

**ABSTRACT**  
**of the PhD thesis**  
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**«Linguoculturological codification and interpretation of the monument "Yryk Bitig" (Oracle book)», submitted for the degree**  
**of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**  
**in the specialty «6D020900 – Oriental Studies»**

**General description of work**

The study of ancient texts in oriental science carried out based on generally accepted methods for studying this kind of sources using specific methods applicable to a specific text, taking into account the territorial affiliation and the era of its origin. In most cases, these are text decoding, historical and cultural analysis and methods of researching source studies. Modern trends in the study of the East aim at studying the culture, religion, philosophy, politics and economics of the countries of the East, starting from the ancient era with a forecast for the future. This allows constructing a holistic view of cultural, linguistic, social processes, phenomena that have taken place and have been happening in Eastern societies. At the same time, ethnic, mental, humanitarian, religious aspects of the life of a given society are touched upon based on theoretical and methodological provisions of oriental sciences. Such scientific research carried out through the analysis of texts of different genres that are significant for both Kazakhstani and foreign science.

In the 21st century, the interest of scientists in the study of ancient texts in the field of various areas of the humanities, such as oriental studies, history, cultural studies, hermeneutics, linguistics, textual studies, and others, continues unabated.

The text as a means of real communication reveals its natural essence, namely, it gives us the opportunity to consider it as a unit of the communicative system. The study of the text from the perspective of communicative-pragmatic principles allows us to consider it as a means for transmitting information by the addressee-creator of the text to the addressee. Therefore, ancient texts also considered as a communicative unit, which provided by various levels of the language and serves as the main material for linguo-culturological research.

The main features that are inherent in texts, according to the work "Ancient text as an object of linguistic research" S.Ye. Meshatkina, also characterize ancient texts, for example:

1. coherence: the ancient text is a holistic, coherent formation that carries a limited amount of information;
2. discreteness: as a rule, an ancient text has a beginning and an end and can be divided into significant segments in accordance with the principle of division (compositionally, semantically, syntactically, etc.);
3. structuredness: the ancient text consists of logically integrated, interconnected parts, the number and interposition of which is due to its semantic structure;

4. modality: the ancient text reflects the author's intentions, the reasons that prompted him to create the text, artistic space and time, as well as the over information contained in the text (subtext, presuppositions, etc.);

5. communication: the ancient text presupposes an impact on the recipient, the result of which is a mental-emotional reaction and is of a dualistic nature.

### **Relevance of the research topic.**

The relevance of the study is due to the need to appeal to the language of written monuments as a reflection and revival of national spiritual values, the cult of knowledge and presentation of Kazakhstan in the world, set out in the program "Rukhany zhagyru", initiated by the first president of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev N.A.

Ancient texts, which reflect the traditions, religions, laws and values of the people inhabiting the territory of the East, carry a set of holistic ideas about the past of Eastern civilizations, whose life is the richest sources of ancient texts. In this regard, written monuments studied as a historical source and linguistic material in a synchronous and diachronic sense. A number of written monuments reflect culture, language and directly related to the people who inhabited the territory of modern Kazakhstan in the past. Thus, the study of these monuments makes it possible to assess the influence of the linguistic heritage of the ancient East on the modern world in general and the culture of Kazakhstan in particular.

One of the striking examples is the ancient Eastern text "Yryk Bitig" (Oracle book), which was written over a thousand years ago (now it is kept in the British National Library, British National Library, Indiana office No. 0 / c-103 – Or. 8212- / 161, discovered in 1907 y. by the British archaeologist A. Stein in the "Cave of a Thousand Buddhas" temple complex in Xinjiang Province (the territory of modern western China).

This written monument is the only runic manuscript book that has survived to this day. The esoteric nature of the monument makes its text unique for linguistic research at the intersection of sciences. This fact allows us to consider "Yryk Bitig" as a linguistic phenomenon of the ancient East, which allows us to apply various approaches to its study to clarify the existing interpretations of the text of the monument. It should be noted that not all currently studied materials on the monument reveal its linguo-cultural specificity.

The first attempts to decipher and translate the book belong to the famous Danish scientist Wilhelm Thomsen. It should be noted that the transliteration of the text "Yryk Bitig" performed by the scientist served as the basis for decoding many subsequent ancient runic texts, which are a valuable heritage of the entire East.

Despite the solid baggage of scientific research by scientists on the content and genre of the monument, a number of questions remain open and polemical:

- the Chinese text, which is located at the beginning and at the end of the "Yryk Bitig" monument, was subjected to incomplete linguistic analysis;

- there are gaps in the linguoculturological interpretation of marker words, the definition of which has a pronounced pragmatic orientation and reflects the most relevant and significant characteristics and features for oriental studies;
- manuscript's belonging to any religion, the presence of numbering in the book, the date of writing the text;
- the relevance of the problem of the comparative study "Yryk Bitig" (Oracle book) with other texts of an esoteric nature remains actual.

**Theoretical and methodological foundations of the dissertation work and the degree of its study.**

The works used classified as follows:

*1. Works of foreign researchers.*

Theoretical and methodological research by W. Thomsen, who was the first to decipher and translate the "Yryk Bitig" monument into English. In the article "Dr. M.A. Stein's Manuscripts in Turkish "Runic" Script from Miran and Tun-huang "(Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1912 y.), the scientist argued that "Yryk Bitig" is a tamga-like letter and dated the manuscript to VIII - early IX century ... Later, the English translation by V. Thomsen was translated into Turkish by H.N. Orkun, and S.E. Malov - into Russian. Analyzing the text of the monument, W. Thomsen attributed the "Oracle book" to Manicheism and completed the first external description: "The Turkic text begins on the back page of the fifth sheet ... and ends on the first page of the fifty-seventh sheet." He first suggested that the book originally written in ancient Turkic script for the Turkic society, and then the text presented within the framework of the content of Chinese Buddhist texts. In addition, the scientist was the first to mention the method of gluing the pages of the monument. In describing the characteristics of the book, W. Thomsen noted that the book did not contain page numbers.

An important source is the works of G. Clauson, who reports that in divination for "Yryk Bitig", three cubes or a short rectangle were used, found in the area of Khayrabad Tepe north of Termez in Uzbekistan; this artifact is dated back to the 3rd century AD. G. Clauson in his work "Notes on the Irk Bitig" (1960 y.) presented informative material on the study "Yryk Bitig", dedicated to words and expressions with "dark" meaning, the interpretation of which, carried out by various scientists, in his opinion, caused certain doubts and offered his own interpretation.

An important work on the research topic is the work of T. Tekin "Irk Bitig the Book of Omens" (1993 y.). The scientist emphasized that "Yryk Bitig" in its content and structure was a unique manuscript, originally written in the Turkic language, and that the monument was not a translation of another source.

In 1977 the German professor M. Erdal published research concerning the monument in "Irk Bitig Üzerine Yeni Notlar". He put forward an assumption about the dating of "Yryk Bitig" by the 9th century, which he established, based on the linguistic peculiarities of the monument. Thus, M. Erdal rightly attributed "Yryk Bitig" to the first ancient Türkic manuscripts dating from the 8th-9th centuries.

In 1974 L. Bazin in "Les calendriers turcs anciens et medievaux" suggested the date of writing the manuscript March 17, 930 or March 4, 942 ; in 1973 James Hamilton made a very important amendment in the translation of the colophon "Yryk Bitig" ("Le colophon de l'Irq Bitig") and dated the time of writing the manuscript on March 17, 930. In addition, J. Hamilton determined that the manuscript was written by a young a monk for his older brother (possibly a senior religious leader) Sanun Itacuk (Sanun Itachuk) or General Sanun Itachuk.

In a comprehensive study of Oracle book, V. Rybattsky, together with his Chinese colleague Hu Hong made a deep textological analysis of the Chinese texts written at the beginning and at the end of the book, which was important for determining the essence of the content of the monument.

L. Giles, who divided the manuscript (Or. 8212) as follows, made an important contribution to the research "Yryk Bitig":

1. The text of divination
2. Colophon
3. Chinese text - poems about the life of Buddha Shakyamuni

L. Giles as "Religious Poems on the Life of Buddha Shakyamuni" described the first Chinese text.

The works of such foreign orientalists made a significant contribution to the study: A. Lecock, A. Gabain, W. Henning, M. Boyes, P. Zieme, O. Hansenn, F.A. Brown, Hu Hongshu, W. Sandermann, F.S. Andreas et al.

*2. Works of scientists of the pre-revolutionary Russian period and Soviet researchers.*

One of the first researchers who comprehensively studied the text of the "Yryk Bitig" monument is S.E. Malov. He published the text of this manuscript in Russian in his major textbook work "Monuments of ancient Turkic writing" in 1951 with comments for each "Yryk" and a translation dictionary compiled by him. S.E. Malov was the first of the orientalists to correlate this monument with the Tengrian worldview of the Turks.

I.V. Stebleva conducted an extensive study of the manuscript's text, defining it as a lyrical composition in terms of genre. She translated the text in poetic form. While researching the lyrical style of the "Oracle book", the scientist compared the manuscript with the "Great Hymn to Mani", written in Manichean script, and with Buddhist poetic works written in Uighur script. In accordance with the religious nature of the manuscript of I.V. Stebleva attributes "Yryk Bitig" to Tengrianism.

S.G. Klyashtorny, who proved that the manuscript belongs to Manichaeism, based on the analysis of the description of the "white horse", expressed an opposite idea in his material "Manichean text II D and Irq Bitig".

Research by such scientists as V.V. Radlov, L.N. Gumilev, V.V. Bartold, I.V. Kormushin, V.M. Yakovleva, A.V. Prelovsky, V.A. Levshits, L. Yu. Tugusheva, I.L. Kyzlasov and others has a great value.

*3. Works of domestic researchers.*

G. Aydarov first translated the text of the manuscript monument "Yryk Bitig" into the Kazakh language based on the translation by S.E. Malova in 1990.

N. Bazytkhan translated the text "Yryk Bitig" into Kazakh from the original text, offering his own transliteration. Currently, his translation and transliteration are on domestic sites <http://bitig.org/>; <http://atalarmirasi.org>.

Professor A. Kairzhanov made a significant contribution to the study of the ancient Turkic monument in the works "Ancient Turkic book of the X century "İrq bitig" and "Ancient Turkic book "İrq bitig" and the Chinese classical "Book of Changes" (2016). In his work the scientist analyzed some similar words from two monuments of oracular content. Based on marker words, the scientist identified traces of Manichaeism, Christianity, Buddhism and Tengrianism in "Yryk Bitig".

The following Kazakhstani scientists as: M.M. Auezov, O.O. Suleimenov, K.M. Baypakov, E. Tursunov, A.S. Amanzholov, B.E. Kumekov, K.U. Torlanbaeva, Yu. L. Zuev, S. Kondybai, Z. Nauryzbaeva, O. Sapashev, S. Bektemirova and others have made a great contribution to the study of the ancient Turkic monument.

"Yryk Bitig" is an object of study by orientalists of a significant genre and content. Attention paid to the religious content of the text, and the linguistic side, style of presentation, genre and linguistic characteristics not subjected to special analysis. In this regard, the issues of attributing the manuscript to a certain class of the Turkic society, their cultural, religious and ethnic identification remained unsolved.

**Object of research:** the handwritten work "Yryk Bitig".

**Subject of research:** the language of the text of the runic monument "Yryk Bitig".

**The purpose of the dissertation research:** to carry out an interpretive characterization of the monument "Yryk Bitig" based on the original text.

**The tasks** set determine the structure of the dissertation research:

1. to determine the religious content of the Xinjiang monuments, which cover the period of the 9th-10th centuries, which served as the basis or influenced the content of the "Yryk Bitig" manuscript monument;

2. to identify and interpret words-markers that carry a linguo-culturological semantic load;

3. to carry out an interpretive and comparative analysis of the language of the monument with other fortune-telling texts of the peoples of the East, of different ideological and religious nature;

4. to conduct a lexicographic analysis of the "Yryk Bitig" language units and codify them in Russian and Turkish.

**Research methods and techniques.**

In the course of the research, general scientific methods and techniques were used: analysis, synthesis, methods of induction and deduction, abstraction, annotation; as well as private research methods, archaeographic analysis, attribution, dating of the source, external criticism of the source, and transliteration of the manuscript.

In the process of translating the manuscript into Russian, the following methods were used: reproductive (representative) interpretation, semantic method of translation, translation, one-way consecutive translation, translation lexicography (use of dictionaries), semantic analysis, descriptive (explanatory translation), comparative analysis and component analysis, textual analysis.

**Sources of research.** The source of the research is "Yryk Bitig" (Oracle book). In the course of the research, *the Old Turkic dictionary*, published in 1969 and republished with new comments and additions by the International Turkic Academy in 2016, the Etymological Dictionary of Turkic languages, "*Divani Lugat at-Turk*" M. Kashgari and others used.

**Research material:** 403 language units of the original, 403 language units of the Russian translation and 403 language units of the translated Turkish text.

**The scientific novelty** of the research lies in the systemic analysis through the prism of the traditional worldview and various religious movements that existed on the territory of Xinjiang (the territory of modern western China). One of the new approaches in the work is to conduct a comparative study of the "Oracle book" with other fortune-telling texts of similar content; a comprehensive analysis of the worldview and the spread of beliefs among the people of Xinjiang was carried out on the basis of identifying "marker words" carrying a linguistic and cultural semantic load; transliteration of the manuscript was performed, the text of the "Oracle book" was translated into Russian with the introduction of scientific comments revealing the content of the "dark words"; on the basis of the original text of the adapted version of "Yryk Bitig" with comments for practical use in the scientific environment; On the basis of glosses, a trilingual ancient Turkic-Russian-Turkish dictionary for the book "Yryk Bitig" was compiled for the first time.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the chosen approach to the object of research. With the difference and diversity of research subjects, the historical monument "Yryk Bitig" is an object of study for a number of sciences in the humanities cycle, thereby forming the basis for integrative scientific research.

**The theoretical significance** of the research determined by a new approach to the study of the handwritten text "Yryk Bitig", the disclosure of the linguo-culturological codification and comparative analysis of the text "Yryk Bitig" with the modern Turkish language, the development of the ancient Turkic-Russian-Turkish dictionary.

**The practical significance** of the research determined by a new approach to the study of the handwritten text "Yryk Bitig", the disclosure of the linguo-culturological codification and comparative analysis of the text "Yryk Bitig" with the modern Turkish language, the development of the ancient Turkic-Russian-Turkish dictionary.

The practical significance of the study lies in the fact that the materials and conclusions can be used in subsequent studies of the monument (Or. 8212) "Yryk Bitig" (Oracle book) in the context of studying the language, culture, worldview and religions of the people of Xinjiang and the texts of eastern people in general (IX -X centuries).

The main provisions, conclusions of the dissertation are useful in the development of lecture courses on oriental studies, philology, Turkic studies, history, culture and religions in universities. The dissertation material can be used for practical educational purposes for the study of ancient monuments. The trilingual dictionary compiled in the process of work will be useful for students, undergraduates, doctoral students, teachers, scientists, as well as for everyone who is interested in the theory and practice of ancient runic source study.

**Provisions for Defense:**

1. Comprehensive comparative analysis of Xinjiang manuscripts: B 165: 3 and part - B 157: 54 with Chinese "Yu-xia-ji" (Book in a jade box) and "Yryk Bitig" with Chinese fortune-telling texts "I Ching" or "Book Changes" testifies that the "Yryk Bitig" monument is a unique symbiosis of the religious movements of Xinjiang of the 9th century.

2. 25 marker words repeatedly appear in the manuscript "Yryk Bitig", that have a special linguo-culturological codification and occupy an important place in the culture of the peoples of Xinjiang both in the 9th century and in our time.

3. A semantic comparison of the ancient Turkic linguistic units of the "Yryk Bitig" monument with similar units of the Turkish language, the fundamental principle of which was the lexical meaning of each word, showed that 42% (168 words) remained unchanged. 3% (11 words) - preserved with deformation. 55% (224 words) are not preserved in the modern Turkish language.

4. An interdisciplinary approach in the study "Yryk Bitig" with the involvement of data from oriental studies, linguistics, Turkic studies, religious studies, history, cultural studies, etc. allows building a new methodological perspective for the study of historical written monuments.

**Approbation of the study.** The dissertation completed within the framework of the implementation of a joint educational program for the training of scientific personnel based on the Institute of Oriental Studies named after R.B. Suleimenov jointly and the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (order No. 166 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 21, 2014).

The main provisions and results of the study tested in four scientific reports and abstracts of speeches at international conferences. On the topic and materials of the dissertation, nine scientific articles published in Russian, Kazakh and English: two publications included in the Scopus database, four articles - in journals recommended by the Committee for Control in Education and Science of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

1. Древнетюркские письменные памятники: Рукописное наследие // Қазақ Тарихы, № 5, 2017. № 75748. Серия гуманитарных наук. – С. 6-9.

2. Көне түркі Ырық Бітіг кітабінің аударма интерпретациясындағы образдық прагматикасының ықпалдасуы // Материалы международной научно-практической конференции «образ независимого Казахстана в странах зарубежного Востока: тенденции и перспективы». – Алматы, 2017. – Б. 32-37.

3. Ежелгі түрік дүниетанымында «махаббат» концептісі // Вестник КазНУ №4(83), 2017. – №75867; 25867. Серия востоковедения. – Б. 103-108.

4. Манихейство на великом шелковом пути и его этнокультурные аспекты в тюркской среде (VI-XI вв.) // Түркі әлемі және халықаралық байланыстар: тарих, тұлға, келешек. Халықаралық ғылыми-теориялық конференция материалдары (Ғылыми басылым) – Астана, 26-27 мамыр 2017 жыл. – С. 428-431.

5. Роль книги «Бірык Битиг» в древнетюркской письменной литературе // Вестник КазНУ № 1 (84), 2018. – №75867; 25867. Серия востоковедения. – С. 162-167.

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7. Роль Мани и архетипические мотивы в истории манихейства в среде тюркских народов // Древние культуры Монголии, байкальской Сибири и северного Китая. Материалы IX международной научной конференции. – Улан-Уде, 2018. – С. 188-192.

8. Archetypes in the ancient turkic pagan beliefs // Известия МОН РК № 3(325), 2019. № 10894-Ж. Серия социальных и гуманитарных наук. – P. 126-131.

9. «Бірык Битиг» (Гадательная Книга) и ее значимость в истории древних тюрков // VII международная научно-практическая конференция молодых ученых-историков «Великие имена великой степи: научно-теоретические и практические аспекты изучения в контексте патриотического воспитания молодежи», в рамках программной статьи Елбасы «Семь граней Великой степи». – Алматы, 28.11.2019. – С. 79-89.

10. Zhumabayeva A., Sh. Tokhtabayeva, B. Bатыrkhan, G. Meirmanova The ethnographical aspect of good wishes of the Kazakh people (Scopus) // Voprosi Istorii Moscow, No.7, 2020. – P. 131-145.

**The structure of the thesis:** title page, table of contents (content), abbreviations, introduction, 3 sections, conclusion, bibliography and applications.