

Hüis Tolgoi Inscription: On the discovery, the whereabouts, condition of the stones, and our expedition

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(Draft version)

The fieldwork on Khüis Tolgoi (I) and Bugut inscriptions which will be mentioned briefly in this paper was carried on by D. Maue, A. Vovin, É. de la Vaissière and Mehmet Ölmez.¹

The inscription was discovered by the Mongolian archaeologist N. Davaan in 1975 (→ N. Davaan, 1976; s. Sartqojaulı and Bazilhan). The description of the inscription was prepared in 1984 by Qarjaubay Sartqojaulı and it was given in the researcher's work published in 2003.

Despite the absence of information about its content and language, the first researcher who announced the aforementioned inscription and published its photograph is Nejat Diyarbekirli.² Diyarbekirli published two photographs, one is general view and the other is a detailed part, of the inscription in his work published in 1978. He gave this information on Khüis Tolgoi (I) inscription: "This is an inscription found in the Hangay Mountains, but its script can't be deciphered yet. It is claimed to be from the Huns." (p. 383).

As mentioned above, even though the second researcher who gave information about the inscription in his work in 2003 is Qarjaubay Sartqojaulı³, the detailed pictures of the inscription were given in his work published in 2005. This work

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² Nejat Diyarbekirli, "Orhun'dan Geliyorum", *Türk Kültürü*, Sayı 198-199, cilt XVII, Nisan-Mayıs 1979: 321-384 (1-64).

³ Сартқожаұлы, Қаржаубай, 2003: *Орхон мұралары*, Астана; s. p. 92-93.

covers the pictures, location and measurements of the inscription (pp. 34-37). The work includes also a photo of Khüis Tolgoi (II) inscription (p. 37). Q. Sartqojauli went to the area where this inscription was located in 1984 and he stated that there were no balbals in that area (p. 36).⁴

Thirdly, N. Bazilhan gave some information on the inscription.⁵ There is one-page for the inscription with some theories on its possible owner in Bazilhan's work. This work covers the location, description and measurements of the inscription with a bibliography of it. At the end of this work, there are some pictures of the inscription.

Lastly, there is a note on this inscription in a Mongolian-Japanese work published in 2009 (p. 93; and please see É. de la Vaissière's paper).⁶

There are no other sources with detailed information on this inscription.

I managed to see the aforementioned inscription for the first time in summer 2011 when I visited to the Institute of Archaeology during a meeting in Mongolia. My second visit to the inscription was for the collaborative work I will mention below.

We spent one day at the Museum of Archaeology as a part of the fieldwork which we carried on between August 18th and 28th 2014. The members of working team are Étienne de La Vaissière (EHESS, Paris), Alexander Vovin (EHESS, Paris), Dieter Maue (Mainz) and Mehmet Ölmez (Istanbul). And the technical team consists of specialist Tobias Reich and his assistant Jens Bingenheimer from University of Mainz.

⁴ Жолдасбеков, Мырзатай – Қаржаубай Сартқожаұлы, 2005: *Орхон ескерткіштерінің толық атласы*, Астана / Жолдасбеков, Мырзатай - Каржаубай Сартқожаұлы 2006: *Атлас орхонских памятников*, Астана.

⁵ Базылхан, Н., 2005: *Қазақстан тарихы туралы түркі деректемелері*, II том, көне түрік бітіктастары мен ескерткіштері (Орхон, енисей, талас), Алматы.

⁶ Бичээс II / Biçeesu II. – *Mongorukoku genson iseku tokketsu hibun chōsa hōkoku* モンゴル国現存遺跡・突厥碑文調査報告 – , Ōsawa Takashi, Suzuki Kōsetsu, R. Munhutoruga, Uranbaturu 2009 // 2006 оноос 2008 оны Монгол улс дахь Түргийн бичээс ба эртний дурсгалыг судлах экспедицийн илтгэл, Улаанбаатар хот 2009; É. de la Vaissière, “The Historical context to the Hüis Tolgoi inscription”: https://www.academia.edu/34569840/The_Historical_context_to_the_Hüis_Tolgoi_inscription.

The first day, we visited to the Museum of Archaeology and met the institute manager. The second day, by kind permission of Ulaanbaatar branch of TIKA (The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) Tobias Reich and Jens Bingenheimer started to work on the 3D shooting (photographs 06-07). After they completed the photoshoot of Khüis Tolgoi (I) inscription, they wanted to take photos of Khüis Tolgoi (II) inscription in front of the institute; however they couldn't because of sunlight (photographs 06-07). After shooting, some topics on decipherment of the inscription were discussed immediately there, in Ulaanbaatar. D. Maue made some explanations about transliteration and transcription of the inscription.

The second work was done on Bugut inscription in Cecerleg (Цэцэрлэг). The working team left from Ulaanbaatar for Cecerleg by two different vehicles. The authorized officer was on annual leave but he came to the museum by our request and he provided us with a comfortable environment for work (photographs 10-13). The face with Sogdian and Brahmi texts of Bugut inscription were recorded with the 3D. Because the Brahmi face of the inscription was in a very bad situation, there were almost no letters / akṣaras readable with naked eye in daylight. For this reason, the Brahmi face was recorded both in the morning and in the dark of evening.

The aforementioned works conducted in 2014 were introduced in Turkish Language Association (TDK) with the participation of Dieter Maue and Tobias Reich on February 13th 2015.

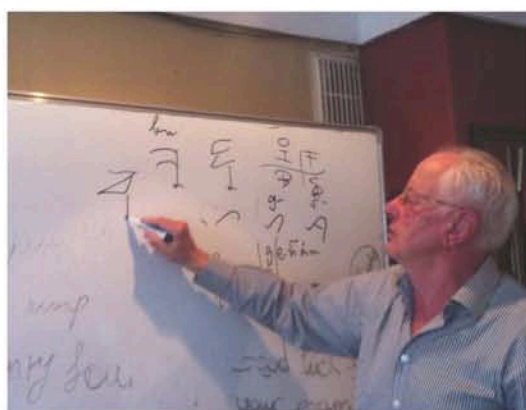
With the collaborative works of these four researchers on May 2016 in Poligny (France) and Paris, the text of Khüis Tolgoi studies was completed now. (Please see D. Maue's work for reading of the text and orthography, for its language see A. Vovin's work and for its content and its possible subject please see É. de la Vaissière's work.)

Khüis Tolgoi (I) inscription, which is obviously a path-breaking inscription for the history of Turkic and Mongolian languages, will be understood better in the case of decipherment of Khüis Tolgoi (II) inscription.

Photos from field search:



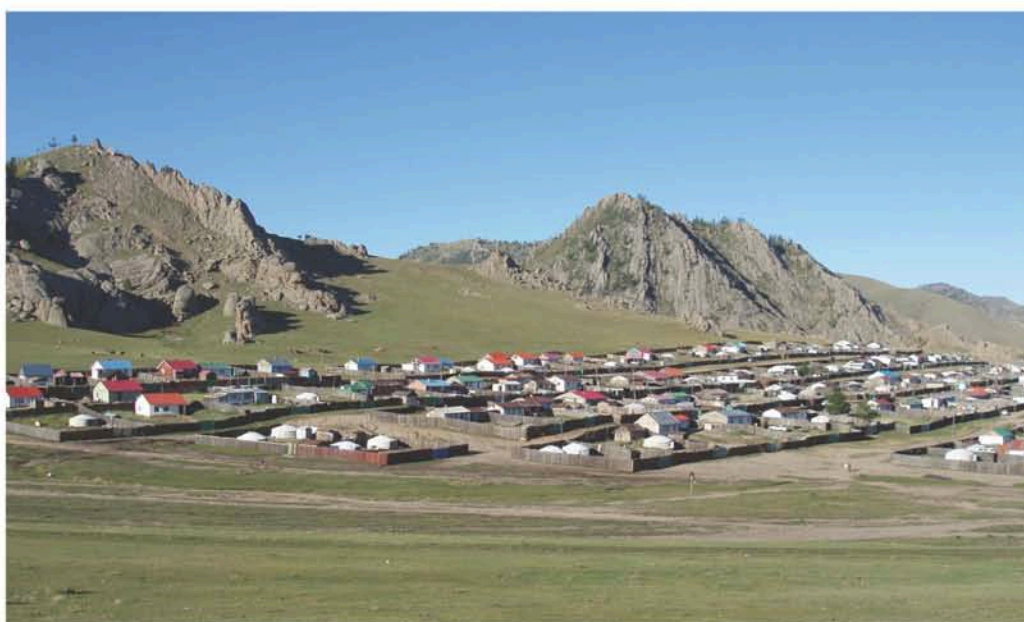
Hüis Tolgoi inscription



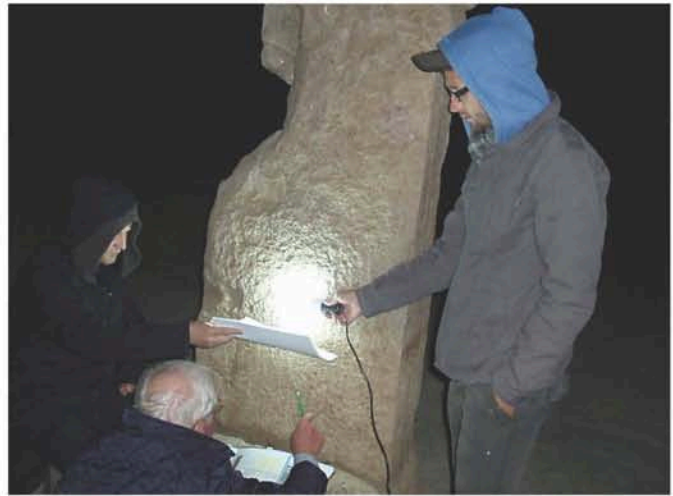
D. Maue checks some akşaras from Hūis Tolgoi (I) inscription; he shows and discusses some akşaras



Hūis Tolgoi II



Cecerleg / Цецерлег



Some photos from Bugut inscription