

ON ČŰLGL (OR ČŰLGIL) IN THE KÜL TEGIN AND BILGÄ KAGAN INSCRIPTIONS*

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This paper attempts to give new explanation for the ethnonyms *bŰkli* and *čŰlgl* (or *čŰlgil*) occurring in the Türk inscriptions of Kül Tegin and Bilgä Kagan. After a thorough survey of former research the author comes to the conclusion that the two names must be treated separately, both indicating a separate country. *Bökli* or *Bökküli* (*bŰkli*), as was correctly supposed formerly, is undoubtedly identical with Goguryeo, a Korean state of the period. *čŰlgl* (or *čŰlgil*) must be read as *Čülüg el* which may be a Turkic name for the Chinese state of Northern Zhou of Tuoba origin. On the other hand, a third ethnonym of the inscriptions, *Tabgač*, refers to the Northern Qi state of Tuoba origin. So it is certainly inaccurate to translate *Tabgač*, in a simplified manner, as ‘China’ or ‘the Chinese’ as most researchers have done until now. *Čülüg el* and *Tabgač* were two separate Chinese states of the period.

Key words: *Bökli*, *Bökküli*, *Čülüg el*, *Tabgač*, Türk inscriptions, Goguryeo, Northern Zhou, Northern Qi.

I. Introduction

Orkhon Turkic is the oldest Turkic dialect whose written records have come down to us (Tekin 1968, p. 7). Orkhon Turkic is known to us through the inscriptions found in present-day Mongolia, mainly in the basin of the Orkhon River, thus being conveniently called ‘the Orkhon inscriptions’. These are the Kül Tegin, Bilgä Kagan, Tuñukuk, Išbara Tarkan (Ongi) and Küli Čor (Ikhe-Khüshötü) inscriptions (Tekin 1968, p. 9).

The Kül Tegin and Bilgä Kagan inscriptions are located in the vicinity of the old course of the Orkhon River and the inland lake named Košo Caydam (ca. 47°

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north latitude and 102° east longitude) (Tekin 1968, p. 9). They were at approximately one kilometre distance from each other. Severely damaged, these two inscriptions are now preserved in the museum (Alyılmaz 2005). The replicas of these inscriptions are in their original places.

Since the well-known Danish scholar Vilhelm Thomsen succeeded in deciphering the Old Turkic script used in the Orkhon and Yenisei inscriptions of the ancient Turks (Tekin 1968, p. 12), many researchers have tried to interpret the texts of the inscriptions. Most parts of the inscriptions are already correctly read and interpreted.

Many parts of the Kül Tegin and the Bilgä Kagan inscriptions are almost identical. Although most parts of these two inscriptions can be well understood, a thorough examination is still needed in the case of some words. One of them is the letter group of *čWlgl* or *čWlglI* occurring in the list of countries that sent representatives to a Turkic Kagan's funeral. This letter group has been usually treated together with its preceding letter group of *bWkII*. However, none of the readings and translations so far of *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) together with *bWkII* are satisfactory. Moreover, the translations of the next word, *TBGč* (*tabgač*), are also problematic. Therefore, in this paper we will try to solve the problem of reading and translating *bWkII* : *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) : *TBGč* (*tabgač*).

The sentence containing these letter groups is in KT E 4 and BK E 5 as follows¹:

yogči : *sʷigütči* : *önrä* : *kʷün* (or *kün*) : *tugsikda* : *bWkII* : *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) :
tabgač : *töpöt* : *par* : *purum* (or *par purum*) : *kʷirkiz* : *üč* *kʷurikan* : *otuz*
tatar : *kʷitañ* : *tatabi* : *bunča* : *bodun* : *kälipän* : *sigtamiš* : *yogلاميš* :

II. Interpretations of the Letter Group *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) together with the Adjacent Two Words, *bWkII* and *tabgač*

As mentioned above, the letter group of *čWlgl* or *čWlglI* has been usually treated together with its preceding letter group of *bWkII*. The third letter group is certainly *tabgač*. Therefore, we can first divide the interpretations of *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) into two groups: (1) *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) without *bWkII*, i.e. *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) and *bWkII* as separate nouns; (2) *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) with *bWkII*, i.e. *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) and *bWkII* as components of a noun.

1. *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) and *bWkII* as separate nouns

1.1. “Korea, Čülig realm, China”

(1) Clauson (1972, p. 420)²: **Bükli: Čülig el³ Tavğaç**

¹ The letter groups in parentheses are from the Bilgä Kagan Inscription. See Radloff (1893, Plates XVII, XVIII, XXII, XXIII) for the runic text.

² “PU **čülig** this word has been read in **Türkü VIII I E 4. II E 5** in the list of countries which sent representatives to Ešte mi Xağan's(?) funeral; it begins ‘from the east, where the sun rises’

1.2. “Korea, the *čölig* nation, China”(1) Clark (1977, p. 135): *bükli, čölig il, tabyač* “Korea, the *čölig* nation, China”⁴

1.3. “Bökli, Čölgil, Tabgač”

(1) Berta (2004, pp. 141, 193): *bw̄k’li čw̄lgi tabyač* “Bökli, Csölgil, Tabgacs”

1.4. “Bükli, Čöllüg Il, China”

(1) User (2009, pp. 48, 150, 154, 158, 159, 162, 164, 187, 223, 231, 281, 282, 286, 333, 395): *bükli čöl(lü)g (e)l t(a)bg(a)ç* “Bök İli⁵, Čöllüg İl, Çin”⁶(2) User (2009, pp. 446, 455): *bök (e)li⁷ : čöl(lü)g (e)l : t(a)bg(a)ç*

Bükli: (PU) **Čülüg el Tavğaç Tüpüt**, etc. Henning in ‘The Date of the Early Sogdian Letters’, *BSOAS* XII 601 ff, showed that **Bükli:** meant ‘Korea’; **Tavğaç** is of course ‘China’ and **Tüpüt** ‘Tibet’; as the list is presumably in a strict geographical order, the entry between Korea and China must be some unidentified ‘realm’ (el) between Korea and China, perhaps one of the minor kingdoms in Korea. The word looks like a Chinese representation of some name like *chū li(g)*. It has been read as **čöllig** and explained as a P.N./A. fr. **čöl** meaning ‘belonging to the steppes’, but this is impossible since **čöl** is a Mong. word which is not traceable as a l.-w. in Turkish earlier than Çağ. XV ff. *Vel.* 252; *San.* 214v. 15. The suggested translations ‘distant’ and ‘strange’ are purely hypothetical, since they do not rest on any solid etymological basis” (Clauson 1972, p. 420). [The title of Henning’s article is not ‘The Date of the Early Sogdian Letters’, but ‘The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters’. However, there is no mention of Korea in that article.]

“**čöl** ‘desert’ (Mong.) see **čülig**” (Clauson 1972, p. 417).

³ Correctly, **él**, i.e. *el*.

⁴ “KT E4 [= BX E5] *čölig il* in the list of countries that sent representatives to Ištemi Xayan’s funeral: *bükli, čölig il, tabyač, töpöt* «Korea, the *čölig* nation, China, Tibet» (ED 420). Some editors of this passage have read the word as *čöl(l)ig*, that is, as *čöl* «desert, steppe» + *-lig* (IOD 98,139; PDP 376; DTS 155; GOT 323); the same word has been read in Toñ 23 *čölgil az eri bultum* «(I searched for a guide and) I found an Az man from *čölgil(?)*» (cf. ED 420; PDP 376; DTS 155; GOT 323). Because of this disputed occurrence in the inscriptions, both Räsänen (VEWT 117) and Doerfer (TMEN III 122–123; IV 458) consider *čöl* «desert, steppe» to be an originally Tü word which was borrowed into Mo (see TMEN for citations). For my part, I consider *čöl* a Mo word that first certainly appears in Čay (cf. ED 420), and is found in Central Asian and Siberian Tü languages. As to the present passages, it should be pointed out: (1) the exact phonetic interpretation of the word is uncertain: KT *čölp̄g* = *čölig, čülig, čöleg, čüleg, čöllüg, čüllüg*, etc.; Toñ *čölp̄gi* = *čölgil, čülgil, čölegil, čülegil, čölligil, čülligil*; (2) the meaning of neither word is known, nor is the connection between the two certain (*čölig il* comes between Korea and China, whereas *čölgil* is associated with the Az tribe, always mentioned in connection with the Čik and the Qırız of the Southern Sayan); (3) it might be possible to postulate *čöl(l)ig* for *čölig*, but there is no suffix *-gi* in Tü or Mo for *čölgil*; (4) the formation *čöl + lig* is not otherwise known, nor does the construction *čöl-lig il* «(lit.) nation having or possessing the quality of a steppe» make very good sense; (5) both *čölig* and *čölgil* (as read) could be placenames or tribal appellatives drawn from a non-Turkic language. Because the two words are attended only by uncertainties (phonetic, morphological, contextual, semantic), it is rash both to seek the word *čöl* «desert, steppe» as their root, and to consider *čöl* as OTü on the basis of these words” (Clark 1977, pp. 135–136).

⁵ Bök İli should be an error for Bükli.

⁶ *čöl* ‘čöl, bozkır’ (User 2009, p. 522).

⁷ *bök (e)li* should be an error for *bükli*.

2. čWlgl (or čWlglII) and bWkII as components of a noun

2.1. “mighty people(s) of the steppe”

- (1) Radloff (1894, pp. 5, 45): *bökli čölzi äl Tabğaç* “die (rundherum bis nach Osten hin wohnenden) mächtigen Steppenvölker, die berühmten (Chinesen)”,
Radloff (1894, p. 140): *bökli čölzi äl Tabğaç* “mächtige Steppenvölker”

2.2. “mighty peoples of the desert (i.e. foreign?)”

- (1) Thomsen (1896, p. 98): *bökli čölⁱg²-il, t^abγ^ač*; *bökli čölⁱg²-il, t^abγ^ač* “les puissants peuples du désert (c’est-à-dire étrangers?), les Chinois”,
² *čöl<l>ⁱg?*

2.3. “mighty Äls of the steppe”

- (1) Bang (1896, pp. 333, 349–350): *bökli čölig äl, Tabğaç* “die mächtigen Äle der Steppe, die Chinesen”⁸

2.4. “people of Bökli-Äčü”

- (1) Radloff (1895, p. 216): *Bökli-äčyliz äl* “das Volk des Bökli-Ätschü”⁹

2.5. “tribes of Bökli-äčü?”

- (1) Radloff (1897, p. 131): *Bökli-čöllýz [Bökli-äčylýz ?] äl, Tabğaç* “die Stämme der Bökli-Steppe⁵, die Chinesen”,¹⁰
⁵ die Stämme der Bökli-etschü?

⁸ “..... So viel ich weiss, kann *äl* jedoch nicht in der Bedeutung *budun* zur Bezeichnung eines nicht türkischen Volkes gebraucht werden, weswegen auch THOMSENS „peuples étrangers“ zu verwerfen ist. Grammatisch richtig kann *önrä – äl* nur durch „nach vorn, zum Aufgang der Sonne (zogen) die mächtigen Äle der Steppe“ übersetzt werden. Da in I S 7–8 = K a. 7–8 *jazy* „Ebene“ im Gegensatz zu *Ütükan jyš* (Bergwald) steht, so verstehe ich unter *čölig äl* die die Steppen bewohnenden Stämme der Türk. „Nach Osten“ kann sich nur auf die Richtung des Zuges bei den Trauerfeierlichkeiten beziehen; Osten ist ja auch die Seite, nach welcher unsere Inschriften schuen” (Bang 1896, pp. 333–334).

⁹ “ᠪᠥᠬᠡᠯᠢ (bökli). Dieses Wort habe ich im Glossar pag. 140 aus bök+li erklärt und durch «mächtig» übersetzt. Jetzt bin ich der Ansicht, dass es besser sei, das Wort as Titel oder Eigenname aufzufassen. Ein Mal (K 8,8, X 8,6) steht bökli қаған, und einmal (K 8,8 YCYNY[sic ⇒ ʌ]:ᠪᠥᠬᠡᠯᠢ bökli [sic] čölgl) bökli äčylir äl «das von einem Bökli ätschü regierte Volk». Es sind zwei Gründe, die mich veranlassen bökli nicht als «stark» aufzufassen: 1) er scheint «stark» wo es auftritt, stets in der Form mökö oder bökö und wird überall als Adjectivum angewendet; 2) ist das Adjective bildende Affix ʌY = ʆY sehr unwahrscheinlich und wo es auftritt, anders zu erklären. Ist bökli auf türkischem Boden entstanden, so müsste es als bō+kli oder bŷ+kli von einem mir unbekanntem Verbalstamm bō, bŷ hergeleitet werden” (Radloff 1895, pp. 230–231).

“ᠪᠥᠬᠡᠯᠢ Bökli-äčŷ. Ist gewiss der Herrscher über ein im Osten wohnendes Tungusen-Volk. Das Volk wird Bökli-äčylir äl genannt. Später wird er Bökli-қаған Bökli-Chan genannt und erwähnt, dass die Chinesen diesen im Osten wohnenden Chan in Gemeinschaft mit den ihnen unterworfenen Türk mit Krieg überzogen hätten” (Radloff 1895, pp. 433–434).

¹⁰ “Bökli Eigenname 140 b; Bökli čöllýr äl, Bökli čölri äl (oder Bökli äčylir äl) und Bökli қаған (Berg?) 231, 46” (Radloff 1897, p. 180).

- (2) Radlov – Melioranskij (1897, p. 17): *Bökli-čöllŷz [Bökli-äčŷlŷz ?] äl, Табѡач* “племена степи Бökли⁷, (затѡмъ) Китайцы”,
⁷ Или «племена Бökли äчŷ»?

2.6. “tribes of the Bökli steppe”

- (1) Radloff (1897, p. 131): *Bökli-čöllŷz [Bökli-äčŷlŷz ?] äl, Табѡач* “die Stämme der Bökli-Steppe⁵, die Chinesen”,
⁵ die Stämme der Bökli-etschü?
 (2) Radlov – Melioranskij (1897, p. 17): *Bökli-čöllŷz [Bökli-äčŷlŷz ?] äl, Табѡач* “племена степи Бökли⁷, (затѡмъ) Китайцы”,
⁷ Или «племена Бökли äчŷ»?
 (3) Radloff (1905, col. 2044): *Bökly¹¹ čöllŷz äl* “племена степи Беклю – die Stämme der Bökli¹² Steppe”
 (4) Radloff (1911, col. 1694): *bökli čölzi äl* “племена степи Бекли – die Stämme der Bökli-Ebene”¹³

2.7. “people of the Bökli steppe”

- (1) Malov (1951, pp. 29, 36): *Bökli čöl(l)iz il, табѡач* “народ степи Бökлийской, (а также) табгач¹⁴”,
 (2) Malov (1951, p. 373): *Bökli čöl(l)ig äl* “народ Бökлийской степи”

2.8. “people inhabiting the Bökli steppe”

- (1) Nadeljaev *et al.* (1969, p. 155): *bökli čöl[l]ig el* “народ, обитающий в Беклийской степи”

2.9. “tribal union of the Bökli steppe”

- (1) Ajdarov (1971, p. 290): *Bökli čөл[l]iz il табгач* “(из) племенного союза Беклийской степи, табгач”
 (2) Amanžolov (2003, p. 159): *bökli čöllig^a l t^a b^a č* “(на востоке) племенной союз Бökлийской степи (чжурчжени?)¹⁵, табгачи (китайцы)”

2.10. “people of the Bökli desert”

- (1) Ergin (1970, pp. 4, 18, 51, 61): *Bökli çöl[l]üg il Tabğaç* “Bökli Çöllü halk, Çin”

¹¹ Correctly Bökli.

¹² Correctly Bökli.

¹³ Bökli-Ebene is an error for Bökli-Steppe.

¹⁴ Табѡач ‘Китай’, ... (Malov 1951, p. 425).

¹⁵ Interpreting it as Jurchen is impossible, because the name Jurchen was used after ca. the 10th century.

2.11. “people of the Bükli desert”

- (1) Tekin (1988, pp. 8, 9, 38, 39): *bükli* : *çöl(lü)g (el) : t(a)bg(a)ç*; *bükli* : *çöl(lü)g il : t(a)bg(a)ç* “Bükli Çöl halkı, Çinliler”¹⁶
- (2) Tekin (1995, pp. 38, 39, 62, 63): *Bükli Çöllüğü el, Tabgaç*; *Bükli Çöllüğü il, Tabgaç* “Bükli Çöl halkı, Çinliler”¹⁷

2.12. “people of the Bükli plain”

- (1) Tekin (1968, pp. 232, 264): *bükli çöl(l)üg el, tabyaç* “the people of the Bükli plain, the Chinese”¹⁸
- (2) Tekin (2000, p. 201): *bükli çöl(l)üg / el* “Bükli ovası halkı”¹⁹
- (3) Tekin (2000, p. 221): *Bükli çöl(l)üg il, Tabgaç*

2.13. “people of the Bökküli steppe”

- (1) Ölmez (2012, pp. 80, 93): *bökküli* : *çöllüg el*²⁰ : *tavgaç* “Bükli²¹ bozkırı halkı, Çin”²²

2.14. “people of the country of the Bökküli (= Korea) steppe”

- (1) Aydın (2012a, p. 45): *bök<k>üli çöl<l>üg el tavgaç* “Bökküli (Kore) bozkırı yurdundan, Çin”

2.15. “people of the country of the Bökküli steppe (= Korea)”

- (1) Aydın (2012a, p. 79): *bök<k>üli çöl<l>üg el [t]avgaç* “Bökküli bozkırı yurdu (Kore) halkı, Çin”²³

¹⁶ “KT D 4: *bükli çöl(lü)g (el)* = BK D 5: *bükli çöl(lü)g il*. Buradaki *Bükli* (veya *Bökküli*?) kelimesinin *bük (eli)* “orman halkı” diye anlaşılması gerektiği ileri sürülmüştür (bkz. Sertkaya 1979, p. 292). Bence bu görüş doğru değildir. Çünkü yazıtlarda bir coğrafi terimden önce daima bir özel ad gelmektedir: *Altun yış, Kadirkan yış, Çugay yış, Yarış yazı*, vb. vb. Ayrıca ve bundan daha önemli olarak dört satır aşağıda *Bükli k(a)g(a)n* ibaresi geçmektedir: ...*Bükli k(a)g(a)nka t(e)gi sü(l)e)üü birm(i)ş* (KT D 8 = BK D 8). Buradaki ibareyi *bük eli kağan* şeklinde anlamak ve açıklamak gramere ve kullanışa aykırı olur. Tek başına *bük el-i* gibi bir isim tamlaması normal ise de (krş. *Tabgaç ili*, vb.), böyle 3. kişi iyelik eki ile kurulmuş bir isim tamlamasının 3. kişi iyelik eki almamış başka bir isimle yeni bir tamlama kurabileceği şüphelidir” (Tekin 1988, p. 72).

çöl ‘çöl, step’; *ç.-(l)üg* (KT D 2 [*sic!* ⇒ 4], BK D 5); *bükli çöl* (KT D 4, BK D 5) (Tekin 1988, p. 132).

¹⁷ *çöl* ‘bozkır, step’ (Tekin 1995, p. 101).

¹⁸ *çöl* steppe, plain, desert; *ç.-(l)üg* KT E4, BK E5; (*bükli ç.*) KT E4, BK E5 (Tekin 1968, pp. 323–324).

¹⁹ *çöl* ‘step, bozkır’ (Tekin 2000, p. 242).

²⁰ Correctly *el*.

²¹ Correctly *Bökküli*.

²² *çöl* ‘bozkır, çöl’ (Ölmez 2012, p. 311).

²³ *bökküli? çöllüğü el* Kore; b. KT D 4, BK D 5 (Aydın 2012a, p. 159).

2.16. “Bökli-Čöläk people”

(1) Vambéry (1898, p. 29): *Bükli*²⁴ *Čöläk-il, Tapgač* “das Volk Bökli-Čölek, Chinesen”

2.17. “distant Bökli (?) people”

(1) Thomsen (1924, p. 145): “das ferne Bökli(?)volk, die Chinesen”

2.18. “foreign (?) Bökli people”

(1) Gabain (1941, p. 249): *Bökli čöl(ü)g*²⁵ *il, Tabyač*

2.19. “Bökli people of the desert”

(1) Çagatay (1950, p. 5): *Bökli čöl(ü)g*²⁶ *il, Tabğaç*

2.20. “(from the) tribes inhabiting forests and steppes”

(1) Orkun (1936, pp. 24, 31): *bükli čöl’ğ^{el}, t^abg^aç; bükli čöl’ğ^{il}, t^abg^aç* “ormanlarda (10), çöllerde oturan kavmlerden Çinliler”²⁷

2.21. “Korean (?) country”

(1) Aydın (2012b, p. 55): *Bök<k>üli? Čöllüg Ėl* “Kore? ülkesi”²⁸

²⁴ Correctly Bökli.

²⁵ *čöl(ü)g (ü? Runenschr.) fremd(?) || yabancı (?)* (Gabain 1941, p. 308).

²⁶ *čölüg çöl, yaban (?)* (Çagatay 1950, p. 54).

²⁷ “(10) [I D 4–II D 5] Bük kelimesi elyevm Anadolu da yaşamakta olup Kâşgaride de *الاجمة [ajama ‘thicket, jungle, forest’]* diye tercüme edildiğine göre ben ibareyi ormanlı, çöllü kavim diye tercüme ettim. Her halde bu ibarede zannedildiği gibi kelimenin has isim olmasına imkân yoktur. Zira *bükli čöl’ğ^{el}* denildikten sonra bu kavimlerin isimleri birer birer sayılmaktadır. Binaenaleyh [I Ş C–II Ş 8] de de aynı kelime aynı manada geçmektedir. Birinci ibarede *kün togusıkta bükli čöl’ğ^{el}* denildiği gibi diğer yerde de *kün togusıkta* [correctly, *togusıkda*] *bükli kaganka teği* [correctly, *teği*] denilmektedir. Bu itibarla bu ibareyi de *kün tonusıkda* [correctly, *togusıkda*] *bükli* (– *čöl’ğ^{el}*) *kaganka teği* diye anlamak lâzımdır” (Orkun 1936, p. 75).

čöl’ğ^{el} çöllü I D 4, II D 5 (I, 30) (Orkun 1941, p. 38)

²⁸ “4. 20. BÖK<K>ÜLİ? ÇÖLLÜĞ ĖL (KT D 4: YĖYŦA:YŦŦA, KT D 8, BK D 8: YŦŦA, BK D 5: YŦŦA:YŦŦA) Kore? ülkesi. KT D 4, 8, BK D 5, 8.

Üzerinde çok tartışılmış yer adlarından birisi de *bök<k>üli čöllüg Ėl*’dir. Bu yer adının çok tartışılmış olması, içerisinde geçen boy ya da halk adından kaynaklanmaktadır. Yer adı çeşitli şekillerde okunmuş ve anlaşılmıştır: Eski Türk yazıtlarında dört yerde geçmiş olmasına rağmen *čöllüg Ėl*’in neresi olduğu ve *Čöllüg(?)*lerin kimler olduğu hakkında yazıtlarda herhangi bir açıklama yapılmamıştır. GUMİLĖV de *Čöllüglerin, Mukriiler olduğunu* düşünür (2002, pp. 415–416). VĀSĀRY de *Bükli ve Mukri ile Kuzey Kore’nin kastedildiğini* düşünür (2007, p. 102).” (Aydın 2012b, pp. 55–56).

2.22. “Korean people”

(1) Ölmez (2012, pp. 123, 137): *bökküli : çöllüg el : tavgaç* “Kore halkı, Çin”

2.23. “bökli çölgil [= Korea]”

(1) Sertkaya (2015, p. 44): *bökli : çölgil : t(a)bg(a)ç* “bökli çölgil [Korea], tabgaç [China]”²⁹
 Sertkaya (2015, p. 132): *bökli : çölgil : t(a)bg(a)ç* “**bökli çölgil** [Kore], **tabgaç** [Çin]”³⁰

III. Conclusion

As was seen above, all researchers except four persons treated the letter group *čŰlgil* (or *čŰlgil*) together with its preceding letter group of *bŰkll*. The readings and translations of *čŰlgil* (or *čŰlgil*) with or without *bŰkll* differ a great deal according to the researchers, but the following word *tabgaç*, has been mostly translated as ‘China’ ‘the Chinese’, or in a few cases as ‘Tabgaç’.

These readings and translations are unsatisfactory and problematic, because most researchers overlooked the following three points:

1. The mark resembling a colon (:) is used to separate words and word groups from each other. Since the letter group of *čŰlgil* or *čŰlgil* is in a list enumerating the

²⁹ Its Turkish original has the title of ‘Kore’nin Göktürk Yazıtlarındaki Adı’ and amounts to 12 pages. This Turkish original is attached to pp. 123–134 of the proceedings named *The 7th (2nd International) Goguryeo Conference to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Restoration of Independence (the 5913th Anniversary of the National Foundation Day) [of Korea] – the Relationship between Goguryeo and the Turkic Kaganate (Korea and Turkey Are Brother Nations)*, Guri, pp. 33–48. [“돌궐 비문들에 있는 한국의 이름”, 광복 70주년(개천 5913년) 기념 제7회 高句麗 학술대회(국제 2회) – 高句麗와 돌궐의 관계 (터어키와 한국은 형제국) –, 구리. This conference was held in Guri / Korea on November 7, 2015. It was not a scholarly conference. It is officially recognised in Korea that the first Korean state was established in 2333 BC. Therefore, 5913 should be corrected as 4348.

³⁰ “Köl Tigin yazıtının Doğu yüzünün 4. satırında 𐰉𐰺𐰽𐰸 𐰇𐰺𐰽𐰸𐰺𐰽𐰸, Bilge Kağan yazıtının Doğu yüzünün 5. satırında ise tashih edilmiş şekli ile, 𐰇𐰺𐰽𐰸𐰺𐰽𐰸𐰺𐰽𐰸 𐰉𐰺𐰽𐰸𐰽𐰸𐰽𐰸 şeklinde geçen kelime bir çok araştırmacının okuduğu gibi **çöl||(ü)g il** şeklinde okunabilir. Ancak ben Eski ve Orta Türkçe devrelerinde **-gil** eki ile teşkil edilen **izgil** ve **çigil** kavim adlarına dayanarak kelimeyi Köl Tigin yazıtında **çölg(i)l**, Bilge Kağan yazıtında ise **çölgil** şekillerinde okuyor, **çöl-gil** şeklinde de ayırıyorum. Türkçe isimlendirmede **çöl** kelimesinin geçmesi kendisinden önceki Çince **bök li ~ bük li** ibaresinin “Çöl ülkesi” anlamındaki ***mo li** şeklinden geldiği görüşünü güçlendirmektedir” (Sertkaya 2015, p. 130). [The Korean translation of this passage is on p. 41.]

“**-gil** eki Türkiye Türkçesi’nde sadece ince şekli olan ve kelimelere eklendiğinde aidiyet bildiren bir partikel (clütük [correctly, *clitic*]) ekidir. Söz gelimi *Baklagiller* teriminde, *Bu geçen otomobil dayımgilindir* cümlesinde **-gil** eki aitlik/mensubiyet bildirir. Dolayısıyla **çölgil**, **izgil**, **çigil** kavim adlarındaki **-gil** eki kavim adı yapan bir ek fonksiyonunda gözükmektedir” (Sertkaya 2015, p. 131). [The Korean translation of this passage is on p. 42.]

countries that sent representatives to the Turkic Kagan's funeral, it is problematic to read *bŪkll* : *čŪlgl* (or *čŪlglI*) as one composite name.³¹

2. There were two *Tabgač* states in northern China in the early years of the Turkic Kaganate. The period of the *Sixteen Kingdoms of the Five Barbarians* (五胡十六國 *Wū-hú-shí-liù-guó*; 304–439) ended with the unification of northern China by the Northern Wei (北魏 *Běi Wèi*; 386–535), a dynasty founded by the *Tabgač* (拓跋 ~ 拓拔 *Tuò-bá*³²) clan of the Xianbei (鮮卑). In 534–535, the Northern Wei was divided into the Eastern Wei (東魏 *Dōng Wèi*; 534–550) and the Western Wei (西魏 *Xī Wèi*; 535–556). The Eastern Wei and the Western Wei were succeeded by the Northern Qi (北齊 *Běi Qí*³³; 550–577) and the Northern Zhou (北周 *Běi Zhōu*³⁴; 557–581) respectively. The Northern Zhou destroyed the Northern Qi in 577. It was overthrown by the Sui (隋 *Suí*; 581–618). The Sui unified the Northern and Southern dynasties in 589.

The Turkic Kaganate (552–744) was established by the Ashina (阿史那 *Ā-shǐ-nà*³⁵) clan of the Turks under the leadership of Bumīn (土門 *Tǔ-mén*³⁶) Kagan (d. 552). His younger brother Ištāmi (室點密 *Shì-diǎn-mì*³⁷) was the de facto ruler (*yabgu*) of the western part of the empire, the Western Turkic Kaganate (552–576).

In the passage in question, there is a list of countries that sent representatives to a Turkic kagan's funeral. As seen above, in the early years of the Turkic Kaganate in 552–577, there were two *Tabgač* states when we count the Western Wei and its successor state the Northern Zhou as one country: (1) the Northern Qi and the Western Wei in 552–556; (2) the Northern Qi and the Northern Zhou in 557–577. These two *Tabgač* states must have sent their representatives to the Turkic Kagan's funeral separately, not jointly. Moreover, it is unthinkable that only one *Tabgač* state sent its representatives to this funeral. Therefore, *čŪlgl* (or *čŪlglI*) and *Tabgač* must correspond to the Northern Qi and the Western Wei / the Northern Zhou. It is certainly inaccurate

³¹ See Tekin (1968, p. 48).

³² The pronunciation of 拓跋 ~ 拓拔 is *tʰak-bat* ~ *tʰak-bəit/be:t* in Early Middle Chinese and *tʰak-pʰuat* ~ *tʰak-pʰia:t* in Late Middle Chinese. "... Early Middle Chinese is the language of the *Qieyun* rhyme dictionary of A.D. 601, which codified the standard literary language of both North and South China, the preceding period of division. ... Late Middle Chinese is the standard language of the High Tang Dynasty, based on the dialect of the capital, Chang'an" (Pulleyblank 1991, p. i).

³³ The name of this country was simply 齊 *Qí*. However, it is called 北齊 *Běi Qí* in order to distinguish it from the Qi 齊 (ca. 1046–221 BC) of the Spring and Autumn period (春秋時代 *Chūn-qiū Shí-dài*; 770–476 (or 403) BC) and the Warring States period (戰國時代 *Zhàn-guó Shí-dài*; 476 (or 403)–221 BC) and from the Southern Qi (南齊 *Nán Qí*; 479–502 AD), the second of the Southern dynasties. The name of the Southern Qi was also simply 齊 *Qí*. The pronunciation of 齊 is *ʃhiaj* (i.e. *ʃhiay*) in Early Middle Chinese and *ʃej* (i.e. *ʃəy*) in Late Middle Chinese.

³⁴ The name of this country was simply 周 *Zhōu*. However, it is called 北周 *Běi Zhōu* in order to distinguish it from the Zhou 周 (c. 1046–256 BC) in ancient times. The pronunciation of 周 is *təuw* in Early Middle Chinese and *tʃiw* in Late Middle Chinese.

³⁵ The pronunciation of 阿史那 is *ʔa-ʃi'ʃi'-naʰ* in Early Middle Chinese and *ʔa-ʃi'-na* in Late Middle Chinese.

³⁶ The pronunciation of 土門 is *tʰɔ'-mən* in Early Middle Chinese and *tʰuǎ'-mun* in Late Middle Chinese.

³⁷ The pronunciation of 室點密 is *ʃit-tem'-mit* in Early Middle Chinese and *ʃit-tiam'-mit* in Late Middle Chinese.

to translate *Tabgač* simply as ‘China’ or ‘the Chinese’ as most researchers have done until now.

3. Although it was already pointed out by Clauson (1972, p. 420) and Clark (1977, pp. 135–136) that *čWlg* in *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) cannot mean ‘desert’, most of the researchers wanted to relate it to the Mongolic word *čöl* ‘desert’ and translated it as ‘(of the) desert’ or ‘(of the) steppe’. However, there is a plain rather than a steppe or desert in the Liao River basin of Manchuria, to the east of the Turkic Kaganate. It is the Liaohe Plain (遼河平原 *Liào-hé Píng-yuán*). The Liaohe Plain, the Songnen Plain (松嫩平原 *Sōng-nèn Píng-yuán*), and the Sanjiang Plain (三江平原 *Sān-jiāng Píng-yuán*) make up the Northeast Plain (東北平原 *Dōng-běi Píng-yuán*) or the Manchurian Plain which is China’s largest plain at present. Therefore, it is almost impossible to relate *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) to *čöl* ‘desert’ or ‘steppe’. The word for ‘plain’ is *yazī* in the Orkhon inscriptions, e.g. *Šantuŋ yazī* ‘the Shantung Plain’ (KT S 3, E 17; BK [N 2], E 15), *Tögültün yazī* ‘the Tögültün Plain’ (KT S 6–7; BK N 5), and *Yariš yazī* ‘the Yariš Plain’ (T 33, 36).

To solve the problem of reading and translation of *bWkII* : *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) : *tabgač*, we should first of all consider *bWkII* and *čWlgl* (or *čWlglI*) as separate nouns. The countries that sent representatives to a Turkic kagan’s funeral are mentioned clockwise beginning from the east. Although *Kitañ* and *Tatabī* were also the eastern neighbours of the Türks, their names are given at the end of the list. Therefore, *bWkII* should be a more important and powerful country than *Kitañ* and *Tatabī*. The only candidate for such a country is Goguryeo. Goguryeo (고구려/高句麗 *Gāo-gōu-lí*, 37 BC–668 AD) was an ancient Korean kingdom located in Manchuria and the northern part of the Korean Peninsula. It was one of the Three Kingdoms of ancient Korea. The other two kingdoms were Baekje (백제/百濟 *Bāi-jì*, 18 BC–660 AD) and Silla (신라/新羅 *Xīn-luó*, 57 BC–935 AD). The name Goguryeo was inherited by the Goryeo dynasty (고려/高麗 *Gāo-lí*, 918–1392), from which the English word “Korea” stemmed.³⁸ The name *bWkII* (= Goguryeo) is not in the list of the countries that sent representatives to Kül Tegin’s funeral in 731 because Goguryeo was no longer in existence at that time, but neither its successor state Balhae (발해/渤海 *Bó-hǎi*, 698–926) was mentioned in the list.

The Japanese scholar Iwasa Seiichirō (巖佐精一郎, 1911–1935) had already read *bWkII* as *bökli* 貂句麗 ‘句麗 of the 貂 *māk* people’.³⁹ It is also possible to read *bWkII* as *bökküli* or *bökköli*. The name *bökküli* or *bökköli* can be analysed as *bökküli* (< **bökküli* < **mökküli* 貂句麗) or *bökköli* (< **bökköli* < **mökköli* 貂高麗).⁴⁰ 句麗/高麗 *Gōu-lí/Gāo-lí* is another name of Goguryeo (高句麗 *Gāo-gōu-lí*). 貂 *Maek*

³⁸ See Song (2001, p. 27) and Lee (2005, pp. 82–86). By the way, Goguryeo must be read as Goguri (고구려), because the pronunciation of the character 麗 is *ri*, not *ryeo* [ryə] when it is used as part of the name of a country. Thus, 高麗 must be read as Gori (고려), not Goryeo (고려). Unfortunately, this fact has been largely ignored.

³⁹ The pronunciation of 貂句麗 *Mò-gōu-lí* is *maiĵk/mɛ:jk-kəw-lið/li* [= *maiĵk/mäyk-kəw-lið/li*] in Early Middle Chinese and *ma:jk-kəw-li* [= *mäyk-kəw-li*] in Late Middle Chinese. The pronunciation of 貂高麗 *Mò-gāo-lí* is *maiĵk/mɛ:jk-kaw-lið/li* [= *maiĵk/mäyk-kaw-lið/li*] in Early Middle Chinese and *ma:jk-kaw-li* [= *mäyk-kaw-li*] in Late Middle Chinese.

⁴⁰ See Li Yong-Söng (2003, especially p. 236).

(= *Māk*) or 濊貊 *Yemaek* is the name of an ethnic group which became the basis of modern Koreans. Goguryeo was also founded by this ethnic group. The denasalisation of initial *m-* is found in the name of *bŪkll*.⁴¹

As mentioned above, there were two *Tabgač* states in northern China in 552–577, i.e. in the first twenty five years of the Turkic Kaganate. Therefore, we should suppose that the Türks distinguished these two *Tabgač* states by calling one state ČŪlgl (or ČŪlglIl) and the other state *Tabgač*. In all probability, ČŪlgl (or ČŪlglIl) and *Tabgač* are the Northern Zhou and the Northern Qi, respectively. If so, ČŪlgl (or ČŪlglIl) can be analysed as ČŪlüg *el* ‘realm/country of the ČŪ people’ (< ČŪ⁴² (< 周 *Zhōu*) + *-lüg* ‘suffix forming possessive noun/adjective’ + *el* ‘realm/country’). The Turkic kagan’s funeral should have been held during the period between 557 and 577. The kagan in question may be Mukan Kagan (木杆可汗 *Mù-gān-kě-hàn*; r. 553–572), the second son of Bumīn Kagan and the third kagan of the Turkic Kaganate, or his younger brother Tatpar Kagan (他鉢可汗 *Tā-bō-kě-hàn*; r. 572–581). However, the question remains: Why is the Northern Zhou mentioned in the list immediately after Goguryeo instead of the Northern Qi? Probably because this funeral was mentioned 154~174 years after the event by later descendants. They could not certainly enumerate the countries that sent representatives to the funeral exactly clockwise from the east, because they confused the geographical order.

-lXg is a suffix forming possessive noun/adjective. It can be added to the proper names of places. Erdal (1991, p. 144) writes about it as follows:

“This *+lXg* is added also to the proper names of places, as it is to this day: in Ht IV 1736, the translator describes himself as *Beş Balıklıg*, i.e. from the well-known town of *Beş Balık*; the Byzantines are *Vromluglar* (Ht IV 966), the elite of Benares (Maitr 7 v2) *Bar(a)nasl(i)g bay bādük kişilār*. PrièreMan mentions a *Solmil(i)g Alp Totok Ögrünçü y(e)gān* and a certain *Kūsānlig iç buyruk*, and somebody refers to his (or one of his) son(s)-in-law as *Kam(i)ll(i)g kūdägümüz*. These designations could identify either where one lived or where one was born.”

Thus, ČŪlüg *el* is the first example of the *+lXg* added to the proper names of places. Now, the letter groups *bŪkll* : čŪlgl (or čŪlglIl) : *TBGč* in this passage should be

⁴¹ I witnessed an example of the denasalisation of initial *m* when I took part in the International Workshop: “Descriptive and Contrastive Analysis on Languages of Northeast Eurasia” at Niigata University in Japan in July 8–9, 2016. One day a Tuvan participant named Arzhaana Syur-yun from the Institute for Language Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences) asked me to pronounce ‘to eat’ in Korean. I pronounced 먹다 *meokta* [mækta]. However, she wrote not *meok* but *beok* as the verb stem on her cell phone. Perhaps the western neighbours of Goguryeo, the *Kitañs* or the *Tatabīs* or the Türks, also heard *māk* as *bāk* or *bök*.

⁴² Cf. čub ‘region, zone’ in *altī čub sogdak tapa* ‘in the direction of Six-*zhōu* Sogdian colonies (= 六胡州 *Liù-hú-zhōu*)’ (KT E 31; BK E 24; < 州 *zhōu*). 六胡州 *Liù-hú-zhōu* was in the northern portion of Shaanxi (陝西 *Shān-xī*) province. It was comprised of 魯州 *Lǔ-zhōu*, 麗州 *Lì-zhōu*, 舍州 *Shě-zhōu*, 塞州 *Sāi-zhōu*, 依州 *Yī-zhōu*, and 契州 *Qì-zhōu*. 州 *Zhōu* was an administrative division in former times. The pronunciation of 州 *zhōu* is also *teuw* in Early Middle Chinese and *tšiw* in Late Middle Chinese like that of 周 *zhōu*.

read as *Bökküli*⁴³, *Čülüg el*, *Tabgač* “*Bökküli* (= Goguryeo), *Čülüg el* (= the Northern Zhou), *Tabgač* (= the Northern Qi)”.

Abbreviations

- BK Bilgä Kagan Inscription
 BX Bilgä Kagan Inscription
 DTS Nadeljaev, V. M. – Nasilov, D. M. – Tenišev, E. R. – Ščerbak, A. M. (eds) (1969): *Drevnetjurkskij slovar'*. Leningrad.
 ED Clauson, Sir Gerard (1972): *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish*. Oxford.
 GOT Tekin, Talat (1968): *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic*. Bloomington–The Hague (Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series Vol. 69).
 IOD Thomsen, Vilhelm (1896): *Inscriptions de l'Orkhon déchiffrées*. Helsingfors (MSFOu 5).
 KT Kül Tegin Inscription
 PDP Malov, S. E. (1951): *Pamjatniki drevnetjurkskoj pis'mennosti*. Moskva–Leningrad.
 T Tuñukuk Inscription
 TMEN Doerfer, Gerhard (1967): *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen III*. Wiesbaden (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur. Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission 20).
 Doerfer, Gerhard (1975): *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen IV*. Wiesbaden (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur. Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission 21).
 VEWT Räsänen, Martti (1969): *Versuch eines etymologischen Wörterbuchs der Türk Sprachen*. Helsinki (Lexica Societatis Fenno-Ugricae 17/1).

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⁴³ *Bökköli* is also possible.

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