASz/. Besides, the word for 'father' is *qaŋ*, and not *ata* in these inscriptions.

Not only for this reason but for contextual reasons as well, I believe that the first three letters in this line are /TSR/ and I read the whole clause as *atsar alp ärtiŋiz i*. As can clearly be seen, there is an obvious parallelism between this and the following clause. (For the *i* at the end of this clause see below.)

11. F 1. *tuts(a)r küč (ä)rt(i)ñ(i)z ä* FATlas: /tUTSRkÜç:rtLzA/; Radloff, Vasil'ev: (together with the preceding /I/): /ItUTSRkÜçrtŋz/.

Radloff: *ät ut ašar (ät utsar) küč ärtiñiz* 'Ihr waret ein Mächtiger, der Fleisch und Rinder verzehrte (der Habe gewann)' (p. 333); Orkun: *it ut ašar küč ertiñiz* 'et (?) öküz ašan güç idiniz' (1936-1941, 3: 101-102). Malov, disregarding the first two letters, read the whole passage as *utsar küč ärtiñiz* and translated it as 'Vy byli sil'ny, priobretaja bogatstvo' (1952: 53); Kljaštornyj read the same passage as *it utsar köč ert(t)iñiz a* 'Kogda psy presledovali (dič'), Vy pronosilis' mimo kočevij!' (1976: 261). Mori: *it utsar küč ärtiñiz a* 'Köpeği kovalarsanız güçlü idiniz' (1982: 6).

These readings and interpretations cannot be accepted for both grammatical and contextual reasons. Clauson's *utsar küç ertiñiz* 'you were strong in conquering' (EDPT: 693), too, cannot be accepted, for it disregards the preceding two letters, i.e. /It/.

In my opinion, putting the first letter /I/ aside for the time being, we may read the rest of it as *tutsar küč ärtiŋiz ä*, thus having a clause parallel to the preceding *atsar alp ärtiŋiz*.

The use of the front-vocalic sign /t/ instead of the back-vocalic /T/ in /tUTSR/ causes no problem since there are other examples of this kind of practise in the inscription, e.g. /YtA/ (line 2), /YItU/ (line 5), /LtI/ (line 6), etc.

As for the first letter of the second clause, it is /A/ in the Finnish Atlas. If it is really /I/ and not /A/, it is in all likelihood an exclamation expressing praise, tenderness and endearment (cf. Yak. *i*: 'oh!', Kirg. *i*., *i*:y id., etc.).

Thus we may read the two clauses as *atsar alp ärtiŋiz i tutsar küč ärtiŋiz ä*.

Another alternative reading would be *atsar alp ärtiŋiz itu*, *atsar küč ärtiŋiz ä*, regarding *itu* at the end of the first clause as a variant of the exclamation /YItU/, i.e. *ytu*, occurring at the end of this line. But I pre-

fer the first solution because of the rhymed opposition between *atsar* and *tutsar* in the two parallel clauses: *atsar alp ärtiñiz i, tutsar küç ärtiñiz ä*.

12. F 1. *(i)n(i)l(i)g*. FATlas: /nrg/; Radloff: /Inlg/; Orkun, Malov: /Inlg/; Vasil'ev: /nlg/.

Radloff (together with the following /BÜrl/): *inilig böri* 'der jüngere Brüder habende Wolf'; Orkun: *iniliğ böri* 'yavru kurt'; Malov: *inilig böri* 'Volk ... imejuščij mladšix brat'ev'; Kljaštornyj: *inilig bürt* '(dux) smerti so svoej mladšej brat'ej'; Mori: *inilig bürt* 'Küçük erkek kardeş sahibi ölüm tanrısı'.

There can be no doubt that the group of letters /nlg/ is a scribal error for /Inlg/ or /Inllg/, i.e. the adjective *inilig* 'having younger brothers'. The initial and medial vowels are also absent in /nlgÜ/, i.e. *(i)n(i)l(i)gü* in line 8.

13. F 1. *bört*. FATlas: /bÜrt/; Radloff: /bÜrl/; Vasil'ev: /bÜrt/.

Radloff, Orkun and Malov: *böri* 'wolf'. But in Korpus the word is spelt /bÜrt/. Kljaštornyj read this as *bürt*, and translated it into Russian as '(dux) smerti', i.e. 'the spirit of death', seeing a relation between this word and *bürt* 'nightmare' in MK. Mori, too, accepted this reading and interpretation.

In my opinion, this word, which is quite similar to OT *böri* 'wolf', could etymologically be related to it. But it is a *hapax legomenon*. However, it reminds me of the noun *bört* or *börtü* in the well-known Modern Turkish phrase *börtü böcek* 'insects and the like' (< ?*bört ü böcek*). As is well known, the wolf has long been regarded as a sacred animal by the Turks and its name has always been taboo. As a result the Common Turkic *bö:ri* has been replaced by a word meaning 'worm' or 'insect' in the Oghuz group, e.g. Trk. *kurt*, Az. *gurd*. We know that in Turkmen, alongside the old word *bö:ri*, the word *mö:jek* 'insect' is also used to denote 'wolf'. I would like to point out here that in some Anatolian dialects the phrase *böcü börtü* is used to denote wild animals like wolves, jackals and pigs: *böcü börtü* 'kurt, çakal, domuz gibi zararlı sayılan hayvanlar' (Ödemiş, Kiraz köyleri; Eşme-Uşak), etc. (DS II: 755-756). If Turkish *bört* or *börtü* in *börtü böcek* is cognate to *böri*, it is very probable that *böri*, too, was not the original name given to this animal by the ancient Turks.

14. F 1. *oça*. Radloff: *uça* 'entflieht (fliegt)'; Orkun: *uça* '[uça?]'; Malov: *böri uça* 'Volk bežal' (p. 53); Kljaštornyj: *inilig bürt uç a* 'Sgin' (dux) smerti so svoej mladšej brat'ej!' (1976: 261), Mori: *inilig bürt uç a* 'Ah! Küçük erkek kardeş sahibi ölüm tanrısı, def ol!' (1986: 6).



All these readings and interpretations are wrong. In my opinion what we have here is the adjective *oča* ‘young, little, youngest’ modifying *bars*. The word *oča* has not yet been attested in Old and Middle Turkic, but it appears in some northeastern languages as *oča* and *oči*: Shor *oča* ‘jüngster, kleinst, letzter’, Sag. *oči* id. (Radloff, Wb. I: 1135, 1137), Khak. *oči* id.

15. F 1. (a)dr(ı)lm(a) yıtu . FATlas, Radloff, Vasil’ev: /DRLmYItU/.

Radloff: *adırılmaı itü* ‘so trennt sich doch der Tiger nicht (von den Seinen)’ (pp. 332-333); Orkun: *adırılmaı itu* ‘ayrılma ey!’ (1936-1941, 3: 101-102); Malov: *bars adırılmaı itu* (?) ‘bars ne otdelilsja’ (1952: 53); Kljaštornyj: *adırılma yıtu* ‘ne pokidaj (naš)’ (p. 261); Mori: *adrılma yıtu* ‘Bars, ayrılma (ölme). Üzgünüm!’ (1986: 6).

Radloff, Orkun and Malov thought that the letter /Y/ of *yıtu* belonged to the preceding verb. But a verbal form like *adrılmaı* is impossible in Old Turkic. The first word spelt /DRLm/ must definitely be *adrılma*. It is obvious that the scribe simply forgot to write the final /A/ here. Kljaštornyj and Mori read the word correctly.

As for the second word, which is spelt /YItU/ instead of /YITU/, it must be an exclamation of pity, perhaps a variant of the commonly used *yıta*.

16. F 2. bot(o)m(u)z. FATlas: /UKmz/; Radloff, Vasil’ev: /BUTmz/.

Radloff: *bu atımız* ‘dieser unser Name’, Orkun: *bu atımız* ‘bu bizim adımız’, Malov: *bu atımız* ‘Éto naše imja’, *bu atımız*. Kljaštornyj: [bu?] *atımız* ‘naše zvanie’, Mori: *bu atımız* ‘Bu bizim adımız (or adımızdır)’.

All these readings and interpretations are wrong. Since the deceased is one person he would not say *bu atımız* in the sense of ‘my name’. Besides, the word *bu* would be out of place in such an utterance.

What we have here is the word *botu* or *boto*, i.e. ‘camel colt’, having the 1st p. poss. suffix of the plural and used here figuratively for the deceased younger brother.

17. F 2. um(a)y b(ä)g(i)m(i)z ‘Our Umay(-like) beg’. FATlas: /UmY : bgmd/; Radloff: /UmYbgbz/; Vasil’ev: /UmYbgmz/.

Radloff: *umay bæg biz* (together with the preceding *bu atımız*) ‘(Dieser unser Name ist) Umay Beg, (der sind) wir’; Orkun: *umay beg biz* ‘(bu bizim adımız) Umay beg’dir’; Malov: *Umay bæg biz* ‘(Éto naše imja-Umay beg’, Kljaštornyj: *umay begimiz (begmiz)* ‘(Naše zvanie...), naš beg-Umaj (var.: naše zvanie takovo-my umaj-begi)’; Mori: *umay bay biz* ‘Umay boyuyuz biz’.

These readings and interpretations cannot be correct, for the group of letters in question is certainly /UmYbgmz/, i.e. *umay bāgimiz* which can literally be understood only as ‘our Umay beg’. But *Umay*, being the name of the goddess who is believed to look after women and children, could hardly be a name given to a male child as Clauson remarked (EDPT: 165).

How could and should the phrase *Umay bāgimiz* be understood? The only solution I can find for the time being is to construe it as ‘our Umay(-like) beg’, i.e. ‘our beg (who protects us as) Umay (does)’.

18. F 2. *biz uya (a)lp (ä)r özin* ‘Our lives, the lives of (your) brave kinsmen (acc.) ...’.

The word *uya* ‘relative, kinsman’ in this phrase was misunderstood by Radloff who translated the passage as ‘Uns folgend, hast den Heldenmann selbst nicht erniedrigt (?)’ (1895: 333). Orkun: *biz uya alp er* ‘Biz kahraman kardeş’; Malov: *biz uya alp är* ‘My-nasledstvennyj muž geroj’; Kljaštornyj: *biz uya alp er* ‘my xrabrye vojny (naševo) roda-plemeni (var.: my rodiči, xrabrye vojny)’; Mori: *biz uya* ‘Biz bir boyuz’.

All these interpretations are wrong. The verb meaning ‘folgen’ is *ud-*, not *uy-* in Old Turkic. Secondly, OT *uya* means ‘brother, blood brother, kinsman’, and not ‘kahraman’ or ‘tribe, clan’.

Furthermore, the word *öz* here means ‘life’, not ‘self’, as in the examples given below: *özüg uzun bolzun* ‘May your life be long!’ (Irk Bitig: 47), *sansız tümän özlüg ölüür* ‘They kill countless myriads of living beings’, *qısyā özlüg yaşıg tınlıylar* ‘short-lived mortals’, *uzun özlüg yaşıy* ‘long-lived’, etc. (EDPT: 286), etc.

19. F 2. *(a)l(ı)tı qılm(a)d(ı)ñ*. Radloff: /LtIKILmDñ/ *alti kılmađıñ* ‘nicht erniedrigt (?)’; Orkun: *eleti kılmađıñ* ‘göndermedin’; Malov: *äläti (alti?) kılmađıñ*; Kljaštornyj: *altı er almađıñ* ‘Šesteryx mužej s soboj ty ne vzjal!’, Mori: *altı qılmađıñ* ‘altı kiři yapmadınız’; Vasil’ev: /LtIKILmDñ/.

All these readings and interpretations are wrong and do not fit the context. The front-vocalic sign /t/ in the first word is only a scribal error for the back-vocalic /T/. Therefore the first three letters should be read *alıtı*. What we have here is the verbal phrase *alıt-ı qıl-* which means ‘to let someone be taken (by the enemy)’.

20. F 2. *özl(ü)k (a)t*. Radloff: *özlāk at* ‘Reitpferd’; Orkun: *özlük at* ‘kendi at’ (!); Malov: *özlāk at* ‘sobstvennaja (ili žirnaja?) lošad’; Kljaštornyj: *özlük at* ‘skakun’, i.e. ‘thoroughbred, fast-running horse’; Mori: *özlük at* ‘hızlı koşabilen at’.

All these interpretations are wrong. As is known, the adjective *özlük* means ‘private, personal’. Together with the following *öz:(i)n* the whole phrase means ‘the life of (your) private horse’.

21. F 2. *öz:(i)n*, i.e. *öz(i)n*. The word is wrongly separated by a colon; cf. *b(ä)ŋ:güm(i)n* (R3).

This *öz*, too, has been misinterpreted by the previous editors. It means ‘life’, and not ‘self’, like the one in the passage *biz uya (a)lp (ä)r özin* ... in line 5 (see note 18 above). It means that the deceased young warrior saved, with his self-sacrificing actions, not only the lives of his three brothers but also the life of his favorite horse in the battle which cost him his life.

22. F 2. *üč (ä)r(i)g*. Finnish Atlas, Radloff: /Üčrg/, Vasil’ev: /ÜčKg/. Radloff, together with the preceding *özin*: and the following *almadıŋ: öčürüg* ‘selbst nicht vernichtet’; Orkun: *üç eriğ* ‘üç adamı’; Malov: *üč äriğ* ‘trex mužej’; ‘the three men’; Kljaštornyj: *üç qag* ‘trex sosudov’; Mori: *üč äriğ* ‘üç savaşıyı’.

The second word is spelt /Kg/ in Korpus. This can be read as *q(a)g* and it could be regarded as the accusative form of *ka* ‘kinsmen, relatives’, not of *ka* ‘vessel, container’ as Kljaštornyj thinks, because such a word does not fit the context here.

In my opinion, *üč (ä)r(i)g* is correct. The runic sign identified as /K/ by Vasil’ev looks like a slightly different form of the front-vocalic /r/ in the photograph.

“The three men” whose lives were saved are no doubt the three brothers of the deceased, i.e. slayed warrior.

23. F 2. *(e)z(ä)nčüm ä küz(ä)nčüm ä*. Radloff: /znččÜmA kÜznčÜmA/; Vasil’ev: /znčÜmA:kÜznčÜmA/.

Radloff: *äzänčümä küzänčümä* ‘von meinen Gewohnheiten und Wünschen’, Orkun: *ezinçüme közüñçüme* ‘şöhretimden’; Malov: *äzänčümä közüñčümä* ‘ot moix dobryx obyčaeŋ i moix želanij (ili javlenij)’; Kljaštornyj: *ezünčüm (?) a közüñčüm a* ‘O, moja dragocenost’! O, moe sokrovisčel’ (1976: 261, 263); Mori: *ezünčüm a közüñčüm a* ‘Benim hazinem (?), ah! Benim servetim, ah!’ (1986: 6).

Radloff’s interpretations cannot be accepted, for a word like *äzänč* or *äzänčü* meaning ‘Gewohnheit’ does not exist and the verb meaning ‘to wish, desire’ is *küsä-* with /s/ in Old Turkic. Orkun wrongly compares his *ezinçü* with MK’s *idünču* meaning ‘something which is let loose’. As for the second word read *közüñčüm* by Kljaštornyj and Mori, it is obvious that they wanted to identify this word with *közüñč* ‘Schätze’,

thus read and interpreted in U I (6: 14). Here it should be remembered that Röhrborn reads the same word as *küzünč* 'Kostbarkeiten' (1979: 113).

These are in fact the most puzzling two words of this inscription, and I must confess having had real difficulties trying to find a solution. Since these two words occur immediately after *yita*, the well-known exclamation of sorrow, pity or regret, the former can be read *(e)z(ä)nčüm ä* or *(e)z(i)nčüm ä* and this can be compared with Kar.H. *ezeñts* 'disgusting, detestable, abominable' and Kar.T. *izinič* 'unpleasant, disgusting'. These two Karaim words go back to an older and original *\*ezänč* or *\*ezinič*. The hypothetical *\*ezänčü* or *\*ežinciü* can then be compared with *erinič* 'wretched, miserable' occurring in the second Altinköl inscription: *(ä)rd(ä)ml[(i)g] bols(a)r bod(u)n is(i)rk(ä)yü (e)rm(ä)di. (e)r(i)nč(i)m, i[s](i)z(i)m ä* 'Since I had manly qualities, the people regretted (so much the loss through my death) and did not despise (me). How miserable it is! Alas (for my life)!' (line 4). But this *(e)r(i)nč* is a noun in *-(X)nç* derived from *(y)er-* 'to loathe, blame' (OTWF: 284). The form *\*ezänčü* occurring in the inscription, on the other hand, is a noun in *-(X)nçU* derived from an obsolete base *\*ezä-* which seems to have survived only in Khak. *izä-* 'to destroy, demolish' and in its derivatives *izäg* 'destruction, demolition, wreck', *izäl-* 'to be destroyed', *izälig* 'ruin, devastation'. The second group of letters can in this case be read *küz(ä)nčüm ä* and *küzänčü*, too, can be regarded as a noun in *-(X)nçU* derived from *\*küzä-*, an obsolete verb which seems to have survived only in Khak. *küzä-* 'to defame, cover with shame'. The passage *ezänčüm ä küzänčüm ä* may then be rendered as 'O, how unpleasant it is! O, how shameful it is!'.

Another possibility is to regard the first word as a derivative of *\*ezä-*, perhaps an old variant of *yezä-* 'to patrol, go on sentry, watch, guard' (EDPT: 985) without the initial /y/. In Uygur there are examples of the loss of the initial /y/ before /e/, e.g. *yer-* / *er-* 'to loathe, oppose, despise', *yerinič* / *erinič* 'wretched, miserable', *yeriničü* / *eriničü* 'sin, something loathsome, a thing to be condemned', *yelkür-* / *elkür-* 'to soar, flutter', *yelküt-* / *elküt-* 'to excite, activate', etc. The verbal noun *\*ezänčü* could then be understood as 'advance guard, vanguard', like *yezäk* 'advance guard' in MK (EDPT: 986). The verb *yezä-* seems to have passed from Turkic into Mongolian where it has the form *jese-* and *jise-* 'to mount guard; to go on sentry duty; to watch, guard' (Doerfer 1965-1975, IV: 164).

The second word *küzānčü* or *küzünčü*, too, could in this case be regarded as a noun derived from \**küzä-* ‘to watch, guard, protect’. The latter has not yet been attested in the Old and Middle Turkic texts, but I think it lives on, among other languages, in Kirghiz *küzö-* which is synonymous with *küzöt-* ‘to guard, watch, protect’ < OT *küzäd-* < *küzä-d-*. Thus, *küzānčü* or *küzünčü* could be an agent noun meaning ‘guardian, watcher, protector’, like *akınču* ‘raider, raiding party’ in MK. The passage *ezānčüm ä küzānčüm ä* may in this case be translated ‘O, my advance guard! O, my protector!’. Here I would like to point out that Arat read the word *közünčüm* occurring in MK II 8-14 as *küzünčüm* and translated it into Turkish as ‘koruyucum’ (Arat 1965: 17).

For contextual reasons, I am more inclined toward the second solution because of the word *ögürd(i)m* or *ögürd(ü)m* ‘(O,) my joy (in life)!’ occurring immediately after *(e)z(ä)nčüm ä küz(ä)nčüm ä* (see note 25 below).

24. F 2. *s(ä)čl(i)nm[ä]*. FATlas: /sčlnmÜ/; Radloff: /IčlnmÜ/; Vasil’ev: /sčlnmÜ/.

Radloff: *ič älinmü* ‘beim inneren Volke?’; Orkun: *iç elinmü* ‘... mi?’; Malov: *ič älinmü (?)* ‘u vnutrennego naroda (?)’; Kljaštornyj: *sečilenmü* (without translation); Mori: *es ečili inim ö* ‘ağabeyim ve küçük erkek kardeşlerim, beni düşün.’ Vasil’ev: /sčlnmÜ/.

The first letter in this group is the front-vocalic sign /s/, and not /l/. The last sign, on the other hand, is /Ü/ everywhere, including Korpus. But it must be a scribal error for /A/. Thus, what we have here is actually /sčlnmA/, i.e. *s(ä)čl(i)nmä* ‘do not be parted!’, i.e. a form synonymous with the preceding *adrılma* ‘do not be separated!’. The verbal binary *adrıl- säčlin-* is found also in the Kızıl Çıra I inscription (lines 1-2): *oɣl(u)ma yut(u)z(u)ma adr(ı)lt(ı)m s(ä)čl(i)nt(i)m* (Vasil’ev 1983: 30). The binary *adır- säč-* ‘to choose, select, pick out’ is quite common in Kutadgu Bilig, e.g. *adr-a säč-ä yör-*, *adr-a säč-ä tut-*, etc.

25. F 2. *ögürd(i)m*. FATlas, Radloff: /IYÜrdmm/; Vasil’ev: /ÜgÜrdm/.

Radloff: *ıyu ärdämim*; Orkun: *iyü erdemim* ‘erdemim’; Malov: *iyü (?) ärdämim* ‘moja doblest’; Kljaštornyj: *ögürdim[iz]* ‘My (prežde) radovalis’; Mori: *ıyu ärdämim* ‘Ah! (?) Benim (?) cesaretim’.

Regarding the last group of letters of this line there is a great difference between the old copies and the one produced by Vasil’ev. But the photograph in Korpus is clear and supports Vasil’ev’s reading:

/ÜgÜrdm/. As far as I can see, there is no /z/ at the end of it, as Kljaštornyj assumes.

The group of letters /ÜgÜrdm/ could of course be read as *ögürd(ü)m* 'I became happy'. But neither this nor Kljaštornyj's *ögürdimiz* 'We were (formerly) happy' would fit the context.

In my opinion, what we have here is a verbal noun in *-DI* or in *-DU* derived from *ögür-* 'to be joyful, rejoice', i.e. *ögürdi* or *ögürdü* 'joy' (cf. Uyg. *ögdi* 'praise', *alkadı* id., MK *tamdu* 'blaze', *umdu* 'request, begging' etc.). Such a noun would perfectly fit the context and be in harmony especially with the preceding imperative forms *adrılma säčlinmä* 'Do not be parted and separated (from us)!'

26. F 3. *b(a)rs t(ä)g(i)m ä (ä)rd(ä)ml(i)g(i)m ä*. FATlas: /BRrtgmA : rdmlgmA/; Radloff, Vasil'ev: /BRStgmA:rdmlgmA/.

Radloff: *bars tägimä ärdämligimä* 'Bei meinem auf der Erde lebenden Tigergeschlechte, bei meinen mit Trefflichkeit Begabten'; Orkun: *bar ertigime erdemligime* 'yerdeki var olduğuma, erdemliğime'; Malov: /BRr(ili S)tgmA/ *bar ärtigimä* (ili *bars tägimä*) 'moim byt'em i (vsem) moim doblestnym ili moim zemnym rodom "bars"'; Kljaštornyj: *bars etigim a erdemligim a* 'moimi dejanijami i moej doblestvju-ja, Bars,'; Mori: *Bars ätigim a ärdämligim a* 'Yeryüzündeki Bars, benim davranışım, ah! Benim cesurluğum, ah!'

The first group of letters under scrutiny is clearly /BRStgmA/ in Vasil'ev (1983) and in the photograph on p. 103. This can only be read as *bars tägimä* or *bars tägim ä*. *Yerdäki bars tägimä, ärdämligimä bök-mädim* would make a good sentence, but the dative suffix after the 1st p. poss. suffix of the singular is +KA in this and the second Altinköl inscription: *il(i)mkä* (line 1), *oyl(u)mqa, bod(u)n(u)mqa* (Altinköl II, front 2), but *y(a)s(ı)ma* (front 4). In my opinion, what we have here are two phrases, i.e. *bars tägim* 'my tiger-like one' and *ärdämligim* 'my virtuous (one)', both followed by the interjection of address A. It should be kept in mind that the speaker here is not the deceased, but his mother. She employs the same simile in speaking of her deceased son on the right side of the same inscription: *t(a)d čına b(a)rs(ı)m* (line 1).

27. F 3. *bökm[(ä)d(i)m]*. After the first three letters there is a punctuation mark in the shape of /:./, perhaps indicating that the line ends there. But the word is incomplete. Obviously, the scribe simply forgot to add the letters /dm/. Radloff reads this *bükmä(dim)*; Malov, Kljaštornyj and Mori correctly read the word with /ö/ and repaired the text by adding

The mother of the deceased, after having described her son with the phrase *(a)ltun soŋa y(i)š k(e)y(i)ki* 'the wild animal of the Altay and Songa Mountains' at the beginning of this line, continues her description with the phrases *(a)rt (o)ɣ(u)l* '(my) last son' and *t(a)š (o)ɣ(u)l* '(my) son abroad'. The use of the noun *taš* 'outside, exterior' attributively is not unusual; cf. *taš y(a)ɣ* 'the outer enemy' (Kežeelig-Khovu, 4), MK *taš ton* 'outer garment', etc. The only problem here is that the initial vowel of *oɣul* is not written in the two occurrences of the word. But in this inscription and others there are many cases similar to this, e.g. *tört (i)n(i)l(i)gü* (right 2), *(ä)r (ä)r<d>(ä)m (ü)č(ü)n* (right 3), *(ö)l(ü)rm(ä)-dük(ü)m* (Elegest I, line 8), etc. Therefore, we may assume that the scribe simply forgot to write the initial vowel of *oɣul* in its two occurrences.



30. R 1. *t(a)d čina b(a)rs(ı)m*. FAtlas, Radloff, Orkun, Malov: /TDčI:NABRSm/; Vasil'ev: /TDčUNA:BRSm/ in the transliteration (p. 25), but /TDçINABRSm/ in the runic copy (p. 64).

Radloff (together with the preceding /GL/) *aɣlatdačina(ga?) barsım*; Orkun: *tad ečinä barsım* 'yabancı içine'; Malov: *udačina barsım* 'Po ego moguščestvu moj bars'; Kljaštornyj (together with the following *adrilu bardı*): *at ud ačun a barsım adırılı bardı* 'Moj Bars pokinul konej i bykov, (ves' étot) mir, on ušel!'; Mori (together with the following *adrilu bardı*): *tad ičiqä barsım adırılı bardı* 'Başka boy(?)un içine, benim Bars ayrılıp gitti.'

It goes without saying that all these readings and interpretations are wrong.

In my opinion, the first two letters may be read *t(a)d* and this may be compared with *tadun* 'a calf, one or two years old', or *ta:dun* 'a one-year-old calf' occurring in MK. This full form of the word survives in Kach., Koyb. *tazın* 'der Ochs', Khak. *tazın* 'an ox, a gelded bull' (EDPT: 457). It also survives in Kzk. *tayınša* 'a one-year-old calf' < \**tadun*+*ča*.

The Middle Turkic *tadun* is in all likelihood a secondary form derived from \**tad*, meaning originally 'a young calf or bull', but used here in the sense of 'young' (cf. OT *bod* 'tribe' and *bodun* 'tribes, people').

As for the second word here, I believe that it is *čina* meaning 'little'. The word *čina* has not yet been attested in the Old Turkic texts, but it is found in modern languages as the base or the first element of a group of words meaning 'the little finger', e.g. Kzk. *šinaşak* 'the little finger or little toe' < \**čina*+*čak*, Crim.Tat. *činajak* id., Blk. *činačik* id., Nog. *šinatay* id. < *čina* *tay*, etc.

31. R 2. *tört (i)n(i)l(i)gü. (ä)rt(i)m(i)z*. FAtlas: /tÜrtnlgÜ : rtmz/; Radloff: /tÜrtnlgÜ : rtm/; Vasil'ev: /tÜrtnlgÜ:rtmz/.

Radloff: *tört änligü ärtim* 'die vier (Winkel) habe ich erstrebt'; Orkun: *tört inilgü ertim[iz]* 'dört kardeşli idik'; Malov: *tört änilgü (?) ärtim(iz)* 'Naš bylo četyre mladšix brata'; Kljaštornyj: *tört inelgü ertimiz* 'Naš bylo četvero vysokorodnyx'; Mori: *tört inälgü ärtimiz* 'Dört meşhur aileden idik'.

All these previous readings and interpretations are wrong. What we actually have here is the word *ini* plus the Orkhon Turkic comitative suffix +*IGU* (see Tekin 1990).

32. R 3. *(ä)r (ä)r<d>(ä)m (ü)č(ü)n*. In the inscription we have only the group of letters /rrmčn/. It is obvious that the scribe simply forgot to



inscribe the letter /d/ after the second /r/. He also omitted the initial /Ü/ of the following (ü)č(ü)n.

33. R 3. *uy(u)r(ı)n üč(ü)n*. Radloff, Orkun, Malov, Kljaštornyj: *uyarın*; Mori: *uyurın*. Of these, only Mori's reading is correct, for the word is a present participle in -yUr. The fully vocalized form of this word occurs in Irk Bitig: (ä)dgüsi *uyurı* 'his good and capable (men)' (IB 28).

34. *b(ä)ŋ:güm(i)n*. The word is wrongly separated into two parts. Cf. *öz:(i)n*, i.e. *özin* 'the life of' (front, line 2).

### Abbreviations

Bashk.	Bashkir	MK	Maḥmūd al-Kāşārī
Blk.	Balkar	Nog.	Noghay
Chag.	Chaghatay	NUyg.	Modern Uyghur (= New Uyghur)
Crim.Tat.	Crimean Tatar	OT	Old Turkic
Kach.	Kacha / Qača	Sag.	Saghay
Kar.H.	Karaim, Halič dialect	Trk.	Turkish
Kar.T.	Karaim, Troki dialect	Trkm.	Turkmen
Khak.	Khakas	Uyg.	Uyghur
Kirg.	Kirgiz	Uzb.	Uzbek
Koyb.	Koybal	Yak.	Yakut
Kzk.	Kazakh		

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