

Seasonal Migrations of the Early Uighur Rulers, 747-780

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Introduction

Pastoral nomadism (遊牧) refers to a mode of livelihood based on patterned seasonal migrations around the steppe, where nomadic peoples engage in livestock raising as their primary economic activity without building permanent shelters for both humans and animals.¹ In general, such pastoral nomads (牧民) customarily tend to repeat the migrations between fixed summer and winter camps. When faced with environmental pressures, however, such migrations can be readjusted not only in summer and winter, but also in spring and autumn as well. The seasonal migrations of nomadic peoples have remained a crucial element in understanding the nature of nomadic communities, as well as a key to understanding the nomadic empires in the northern Asian steppe.²

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¹ A. Khazanov, trans. Kim Hodong 金浩東, *Yumok sahoe eui gujo* [Structure of nomadic society] (Seoul: Jisik saneop sa, 1990), p.50; Sima Qian 司馬遷 referred to ‘youmu’ 遊牧 (nomadism) as ‘zhuanyi’ 轉移 (moving around) in his “Xiongnu liechuan” 匈奴列傳 [Biographies of the Xiongnu] of *Shiji* 史記 [Records of the historian].

² Yoshida Junichi 吉田順一, “モンゴルの遊牧における移動の理由と種類について” [Reasons and types

Drawing on the limited extant materials, several scholarly attempts have been made to explore the seasonal migrations of past steppe rulers. Topics include, the seasonal movement of the Northern Wei 北魏 in association with imperial tours (*xungxing* 巡幸),³ the Qītañ Liao's 契丹 moving court (*nabo* 捺鉢) depicted in mural paintings and historical sources,⁴ and the Mongol emperors' imperial tours⁵ between the two capital cities of Shangdu 上都 and Dadu 大都.⁶ In particular, the Yuan emperors' seasonal

of nomadic migrations in Mongolia], 早稻田大學大学院文學研究科紀要 28 (1983), pp.327-342; B. Chinbat, *The nomadic movement of Mongolian herdsmen* (Ulaanbaatar, 1989).

- ³ Sato Chisui 佐藤智水, “北魏皇帝の行幸について” [Imperial tour of the Northern Wei emperors], 岡山大學文學部紀要 5 (serial volume 45) (1984), 39a-53.
- ⁴ Fu Yuehuan 傅樂煥, “遼代四時捺鉢考” [Study on the seasonal imperial tours of the Liao dynasty], 歷史語言研究所集刊 10-2 (1942), 223-347; Yi Yongbeom 李龍範, “Yodaec chunyu go” 遼代春遊考 [Study on the imperial spring tour of the Liao dynasty], *Dongguk sahak* 東國史學 5 (1957). Reprint in Jungse Manju Monggo sa cui yeon'gu 中世滿州·蒙古史の 研究 [Study on the histories of Manchu and Mongol], (Seoul: Donghwa chulpan gongsa, 1988); Bai Junrui and Li Bo 白俊瑞·李波, “析契丹語的‘捺鉢,’” [Analysis of the Qītañ term ‘nabo’], 內蒙古大學學報 1998-4, pp.70-74; Huang Fengqi 黃鳳岐, 契丹史研究 [A study of the history of the Qītañ], (赤峰: 內蒙古科學技術出版社, 1999), pp.81-114; Li Xihou 李錫厚, “論遼朝的政治體制” [Discussion on the political system of the Liao dynasty], 臨漢集, (保定: 河北大學出版社, 2001), pp.8-14; Li Xihou 李錫厚, “遼中期以後的捺鉢及其與幹魯朵中京的關係” [The imperial tours of the mid and late Liao in relation to its capital], *Ibid.*, pp.73-85; Gu Wengshuang 谷文雙, “遼代捺鉢制度研究” [Study on the imperial tour system of the Liao dynasty], 黑龍江民族叢刊 2002-3, pp.93-98; Wang Xinying 王新迎, “從遼聖宗前期捺鉢看南京城的職能及地位” [Function and position of the Southern Capital of the Liao seen through the imperial tour of the early era of Liao Emperor Shengzong], 首都師範大學學報 (2004), pp.40-45; Hu Tingrong 胡廷榮, “遼中京至廣平甸捺鉢間驛館考略,” 中國邊疆史地研究 2004-1, pp.52-55; Huang Fengqi 黃鳳岐, “契丹捺鉢文化探論” [Research on the culture of imperial tour of the Liao], 社會科學輯刊 2004-4, pp.99-103; You Li 尤李, “遼金元捺鉢研究評述” [Review of the study on the imperial tours of the Liao, Jin and Yuan dynasties], 中國史研究動態 2005-2, pp.9-16.
- ⁵ Yoshida Junichi 吉田順一, “モンゴル帝國時代におけるモンゴル人の牧地と移動” [Mongolians' pastures and migrations during the Mongolian empire], 內陸アジア, 西アジアの社會と文化 [Society and culture of Inner and Western Asia], Mori Masao, ed., 護雅夫 編, (東京: 山川出版社, 1983), pp.233-253; Honda Minobu 本田實信, “イルハンの冬營地、夏營地” [Winter and summer camps of the Ikhanate], *モンゴル時代史研究* [Study on the Mongol history] (東京: 東京大學出版會, 1993), p.376.
- ⁶ Dong Hu 東湖, “元朝帝王巡幸上都的原因” [Reason for the Yuan emperors' tour of Shangdu], 中國歷史地理叢 1994-3, pp.251-252; Ye Xinmin 葉新民, “都巡幸制與上都的宮廷生活” [The system of touring two capitals and the court life at Shangdu], 元上都研究, (內蒙古大學出版社, 1998), pp.37-54.

movement between the two capitals in the fourteenth century when their Sinicization had already been well underway has been seen as a legacy of their ancestral pastoral way of life.⁷ These studies have contributed to our understanding, albeit partially, of the nature of seasonal migrations continued by nomadic rulers who built and maintained their steppe empires.

Yet, little study has been done on the cases of nomadic states in ancient times within the Mongolian Steppe, including the early Uighur state (744-840), mainly due to the dearth of relevant historical materials. The comments on this subject in introductory overviews of Uighur history have been sketchy and speculative, surmising that the Türks and the Uighurs, based in their political center of the Orkhon River valley, moved between deep mountains and fertile lands along the river in summer,⁸ or pointing to the existence of their rulers' seasonal residential camp (*ordu*, or *louju* 樓居 in Chinese).⁹ This study also aims to recover the pattern of seasonal migrations of the early Uighur rulers and provide new insights into the characteristics of their state formation.

More specifically, this study attempts to examine carefully the extant Türkic stone inscriptions and explore the unexplored subject of seasonal migration of nomadic rulers on the Mongolian Steppe.¹⁰ To begin with, I will use the stone inscriptions, related to the formation and consolidation of the Uighur state during the reign of its second ruler Qarlıq qaghan (Gelekehan 葛勒可汗, r. 747-759), and illustrate the routes of seasonal migrations involved with his expeditions as well as the locations of his summer and

⁷ Kim Hodong 金浩東, "Monggol jeguk gunjudeul cui yangdo sunhaeng gwa yumok jeok seupsok" 帝國 君主 兩都巡幸 遊牧의 習俗 [Mongol emperors' tour of the two capitals, and nomadic customs], *Jungang Asia yeon'gu* 7 (2002), pp.1-23.

⁸ Yang Shengmin 楊聖敏, *回紇史* [History of the Uighurs], (吉林教育出版社, 1991), p.100.

⁹ Ren Aijun 任愛君, "回鶻'居'與契丹'樓'之關係研究" [Study on the relation between the Uighur 'louju' and the Qītañ 'silou'], *西北民族研究* 1997-2, pp.138-145.

¹⁰ In order to reconstruct an overview of the Uighurs' seasonal migrations, this study uses mainly the 'Tes' Inscription and the 'Tariyat' inscription of Qarlıq qaghan, as well as his tombstone 'Shine Usu' inscription. For the Uighur stone inscriptions, see Jeong Jaehun 정재훈, *Wigureu yumok jeguk sa* 위구르 유목제국사 744-840 [History of the nomadic empire of the Uighurs] (Seoul: Munhak gwa jiseong sa, 2005), pp.405-452.

winter camps. Focusing on the sacred Ötüken Mountain (Yudujin, Wudeji-an, Yudujun 於都斤, 烏德鞬, 鬱督軍)—a hub for the seasonal migrations of the Uighur rulers—during the period, this paper combines field research with the analysis of stone inscription. By so doing, this approach will shed light on the ways the Uighur rulers’ seasonal migrations were closely tied to their state-building and the nature of their statecraft on top of their efforts to construct the capital city as a political center.

Seasonal Migrations during the Uighur State Formation

For some years, even before the foundation of the Uighur state, Bayan Chor (Qarlıq qaghan after enthronement) had actively helped his father Qutluq Boyla (Quli peiluo 骨力裴羅—an Uighur chieftain) in his attempt to establish the Uighur state by overthrowing the Türks (Tujue 突厥). Beginning in 741, at the age of 28, Bayan Chor assisted his father’s extensive expeditions.¹¹ Afterwards, the Uighurs would expand their control by taking part in the rebellion against the Türks and taking advantage of a chaotic succession struggle following the death of Inel qaghan (Yiran kehan 伊然可汗: r. 731-41 as the fourth qaghan) in 741.¹² Qutluq Boyla, however, assist-

¹¹ The Tariyat Inscription, (E-5).

¹² The internal conflicts of the second Türk empire in its last years that caused it to fall can be summarized as follows. Following the death of Inel *qaghan* in 741, his wife Qutluğ barım *qatun* (Guduolu Parunkedun 骨咄祿 婆悶可敦, who was Bilge *qaghan*’s wife and a daughter of Bilge Tonyuquq) succeeded in putting his young son Tengri *qaghan* on the throne and tried to weaken the power of the royal house to strengthen the *qaghan*’s power. In order to have the succession she wanted, she lured and killed the candidate with the most potential, Tarduš šad 左殺 (Youxianwang 右賢王 in Chinese transcription, who was invested as the ruler of the Western Frontier Region of the Türk empire). Her action, however, provoked a rebellion from Tölis šad (Zuoxianwang 左賢王, who was invested as the ruler of the Eastern Frontier Region of the Türk empire). Tölis šad (Pan Kül Tegin 判闕特勤 as his proper name, and Qutluğ yabghu 骨咄葉護 as his official name) attacked and killed not only the young Tengri *qaghan* but also the succeeding *qaghan*, and established a separate force of his own, contributing to the dissensions and weakness and ultimately downfall of the Türk empire. (*Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 [New Tang history], fascicle 215 *xia*, “Tujue 突厥 *xia*,” p.6054; *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 [Old Tang history], fascicle 194 *shang*, “Tujue 突厥 *shang*,” p.5177) The Chinese dynastic histories cited in this paper are from the punctuated and edited editions of the *Zhonghua shuju* 中華書局.

ed a Basmil chieftain (known to the Chinese as Ashina shi 阿史那施)—who led the rebellion, killed the Türk qaghan (Pam Kül Tegin?), occupied the Orkhon River valley, and assumed the title of ‘Ilig bilge qaghan’—and called himself as ‘yabghu’ together with the Qarluq chieftain.¹³

The Uighurs attacked the defeated Türks by crossing the Gobi Desert.¹⁴ Bayan Chor joined that campaign, set out from Udurghan in 744 to assist his father in crossing the Gobi, met him at Key tagh again, passed Qara Qum (Heisha 黑沙, south of the Yinshan 陰山 Mountain Range in Chinese), and fought a series of battle against the Türks at Kögür, Kömür tagh, and Yar ögüz (Huanghe 黄河 in Chinese).¹⁵ The goal of those battles was to subdue the Türks south of the Gobi and to stop the Turkish effort to restore their state through installing the Ozmış qaghan (Wusumishi kehan 烏蘇米施可汗) as the ruler.

Upon the returning of Bayan Chor, his father Qutluq Boyla attacked and defeated the Basmil’s Ilig bilge qaghan in collaboration with the Qarluq chieftain to take upon himself the title of ‘Qutluq Bilge Kül qaghan’ (Guduolubiqieque kehan 骨咄祿毗伽闕可汗: r. 744-747). Immediately, the Qutluq Bilge Kül qaghan delivered the head of the Türk’s Ozmış qaghan via the military governor Wang Zhongsi 王忠嗣 at Shuofang 朔方 to the court of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), which had feared a Turkish invasion southward. This action inspired the Tang to invest the Uighur qaghan as the “king who respected righteousness” (Fengyi wang 奉義王) and the “qaghan who cherished humaneness” (Huairan kehan 懷仁可汗).¹⁶

¹³ *Xin Tang shu*, fasc. 215 xia, “Tujue 突厥 xia,” p.6055.

¹⁴ The Uighur ruling class who submitted to the Tang included Tarduš šad’s 西殺 wife and son, Bög čor’s (the Kapaghan *qaghan*) grandson Bediz Tegin 勃德支特勤, the Bilge *qaghan*’s daughter princess Talui 大洛, the Inel *qaghan*’s wife Yüz begh 余塞匄, the Tengri *qaghan*’s 登利可汗 daughter princess Yüz 余燭, and Abus elteber 阿布思額利發, and others. A total of large 10,000 Uighur refugees into the Tang territory indicates the strength of the Türk forces, though defeated.

¹⁵ Along with the inscription sources above, the Tang military commissioner Wang Zhongsi 王忠嗣 at Shuofang 朔方 reported that “Once again the Nujie 怒皆 and Tujue 突厥 tribes were vanquished. Since the borderlands were pacified, the barbarians dared not to enter into [China].” (*Jiu Tang shu*, fasc. 103, “Wang Zhongsi,” p.3198) His statement indicates that the Uighur military operations also took place south of the Yinshan mountains.

¹⁶ *Jiu Tang shu*, fasc. 117, “Huigu 回鶻 shang,” p.6114.

The Uighurs continued to vanquish the remaining forces of the Türks by defeating Bolmīš qaghan (Baimei kehan 白眉可汗), a Tardush Shad's descendant who had put up fierce resistance, and sending his head to the Tang.¹⁷ Thereafter, the strength of the Türks became severely weakened and the last important ruler of the Türks' in-law clan (known as Ashide 阿史德 in Chinese), Qutlugh Barīm Qatun, finally surrendered to the Tang in 745.¹⁸ Therefore, the Uighurs could come to the fore as the new rulers of the Mongolian Steppe by expanding over the steppes to the north of the Gobi Desert and receiving investitures from the Tang court.

Still, the subsequent formation of the Uighur state did not fare as the Uighurs had hoped. The Uighur state was confronted with ongoing challenges from other Türkic tribes, notably from the Qarluqs, or a former ally and other nomadic tribes out of the Türk rules. To begin with, the Uighurs tried to incorporate the confederation of nine Türkic tribes, collectively known as the 'Toquz Oghuz' or 'Nine Surnames' (Jiuxing Huihe 九姓回紇 in Chinese).¹⁹ In 746, the Uighurs would drive out the Qarluqs to the west and extended their control over eastern nomadic tribes such as the Toquz Tatar (Jiuxing Dada 九姓達靼 in Chinese)²⁰ who had tried to create their independent power bases.

¹⁷ *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 [Prime tortoise of the record office], fasc. 975, "Waichenbu Baoyi 2" 外臣部 褒異2 [Vassal Baoyi 2], 11457 *xia* (Photographic version of the *Zhonghua shuju*, 1982).

¹⁸ *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 [Comprehensive mirror to aid in government], fasc. 215, Tang Emperor Xuanzong the 3rd year of Tianbo reign era 唐玄宗 天寶 3 (745), p.6863 (Punctuated and edited version of the *Zhonghua shuju*, 1990).

¹⁹ Jeong Jaehun, "Wigureu chogi (744-755) 'guseong Hocheul' eui bujok guseong: 'Toquz Oghuz' munje eui jaegeomto" 初期 (744-755) '九姓回紇' 部族 構成—' (Toquz Oghuz) 問題 再檢討 [Composition of the 'Nine Surnames' tribes in the early Uighur state, 744-755: Review of the 'Toquz Oghuz' issue], *Dongyang sahak yeongu* 東洋史學研究 68 (1999).

²⁰ The Toquz Tatar transcribed in Chinese sources as Dada 達靼 or Shiwei 室韋 was a Mongolian tribe of forest people residing north of eastern Mongolia in Tang times. (*Xin Tang shu*, fasc. 219, "Beidi Shiwei 北狄 室韋," p.6176.) The very Toquz Tatar who challenged the Uighurs at the time were estimated to be those nomads of the Shiwei tribe close to them. (*Siweishi yanjiu* 室韋史研究 [Study of the history of the Shiwei tribe], (北方文物雜誌社, 1985), pp.87-90; Zhang Jiuhue 張久和, 原蒙古人的歷史—室韋·達靼研究 [History of original Mongolian peoples: Study of the Shiwei and Dada tribes], (高等教育出版社, 1998), pp.134-138, pp.140-145.)

However, although the Qarluq qaghan had been pushed to the west, he maintained some degree of power and kept diplomatic contact with the Tang. Moreover, the Qarluqs posed a strong challenge by taking advantage of a power vacuum created during the interregnum following the death of Qutluğ Bilge Kül qaghan until his son ascended the throne as Qarlıq qaghan. It is not surprising that the death of a ruler in a steppe state might entail its serious decline or even its collapse, because the fate of steppe states heavily relied on the personal power and authority of its ruler. Therefore, Qarlıq qaghan launched campaigns to bring neighboring peoples under subjugation and to firmly establish his state.

In 748, no sooner had Qarlıq qaghan ascended the throne at the qaghan's court in the winter camp base to the rear of the mountain peaks (As ögüz bash and Qan ıduq bash) of the Ötüken Mountain, than he launched an expedition to the north.²¹ He vanquished the Seqiz Oghuz and the Toquz Tatar based in Bükügüg and named them as "close subjects" (qara igil bodun). He boasted that it was accomplished as a result of the virtue of Heaven (*tengri*) and Earth (*yir*).²² That campaign succeeded in deterring the separation of the Seqiz Oghuz, one important component of the confederation under his early rule.²³

Afterwards, the qaghan tried to secure their loyalty as his subjects, yet was not so successful to pursue them further and gained a victory at Burghu in the 4th month of 748.²⁴ In the summer of that year, he sent expeditionary forces to the north up to the Selenge River valley, passing the mountain peak Shıb bash on the right side of the Ilun köl Lake. The expedition aimed to attack the Uighur chieftain Tay bilge tutuq, who put up resistance from the lower reaches of the Selenge River, indicating that the qaghan pursued the resisting force that had moved to the lower reaches of

²¹ The Tariyat Inscription, (S-5).

²² The Shine usu Inscription, (E-1)-(E-2).

²³ The Seqiz Oghuz referred to the confederation of those Türkic nomadic tribe, who had maintained a close alliance with the Uighurs, and included the sub-groups, such as Bugu 僕固, Hun 浑, Bayırqu 拔曳固 or 拔野古, Tongra 同羅, Ediz 思結, Qabış 契苾, Abus 阿不思, and (?) 骨崙屋骨恐.

²⁴ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-3)-(E-4).

the river for their favorable summer camping. Furthermore, the qaghan's troop moved to the north, which can be proven by the record that his troops gained victories at Qasui of the Achīq Alfīr köl Lake and along the Selenge River on the 8th month of the same year.²⁵

With the arrival of winter, the qaghan returned to the Ötüken Mountain, clearly showing the seasonal pattern of nomadic movement to the south in winter from the north in summer. Upon returning to the Ötüken Mountain in winter from the summer victories along the Selenge River valley, the qaghan flattered himself that “we were freed from the enemies.” Thereupon, he granted the titles of ‘yabghu’ and ‘shad’ to his two sons and affiliated the two categories of people—Tölis and Tardush—with them respectively²⁶ in his effort to establish the state administrative structure.

In the following year of 750, on the 14th day of the 2nd month (springtime), the qaghan again embarked on an expedition to the northwest to attack the village communities called ‘Chik’ in the Kem River region. Upon completing the expedition in summer, the qaghan spent the summer-time at the site of what is now the Tes River valley, and erected an epigraphic stele to commemorate his victory.²⁷ The lower half of the monument was discovered in 1976, and has been known as the ‘Tes’ Inscription. In the autumn of the same year, the qaghan subjugated the Tatars again and returned to the Ötüken Mountain in the winter of early 751. Then, in the summer of the same year, he erected an epigraphic monument at the point between the peaks Ay bash and Toqush at the rear of the İduq bash peak of the Ötüken Mountain.²⁸ The monument has not yet been discovered but its existence can be ascertained by the ‘Shine Usu’ inscription erected later. If this monument is discovered, scholars will benefit from more evidence able to reveal the summer camp base and the movement of the Uighur rulers in the early stage of their state-building.

²⁵ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-6)-(E-7).

²⁶ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-7).

²⁷ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-7)-(E-8).

²⁸ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-8)-(E-9).

In the autumn of 752, the qaghan set out on an expedition to the west from his Ötüken summer camp base to attack the Chiks again. The camp base for this campaign had been established at the ‘Etiz bash’ peak to the west of the Ötüken Mountain.²⁹ The Chiks’ challenge at the time can be seen as the result of the weak control of the Uighurs over the western Mongolian Steppes and also the growing threat from the Qırghız (Xiajiasi 黠戛斯 or Jiakun 堅昆 in Chinese). By that time, the Qırghız had come down south as far as south of the Kögmen yiş Mountain (today the Sayan Mountains)³⁰ to the northwest of the Mongolian Steppe to help the Chiks.

The confrontation with the Qırghız marked the start of a crucial struggle against a major rival of the newly-found Uighur state. The story of the initial conflict with the Qırghız between 750 and 752 remained unclear because stele inscriptions about it have been worn out. Yet, it can be speculated that it was not a victorious story to the Uighurs. The reason is that the ‘Tariyat Inscription,’ erected in 753, made no reference to the fact that the initial war against the Qırghız was a successful one especially as compared with the extensive account of their earlier victory against the Chiks.

The Uighurs continued to undertake expedition against the Chiks in the autumn of 751. Furthermore, even in the early winter season on the 11th month, they crossed the Altai Mountains and advanced to the Bolchu River (a branch of the Irtysh River) to attack the Üç Qarluqs (Sangxing Geluolu 三姓 葛邏祿 in Chinese).³¹ This indicates that they undertook expansionary campaigns not only against the Qırghız, but also against the Qarluqs and the Basmils further to the west. Moreover, the qaghan restarted attacking the Chiks in the spring of 752 after spending the previous winter at the Ötüken Mountain and returned to the Siz bash peak to spend the summer. The qaghan proclaimed that “a governor (*tutuq* derived from Chi-

²⁹ The Tariyat Inscription, (W-1).

³⁰ The Kögmen yiş mountain may refer to today’s Tannu Ula or Sayan mountains bordering the Yenisei River basin. Other ancient Türkic inscriptions also often note that the Kögmen yiş mountain was an important strategic point to secure for the wars with the Qırghız.

³¹ The Shine usu Inscription, (S-1)-(S-2).

nese *dudu* 都督) was granted to the Chik *bodun* (people),³² meaning that the qaghan could send an overseer to control the Chiks or appoint the Chik chieftain as a governor.

After a summer victory against his rivals in 753, the qaghan erected an epigraphic stele on the shore of the Terkhin Lake located at the upper reach of the Selenge River, known as the ‘Tariyat Inscription,’ in order to commemorate his achievement of defeating rival nomadic powers such as the Qirghiz, allied with the Chiks, the Qarluqs and the Basmils, and establishing domination over the Mongolian Steppe. On the inscription, the qaghan described in great detail his successful early campaigns including secured territories, subject peoples, and enfeoffed lands. The final subjugation of the Basmils and the Qarluqs to the north in 754³³ enabled the Uighurs to incorporate them into a single subject community (*kebuluo* 客部落 in Chinese sources) under appointed governor, relegate them to the forward guard at every battle,³⁴ and stand as the new hegemon across the Mongolian Steppe.³⁵

On the ‘Tariyat’ Inscription of 753, the qaghan listed eight branches of the Selenge River under his domination such as “Orqon, Toghla, Sebin, Teledü, Qaragha, and Buraghu,”³⁶ and made it clear that he “moved and camped [seasonally] within the boundaries of these territories.”³⁷ Among the names of the branch streams listed there, only two are identical with

³² The Shine usu Inscription, (S-2). The title *tutuq* was used to designate the Türkic chiefs under the “loose-reign” (*jimi* 羈縻) rule of the Tang, and was comparable to the indigenous titles of the first Türk empire ‘elteber’ or ‘ilteber.’

³³ The Shine usu Inscription, (W-2).

³⁴ *Tang Huiyao* 唐會要 [Tang collection of notabilia], fasc. 98, “Huihe 回紇,” p.1744 (Punctuated and edited version of the *Zhonghua shuju*, 1990).

³⁵ Kawasaki Hirotaka 川崎浩孝, “カルルク西遷年代考—シネウス・タリアト碑文の再検討による” [A Study on the dating of Qarlıq qaghan’s western expeditions through a reexamination of the Shine usu and Tariyat Inscriptions], 廻経タリアト・シネウス兩碑文(八世紀中葉)のテキスト復原と年代記載から見た北・東・中央アジア (Katayama Akio, et al. 片山章雄 等, 1993年度東海大學文學部研究造成金成果報告書, 1994), p.109; Chen Liangwei 陳良偉, “拔悉密汗國及其相關的問題,” 新疆大學學報 1992-3, p.59.

³⁶ The Tariyat Inscription, (W-1).

³⁷ The Tariyat Inscription, (W-4).

modern-day names—Orqon and Tol (Toghla)—, yet all the branch streams listed seem to be tributaries of the Selenge River. The Selenge River originates from the Khanghai Mountain range and the Khovsgol region, and passes through the Mongolian Steppe to flow into the Baikal Lake, being fed by a good number of tributaries and branch streams created by the rugged terrains of the steppe. These waterways flow into larger rivers which nourish pasture lands and nurture nomadic peoples. Therefore, it seems likely that more or less the whole range of the Selenge River valley might well constitute the domain of the early Uighur state.

As noted above, it can be seen that the boundaries of seasonal movement by the Uighurs under their early ruler Qarlıq qaghan consisted of the Ötüken Mountain and the tributaries and branch streams of the Selenge River. To specify their seasonal migration pattern, we need to identify the present-day location of the Ötüken Mountain—the center of the Uygur polity—to and from which the Uygur rulers and population moved. More importantly, what should not be discarded here is the fact that the campaign routes in the early expansionary stage of the Uighur state cannot be mechanically equated to the pattern of seasonal migrations in the later stage of the Uighur state marked then by stability and growth.

Seasonal Migrations and the Ötüken Mountain

The Ötüken Mountain and their adjacent areas, known as the stronghold of the early ruler Qarlıq qaghan, were referred to as the ‘Ötüken yış’ (mountain) or the ‘Ötüken yir’ (land) in all the records. Yet, the exact location of ‘Ötüken’ mentioned often in the Türkic and Uighur periods has remained uncertain. It is generally accepted that the site was the heartland of the Mongolian Steppe, and was best suited for the seat of the government of the historical nomadic states.³⁸ Among a range of discus-

³⁸ It has been understood that the *qaghan's* court south of the Gobi Desert in the Xiongnu era also had been located close to today's Kharkhorin, and identifiable to the Ötüken mountain in the Türk and Uighur eras. See Uchida Ginpū 内田吟風, 北アジア史研究—匈奴編 [A study of the history of northern Asia: On the Xiongnu], (東京: 同朋舎, 1975), pp.97-102.

sion about its location,³⁹ I subscribe to the thesis that the Ötüken is located in the “mountain forest steppe” along the Orkhon River valley flowing down the northern slope of the Khangai Mountain range, which still needs an elaboration.⁴⁰

The northern slope of the Khangai Mountain, referred traditionally to as ‘Ötüken,’ was one of the most fertile mountain forest steppes within the Mongolian Steppe, as suggested by the name ‘Khangai,’ which means “cool climate, soft soil, many streams and lakes, rich grasslands and forests in a mountainous region.”⁴¹ Blessed with the streams flowing down from the mountains and the rich grasslands and forests along the streams, ‘Ötüken’ was historically the heartland of the Mongolian Steppe. Geographically, this wide steppe was traversed by a set of tributaries of the Selenge River, including the Orkhon River, and enclosed by mountains less dry than the arid Gobi Desert to the south. The environment as above made this area not only available for herding and hunting, but also prepared for a higher concentration of livestock than other steppes.

Also in the period of the Türkic empire, the qaghans recognized the Orkhon River valley, running down the northern slope of the Khangai Mountain as the central sacred land in their possession, by which means they could justify their power derived from Heaven (*tengri*).⁴² In the mid-sixth century, Muhan qaghan 木汗可汗 (r. 553-572) of the first Türkic empire conquered the Rourans 柔然, took possession of this land, and enthroned himself as the legitimate sovereign of the Mongolian Steppe.⁴³ Later, in the ‘Kül Tegin’ Inscription, the Bilge qaghan (r. 716-733) of the second Türkic empire cited this land as the ‘iduq (sacred) Ötüken’ and re-

³⁹ For the research findings so far, see Mori Masao 護雅夫, 古代トロコ民族史研究 I [Study on the ancient Türkic people I], (東京: 山川出版社, 1967), p.57.

⁴⁰ Yoshida Junichi 吉田順一, “ハンガイと陰山” [The Khangai and Yinshan mountains], 史観 102 (1980), p.52.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.49.

⁴² Mori Masao 護雅夫, 古代トロコ民族史研究 I [A study of the history of ancient Türkic people I], p.24.

⁴³ *Zhoushu* 周書 [History of the Zhou of the Northern Dynasties], fascicle 50, “Yiyu Tujue chuan” 異域突厥傳 [Biography of the Türks in foreign lands], p.910.

marked that “there is no better land than the Ötüken Mountain to exercise government!” or “setting yourself up in the Ötüken Mountain, you can forever govern the state as sovereign.”⁴⁴ This eulogy expresses the qaghans’ belief that the possession of this sacred land might well guarantee the divine right to rule the steppe permanently.

After overthrowing the Türkic empire, the Uighurs regarded the occupation of ‘ïduq Ötüken’ as a heartland in legitimizing their rule over the entire Mongolian Steppes. When the Qarlıq qaghan declared the eight tributaries of the Selenge River as his domain and launched expeditions to occupy them, he aimed to extend his power over the surrounding areas of the Ötüken Mountain. The name of the nomadic rulers’ heartland in the Mongolian Steppe also proves that the site was regarded as a sacred land.⁴⁵ For example, the Qarlıq qaghan’s summer and winter camp bases were located at ‘ïduq bash’ and ‘qan ïduq bash’ respectively, all meaning sacred peaks.

In order to know the present location of Ötüken where the qaghan’s bases were placed, it is necessary to connect the requirements for a suitable base with its geographical conditions. In general, two essential elements that pastoral nomads considered for their settlement base were wind and water. They would choose the place where wind and water were easily available in summer while in winter the place where the severity of winter wind could be reduced by mountain barrier to the north and the access to grasses were secured for their animals. To meet such requirements, given the geographical setting of the mountain forest steppe, they would move down to lower lands in winter while moving upward a mountain or moving to a place in a mountain where wind was abundantly available after winter.⁴⁶ Therefore, the present location of the ïduq peaks of the qaghan’s bas-

⁴⁴ The Kül Tegin Inscription, (S-8). For Korean translation of the inscription, see Jeong Jaehun 정재훈, *Dolgweol yumok jeguksa* 돌궐유목제국사 [History of the Türk steppe empire] (Seoul: Sagyejeol, 2016), pp.620-627.

⁴⁵ Mori Masao 護雅夫, “ウチユケンと古代遊牧國家” [The Ötüken and ancient nomadic states], 内陸アジア研究 I [Study on Inner Asia I], (1964), pp.37-40; Yamada Nobuo 山田信夫, “テュルクの聖地 ウトユケン山” [The Ötüken mountain, the sacred land of the Türks], 北アジア遊牧民民族史研究 [A study of the history of nomadic peoples in northern Asia], (東京: 東京大學出版會, 1989), p.67.

⁴⁶ Refer to the note 2.

es can be estimated by combining these natural requirements and the information considering seasonal migrations in the stone inscriptions.

As explained in the previous section, in order to consolidate his newly found state, immediately following the death of his father, Qarliq qaghan launched expeditions starting from the Ötüken Mountain northwest towards the Terkhin Lake. At the time, the qaghan spent summers around the Tes River and the Terkhin Lake to the northwest of the Ötüken Mountain, as well as around the mainstream Selenge River. Except for the year 751 when his state enjoyed temporary stability and he spent the summer at the contact point of the Ay peak (meaning the moon-shaped peak) to the rear of the İduq peak and Toqush, the qaghan stayed northwest of the Mongolian Steppe until the year 753. It seems to me that the course of migrations the qaghan took might well have met both the overall inclination of nomads to move to the north in summer and his particular need for military expeditions.

The contact point of the Ay peak to the rear of the İduq peak and Toqush, where Qarliq qaghan was recorded to have spent summer in his early rule, was a mountain forest steppe suitable for the qaghan’s summer camp base. The site was to the north of the sacred İduq peak, encompassing a lower peak and its surrounding steppe. It may be possible to find out its exact location in the mountain forest steppe along the present upper Orkhon River valley, which was referred to as the ‘sacred Ötüken’ by the qaghan.

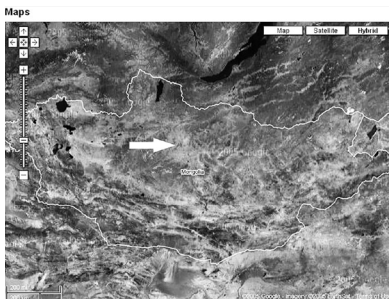


Figure 1. Mongolian Steppes (satellite photo)

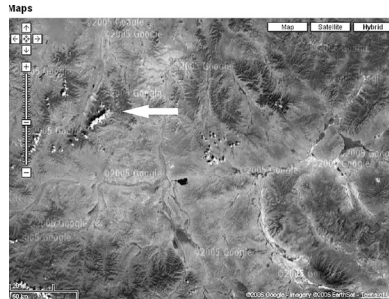


Figure 2. Mountain Steppe in the Northern Slope of the Khangai Mountain

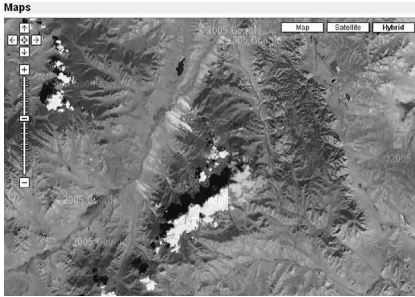


Figure 3. Mountain Steppe Centered on the Chigeltei Peak (enlarged satellite photo)

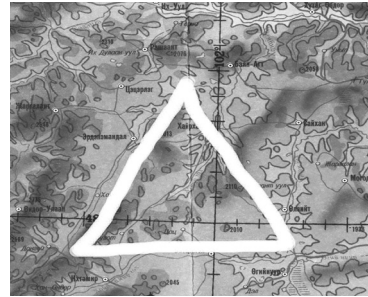


Figure 4. Mountain Map Centered on the Chigeltei Peak

To this end, I have analyzed the geographical features of the Mongolian Steppe as represented in satellite photos (Figure 1 and Figure 2) as well as the geographical data collected through two field surveys conducted in 1996 and 2005. As a result, the best candidate for the present location of the Ötüken Mountain with the sacred peak and its surrounding steppe appears to be a triangular green mountain region (Figure 3) of the northern slope of the Khangai Mountain, shaped by the Orkhon River to the east, the Khunui River to the west, and the Tamir River to the south.

This extensive mountainous site in point is marked by the Chigeltei peak at 2,294 meters above sea level. From the high elevated Chigeltei peak, the slope stretches from the northwest to the southeast along with a number of the tributaries of the Orkhon River that flows down in the same direction (Figure 4). To the south of the peak, following the northern slope of the Khangai Mountain lies the vast mountain forest steppe alongside many streams and river, thus constituting the invaluable sources of water and grazing land for pastoral nomads and their livestock. And, the *ïduq* peak described in the inscriptions may refer to the Chigeltei peak. The contact point of the *Ay* peak to the rear of the *ïduq* peak and *Toqush*, where the *Qarliq qaghan's* summer camp base was recorded to be placed, may be located at the *Khunui River* area to the north, or the steppe adjacent to its tributary *Jaraitain*, or even the *Moghon Shine usu* further north where the

tomb and the stone steles honoring Qarliq qaghan have been discovered (See Figure 4 and Figure 5). All these sites are cool in the summer thanks to the blowing wind and had easy access to water.

These sites in point can be a possible locus for the winter camp base of the qaghan, in view of their high mountain barriers in the northwest blocking severe winter wind. Although the extant inscriptions depict mostly the summer camp bases, the location of the winter camp base, where the qaghan was recorded to spend the summer of 749 according to The Shine usu Inscription, can be roughly determined by the record from the Tariyat Inscription which states the location of the winter base at the ‘As öngüş bash’ peak inside the Ötüken Mountain and at the rear of the ‘Kan iduq’ peak. Given the descriptions from the two inscriptions,⁴⁷ the winter camp base of the qaghan can be the present basin area between the two lowly peaks to the southeast of the Chigeltei peak. This area occupies a mountain slope that is 1,700 meters above sea level, blocked by mountain barriers to the northwest sufficient to construct the qaghan’s court (*kehanting* 可汗庭) and accommodate a large number of people.

Moreover, not only was the northern expedition possible from there, but the vast steppe and forest of the Tamir River valley was also readily available closely down below. Furthermore, this presumed location of the Ötüken possesses not only the geographical features, favorable to the qaghan’s seasonal migrations and campaigns, but also a higher concentration of cultural and religious remains. As a matter of fact, through field surveys around this region, there is a higher concentration of ancient remains, compared to other regions, such as deer-shaped stone monuments, stone mound tombs, and human-shaped stone monuments, all of which indicate how the political and religious center of the Uighur state ran.⁴⁸

In sum, according to the inscriptions, it appears to me that the qaghan’s camp bases were located in the triangular area centered on the

⁴⁷ The Shine usu Inscription, (E-7); The Tariyat Inscription, (S-6).

⁴⁸ Numerous maps of these historical remains were published in Mongolia Монголын Хүмүүнлгийн ухааны Академи, *Монгол Нутаг Дахь Түүх Соёлын Дурсгал* (Улаанбаатар, 1999), p.68, p.94.

Chigeltei peak, or the Ötüken Mountain area during the time. In summer, he would launch expeditions towards the north or the northwest or move to neighboring places from there while he would return to the bases on the southern slope of the mountains against cold weather. The presumed location of the Ötüken as above could afford three crucial advantages to the qaghan in his effort to strengthen the newly-found Uighur state. First, the site was favorably situated for the northwestern expeditions which the qaghan prioritized. Second, since it lied at the center of a dense network of tributaries of the Selenge River, the qaghan could effectively exercise control over it. Third, the possession of the Ötüken, acclaimed generally as “God’s land” among the rulers of the Mongolian Steppe, could promote further an ideological legitimization of the qagan’s power.⁴⁹

Seasonal Migrations in Relation to the Construction of the Capital

By 753, Qarliq qaghan had waged a series of warfare with neighboring nomadic peoples and from then on took initiatives in consolidating the Uighur state. He tried to make the Ötüken Mountain, centered around the tributaries of the Selenge River, not only as the camps for seasonal migrations, but also as a political center from which he could exercise control over his realm. The qaghan was not just content with bringing various northern or northwestern nomadic peoples under subjugation. He also strove to forge close ties with communities of sedentary peoples in accordance with the general pattern of state expansion among nomadic rulers.⁵⁰

The Uighur state in its early stage came to terms with the Tang when the founder Qutlugh Bilge Kül qaghan conquered the Türks and received the title of the ‘king who respected righteousness’ (Fengyi wang 奉義王)

⁴⁹ Yamada Nobuo 山田信夫, “テュルクの聖地ウトユケン山” [The Ötüken mountain, the sacred land of the Türks], p.71.

⁵⁰ Kim Hodong 金浩東, “Buk Asia youmok gukga eui gunjugweon” 北遊牧國家君主權 [Sovereign power of the nomadic states in northern Asia], *TongAsa sang eui wanggweon* 東亞史上王權 [Monarchical power in East Asian history], (Seoul: Hanul academi, 1993), p.137.

from the Tang.⁵¹ However, the event did not lead to a substantial relationship with the Tang. His successor Qarlıq qaghan busied himself with conquering nomadic peoples rather than making contact with the Tang. Establishing his power over the nomadic world was an absolute priority for the qaghan on the ground that military victories over the other contenders of power in the Mongolian Steppe would perpetually confirm the Uighur destiny and legacies from their ancestors.⁵² Through his military prowess, the qaghan was able to consolidate his power over the Inner Asian steppe by 753, and in 754 he was able to drive out the Qarluqs and the Basmils to the west. Still, the Uighurs' renewed effort to make a rapprochement with the Tang met with little success.

As it happened, the qaghan started recruiting the Sogdians, engaged in trade between the East and the West, to the Uighur government. The Sogdians of oasis origin had served important roles in the operation of the nomadic states and became prominent during the imperial period of the Türks⁵³ to the point of making their residential colonies in the Mongolian Steppe. The Uighurs also tried to forge a constructive tie with them by building residential facilities to accommodate them, as shown in an account recorded on The Shine usu Inscription following the victories against the Qarluqs and others around the Terkhin Lake in 753. Afterwards, the qaghan returned to the Ötüken and built the *ordu* in the vicinity of the Orkhon River and the *balıq* (permanent citadels).⁵⁴

The qaghan chose to build his *ordu* close to the citadels on the vast rich pastures by the main stream of the Orkhon River flowing from the

⁵¹ *Jiu Tang shu*, fasc. 117, “Huigu 回鶻 *shang*,” p.6114.

⁵² The Shine usu Inscription, (N-12)-(E-2).

⁵³ Mori Masao 護雅夫, “ソグド人の東方發展に関する考古學的一資料” [An archaeological material related to the Sogdians' eastern expansion], 古代トルコ民族史研究 II [A study of the history of ancient Türkic people II], (東京: 山川出版社, 1992), p.216-229; Iwasa Seiichirō 岩佐精一郎, “元代の和林” [Helin in the Yuan era], 岩佐精一郎遺稿 [Posthumous manuscripts of Iwasa Seiichirō], (東京, 1936), p.233; K. M. Байпаков, Среднебекобая городская культура южного казахстана и семиречья (Алма-Ата, 1986); Étienne De La Vaissière ; James Ward, tr., Sogdian traders : A History (Histoire des marchands Sogdiens) (Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2005), p.225.

⁵⁴ The Shine usu Inscription, (S-10).

Maps

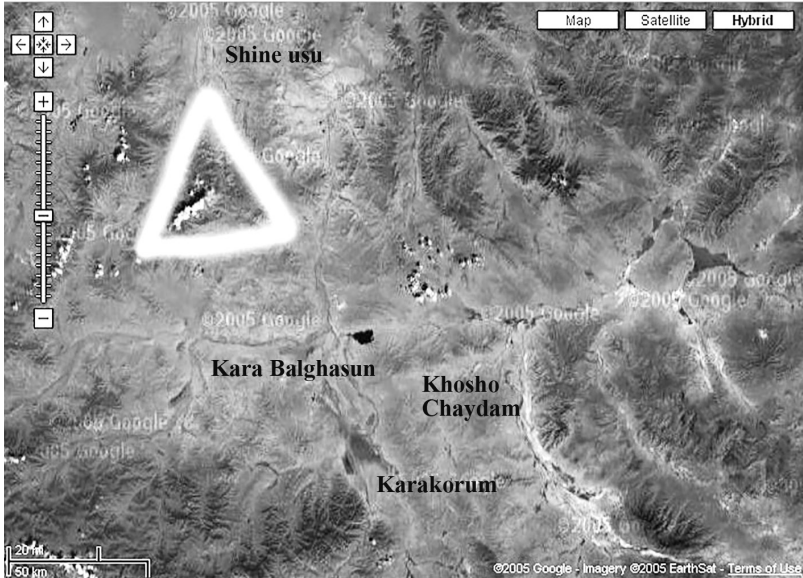


Figure 5. Location of the Ötüken Mountain Area in the Northern Slope of the Khangai Mountain—Political Centers of the Türks, Uighurs, and Mongols

Khangai Mountain to the north and its tributary Tamir River. This fertile steppe area of sedentary agriculture (even today) with the trade routes linking the East and the West was fairly compatible with commercial bases of itinerant caravans. As Bilge qaghan of the Türks once remarked; “If you take the seat [of the government] at Ötüken and send out the caravans, you need not worry about anything.”⁵⁵ The area allowed for commercial transactions with adjacent regions whose citadels includes both Qara Balghasun—close to Khosho Chaydam—, the political center of the Türk empire, and Qaraqorum, the capital city of the Mongol Empire later.

Yet, the Uighurs could not develop a close relationship with the Tang. At that time, the Tang did not recognize the Uighurs as the master of the

⁵⁵ The Kül Tegin Inscription, (S-8).

pastoral nomadic world but merely as one of the “loose-reign” (*jimi* 羈縻) peoples. The Uighurs were unable to force the Tang to send a princess for peace-making (*hefan gongzhu* 和蕃公主) or for opening border markets (*hushi* 互市). Rather, the Tang used its “loose-reign” peoples such as the old and new Türk subordinates, who had submitted in the mid-7th century (Tujue *zahu* 突厥雜胡) and in the aftermath of the downfall of the second Türk empire (Tujue *jianghu* 突厥降戶) respectively, to counter the aggressive Tibetans (Tufan) 吐蕃 and Qitans 契丹, as well as the rising Uighurs.⁵⁶

Until 756, the Uighurs had been unable to develop any concrete diplomatic relationship with the Tang according to their terms. However, by rendering invaluable military service against the An Lushan 安祿山 Rebellion that began in the eleventh month of 755, the Uighur state could acquire a valuable opportunity to establish a new favorable relationship with the Tang. Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756-762), at the face of the fall of his capital Chang’an 長安 and in counter to the growing power of his Türk subordinates (Tujue *jianghu* 突厥降戶) and the Tibetans on the heels of the rebellion, decided to accept the assistance of the Uighurs. In the ninth month of 757, the eldest son (Tarduš ulugh bilge yabghu) of Qarlıq qaghan was ordered to assist the Tang armies in recapturing the two Tang capitals of Chang’an 長安 and Luoyang 洛陽, and, in return, the Uighurs were allowed to loot and pillage the two imperial capitals, and were rewarded with gifts. On his return to the steppes in the winter, the Uighur heir apparent promised another military expedition to help the Tang and in the next year Qarlıq qaghan began a diplomatic marriage by asking for an imperial bride of the Tang.

Breaking with precedents, Suzong granted a marriage alliance with Qarlıq qaghan and sent a daughter of his, known as the Ningguo Princess

⁵⁶ Jeong Jaehun 丁載勳, “Dangjo cui Dolgweol hangho gimi wa An Roksan cui nan: Dolgweol jei jeguk (682-745) bunggoe ihu yumok segye cui jaepyeon gwa gwallyeon hayeo” 唐朝突厥洛戶羈縻安祿山亂—突厥第二帝國(682-745)崩壞以後遊牧世界再編關聯 [The Tang’s loose-rein rule of the Türk subordinates, and the An Lushan rebellion in relation to the reordering of the steppe world in the aftermath of the collapse of the second Türk empire], Bunyeol gwa tonghap: Jungguk jungse cui jesang 分裂 統合—中國中世 諸相 [Division and Unification: Aspects of medieval China], (Seoul: Jisik saneop sa, 1998).

寧國公主, to marry him. The Tang court also accorded the title of “Bilge qa-qghan whose heroic martial power is far reaching” to him in the 7th month of 758. This marriage alliance, expressed as ‘the Tang and the Uighurs are in lip and teeth relationship,’⁵⁷ marked an epochal event. The Uighurs started to gain recognition of their regional hegemony from the Tang and represent themselves as the leader of the whole northern nomadic world .

In the 7th month when the qaghan stayed at his summer camp base, the Ningguo Princess arrived probably at the northern side of the Ötüken. The location of her residency can be inferred from the statement on The Shine usu Inscription that the city of Bay baliq (rich city) was built on the northern bank of the Selenge River on behalf of the princess and the Sogdian merchants.⁵⁸ The meaning of ‘baliq’ or citadels, close to the qaghan’s *ordu*, denotes a large complex of permanent structures rather than the movable housing common to the nomads. Bay baliq may be identified with the Khotag Undur som citadel remains on the northern bank of the Selenge River today. The remains consist of three distinguishable sites; the smallest by the Uighurs and the remainders by the Qitans.⁵⁹ The northern bank of the Selenge River, where the Khunui River joins, lies at the center of the vast pasture land with cool summer weather and has the trade route along the river connecting the East and the West.

The location of the Uighur summer camp base to the north of the Ötüken was a regular migration site but their migration further north is related to the battles with the Qirghiz. The northern bank of the Selenge River, where Bay baliq was located, had the strategic advantage of launching expeditions against northern enemies. In the early period of the Uighur state, the Uighurs largely prevailed over the Qirghiz. For example, accord-

⁵⁷ “Ce Huihe wei yingwu weiyuan kehan wen” 冊回紇爲英武威遠可汗文 [Writ for investing the Uighur as the qaghan whose heroic martial power is far reaching], Tang da zhaoling ji 唐大詔令集 [Collection of the Tang imperial edicts], 638 (上海: 學林出版社, 1992).

⁵⁸ The Shine usu Inscription, (W-5).

⁵⁹ Hayashi Toshio, Shiraishi Noriyuki, and Matsuda Koichi 俊雄・白石典之・松田孝一, “バイバリク遺蹟” [The Bay baliq remains], (中央ユーラシア學研究会, モンゴル國現存遺蹟・碑文調査研究報告 [Research report on existing historical remains and stone inscriptions of the Mongolian People’s Republic], 1999), pp.196-198.

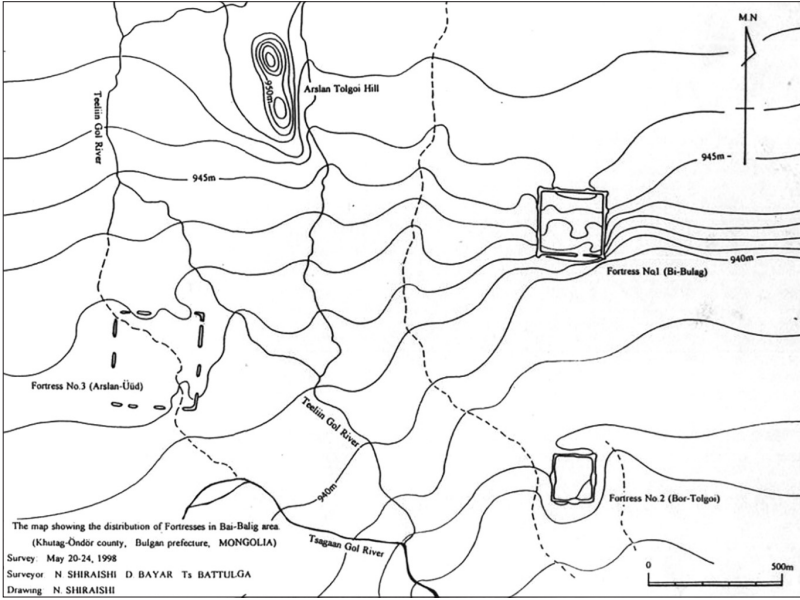


Figure 6. Location of the Bay baliq Citadel. The rectangle on the right bottom marks the citadel of the Uighur era.

(Source: Hayashi Toshio, Shiraishi Noriyuki, and Matsuda Koichi 俊雄・白石典之・林松田孝一, “バイバリク遺蹟” [The Bay baliq remains]. (中央ユーラシア學研究會, モンゴル國現存遺蹟・碑文調査研究報告[Research report on existing historical remains and stone inscriptions of the Mongolian People’s Republic], 1999), p.198)

ing to the *Xin Tang shu*, “in the reign period of Emperor Suzong, [the Qirghiz] were defeated by the Uighurs, and cut off from China ever since.”⁶⁰ Also, in the 9th month of 758, an Uighur envoy (Dashouling Gaijiangjun 大首領蓋將軍 in Chinese), dispatched to the Tang court reported the Uighur destruction of a Qirghiz army of 50,000.⁶¹

In order to deal with the severe winter season, the qaghan moved

⁶⁰ *Xin Tang shu*, fasc. 217 xia, “Huigu 回鶻 xia,” p.6149.

⁶¹ *Jiu Tang shu*, fasc. 195, “Huihe 迴紇,” p.5201.

from the northern bank of the Selenge River to the southern slope of the Ötüken where the winter capital Kara Balghasun sat. Despite the lack of detailed accounts, it is highly likely that new dwellings were necessary for the princess to tide over the extreme winter weather, just as Bay baliq was selected as her summer dwelling. Therefore, the construction of Kara Balghasun received renewed vigor after the arrival of the Tang princess and the position of Kara Balghasun as the winter capital was further strengthened.

The construction of the capital Kara Balghasun continued even after the death of Qarliq qaghan in the following year (the 4th month of 759). After the Ningguo Princess had returned home to finish mourning in the 6th month, a daughter of Pugu Huaian 僕固懷恩, called the younger Ningguo Princess, was married to the third ruler Bögü qaghan (r. 759-780, Mouyu kehan 牟羽可汗 in Chinese sources) and became the qatun, for whom more residential facilities were built. Pugu Huaian 僕固懷恩 was one of the foremost Tang generals of Türk descent who played an active role in quelling the An Shi Rebellion and forming a military alliance with the Uighurs by visiting them together with the Dunhuang king Cheng Cai in the 9th month of 757. Furthermore, the Dunhuang king received the Uighur princess Bilge as his wife and Pugu Huaian sent off another daughter of his to marry the qaghan's second son Bilge Tölis ulugh bilge shad.⁶²

If hesitant somewhat in leading campaigns to assist the Tang, Bögü qaghan personally put down the rebellion of Shi Siming 史思明 (703-761), one of An Lushan's generals who proclaimed himself emperor, and vigorously strengthened the Uighur-Tang ties including the construction of a royal palace in Kara Balghasun for the Tang princess.⁶³ Meanwhile, he adopted Manicheism from his Sogdian supporters to further strengthen his rule.⁶⁴ This was meant to forge a strong and long-lasting connection with a

⁶² Xin Tang shu, fasc. 217 shang, "Huiyu 回鶻 shang," p.6115.

⁶³ Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 [Comprehensive mirror to aid in government], fasc. 226, Tang Emperor Dezong the 1st year of Jianzhong reign era 唐德宗 建中元年 (780), p.7282.

⁶⁴ Jeong Jaehun, "Wigureu cui Manigyö suyong gwa geu seonggyeok" 摩尼教 受容 性格 [The Uighurs' adoption of Manicheism and its characteristics], Yeoksa hakbo 歷史學報 168 (2000).

people possessing commercial and urban skills as well as religious devotion. The Sogdian traders, acting as a bridge between the Uighurs and the Tang, made crucial contributions to the trade of Uighur horses for Chinese silk, a major economic policy for the Tang.⁶⁵ Consequently, the sedentary urban centers like Kara Balghasun and Bay baliq expanded to accommodate the Sogdian merchants as well as the people from the Tang. Furthermore, the active construction of the capital for sedentary populations wielded a substantial influence on the pattern of seasonal migrations of the qaghan.

Additionally, there might be a certain spring camp where the qaghan would stay on his way to the summer camp at Bay baliq after spending the winter season at the Ötüken. A plausible site for that purpose could be the Moghon Shine usu (clear water of the snake) where Qarlïq qaghan's tomb was built after his death in the 4th month of 759 and his funeral was held in the 6th month with the arrival of the Tang condolence embassy. The stone inscriptions and mound stone monuments in the middle of an elevated basin, surrounded by the small 'Moghon Shine usu' Lake to the south, alongside a tributary of the Khanui River have still remained in place.⁶⁶

Besides, among the nomadic peoples in the region, sacrificial offering or military training in the form of hunting was usually held at the site of the spring camp.⁶⁷ The Türks used to gather at the sacred Tarenshui 他人水 in the middle of the 5th month to offer sacrifice to tengri (heavenly god)⁶⁸ and the Gaoche 高車 with whom the Uighurs was once affiliated also performed a similar ritual during the spring season.⁶⁹ Later, the Qïtans performed a range of primitive religious rituals at the site of the spring

⁶⁵ Zizhi tongjian, fascicle 226, Tang Emperor Dezong the 1st year of Jianzhong reign era (780), p.7282.

⁶⁶ Hayashi Toshio 林俊雄, “ウイグル可汗国初期の石碑遺跡” [The stone inscriptions of the early Uighur qaghan state], 廻純タリアト・シネ=ウス兩碑文(八世紀中葉)のテキスト復原と年代記載から見た北・東・中央アジア (Katayama Akio, et al., 片山章雄 等, 1993年度東海大學文學部研究達成金成果報告書, 1994).

⁶⁷ Kim Hodong, “Monggol jeguk gunjudeul cui yangdo sunhaeng gwa yumok jeok seupsok,” 5, p.12.

⁶⁸ Zhoushu 周書, fasc. 50, “Yiyu Tujue chuan” 異域 突厥傳, p.910.

⁶⁹ Weishu 魏書 [History of the Wei of the Northern Dynasties], fasc. 103, “Gaoche” 高車, p.2309.

camp.⁷⁰ Likewise, it is highly likely that the Uighurs also performed similar spring rituals somewhere around the Ötüken. If such rituals were performed in the spring season, as mentioned above, the most plausible venue may well be around the Shine usu. Moreover, the venue, bordering the forest to the northeast, was an ideal hunting ground fit for training a large number of soldiers, to be sent out whenever necessary, and a strategic location for a marshalling area, both of which suggest the function of the spring camp as a strategic platform to launch expeditions against other nomadic peoples.

In summary, the qaghan's seasonal migration followed the path starting from the winter camp at Kara Balghasun situated in the southern slope of the Ötüken Mountain, heading northward to the spring camp in the steppe along the Khanui River and moving further north to spend the summer season. In particular, from the arrival of the Ningguo Princess in 758 onward, movements between Baybaliq and Kara Balghasun became central in the qaghan's seasonal migrations, naturally resulting in the further construction of comfortable living quarters for the Tang princess. What should not be dismissed is the fact that related structures like citadels and inner courts could serve as important



Figure 7. Location of the Shine usu Inscription.

(Source: Hayashi Toshio 俊雄. “ウイグル可汗国初期の石碑遺跡” [The stone inscriptions of the early Uighur qaghan state], 8)

⁷⁰ Yi Yongbeom 李龍範, “Yodae chunyu go” 遼代春遊考 [Study on the imperial spring tour of the Liao dynasty], Jungse Manju Monggo sa eui yeon'gu 中世滿州·蒙古史の 研究 [Study on the histories of Manchu and Mongol], (Seoul: Donghwa chulpan gongsa, 1988), p.115.

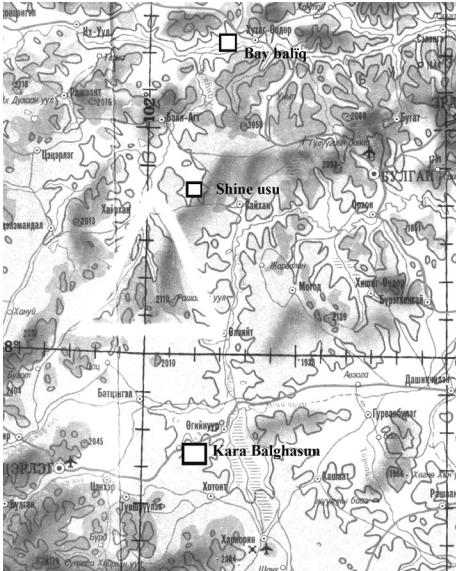


Figure 8. The Spring Camp (Moghon Shine Usu) of the Uighurs between the Summer and Winter Camps

symbols and landmarks to demonstrate the qaghan's authority and power.⁷¹ As Figure 9 shows, Kara Balghasun's development into a great city testifies to the enhanced position and power of the Uighur qaghans through the establishment of constructive relation with the Tang and the further westward expansion since the late 8th century. Consequently, the later qaghans, while continuing seasonal migrations centered on their existing summer and winter camps, tried to build additional urban centers in their realm to accommodate the Tang people and the Sogdians, nurture the economic growth, increase their cultural competence, and finally maintain the Uighur hegemony in the Mongolian Steppe.

⁷¹ The Ilkhanate of the Mongol empire era constructed and expanded permanent structures centered on the cities to demonstrate its rulers' prestige. See Honda Minobu 本田實信, “イルハンの冬營地、夏營地” [Winter and summer camp bases of the Ilkhanate], *モンゴル時代史研究* [Study on the Mongol history], (東京: 東京大學出版會, 1993), p.378.

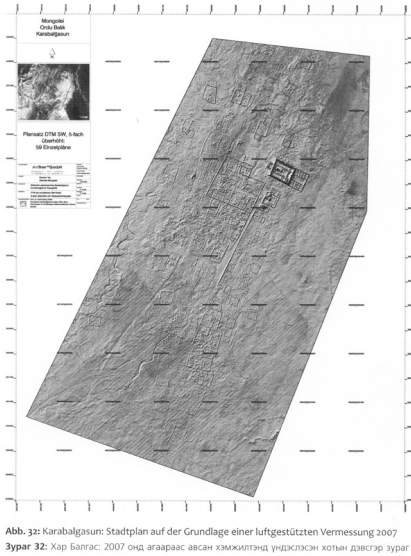


Figure 9. Map of Kara Balghasun
(Courtesy of the Excavation
Team from University of Bonn)

Concluding Remarks

Written and archaeological sources have suggested that the early Uighur rulers followed the nomadic practice of seasonal migrations around the triangular-shaped mountain steppe area of the Ötüken—the modern Chigeltei peak—. Along this line, I explore more specifically the Uighur route that started from the winter camp in the Ötüken northward to the Khanui River steppe in the spring season north or northwest to Bay balıq for summer. And, in the course of the migration the second ruler Qarlıq qaghan conducted frequent expeditions to bring other neighboring nomadic peoples under his dominance and confirm the Uighur hegemony over the Mongolian Steppe. Until his newly-found state achieved a level of stability in 753, the qaghan kept performing military operations to the north or northwest in summer while returning to the Ötüken in winter. At the same time, the Uighur military aid in suppressing the An Lushan Rebellion in 756 gave

the qaghan an invaluable chance to improve the Uighur-Tang relationship. Following his marriage to the Ningguo Princess in 758, the qaghan built permanent living quarters around his ordu on behalf of the Tang princess by constructing his royal residences in Bay baliq for summer and in Kara Balghasun for winter. Without forgoing the traditional nomadic practice of seasonal migrations, he built more permanent structures alongside the citadels in the summer and winter camps for the Tang princess and the Sogdian merchants; the construction project continued from the reign of the third ruler Bögü qaghan onward. Hence, I contend, the development of permanent urban centers was closely related to the increasing contact and exchange with the Tang through diplomatic marriages, the vigorous promotion of trade with the Sogdians, and eventually strengthen the qaghan's power. To be certain, the Uighur ascendancy in conjunction with the diplomatic and commercial changes made the Uighurs themselves reshape their own seasonal migration pattern and residential structures.

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