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**Titel:** An 8th century Turkic narrative: Pragmatics, reported speech and managing informa...

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# An 8th century Turkic narrative: Pragmatics, reported speech and managing information

## Nathan Light

Sociolinguistic methods should be more extensively applied to the analysis of historical texts, particularly narratives and representations of oral language. Understanding processes of authorial disclosure and management of information calls for process-oriented analyses of the ways that communication events and knowledge transitions are marked within narratives. Narratives appeal in part because authors arrange and coordinate information transitions within both narrated events and narrative events. The 8th century Turkic narrative commemoration of Bilgä Tońuquq offers excellent material for demonstrating how these features interact in a complex historical narrative about knowledge, communication, planning and action. Processual analysis attending to individual rather than community conventions reveals complex, idiosyncratic understandings of the social uses of logic, poetics, narrative, and metaphor. The resulting clarity about how this narrator tells history improves our understanding of the narrator's intentions, improves translation, and clarifies the text's relationship to its historical context.

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## Introduction

I, myself, Bilgä Tońuquq, was born in the realm of China.
The Turk people were subjects of China.
The Turk people, having no khan,
broke away from China and enthroned a khan,
but losing their khan they again submitted to China.

Heaven must have spoken thus:
"I gave you a khan,
but losing your khan you submitted."
Indeed it is because they submitted, that it seems Heaven must have said, "Die!"

Thus begins a Turkic inscription upon two four-sided stone pillars found at a place known as Bain Tsokto in a grassland plain some 50 km southeast of Mongolia's

capital Ulan Bator.[1] These two pillars are part of a now largely decayed funeral complex commemorating the important counselor Toñuquq of the Second Turk Empire. The inscription is a first-person account of major episodes from his political and military life. There are at least four other important Turk commemorative inscriptions from the first half of the 8th century C. E. that describe political and military events in the life of the person being commemorated, in addition to a number of inscriptions in essentially the same alphabet and language from the Uighur Empire that succeeded that of the Turks.

These Turk narratives generally take the form of a first person address in the voice of the deceased or of a surviving family member recounting a series of military encounters and placing them within Turk imperial history in Central Eurasia. The inscription commemorating Toñuquq contrasts with the others in several basic stylistic features: the author never directly addresses an audience, either as the 'Turk people' or with the second person pronoun; he does not give the blow-by-blow and horse-by-horse accounts of military prowess; and his episodes are organized around information gathering, discussion and decision making. Because Toñuquq narrates the causes and sequence of historical events and decisions through extensive reported speech, this inscription provides important insights into the author's understanding of the role of spoken communication and narrative within social life, politics and military campaigns.

The autobiographical text of this stone inscription shows a Turk leader managing communicative resources to represent history, summarize his life and demonstrate the historical and political significance of his actions. Toñuquq insists on his key role in founding and expanding the Second Turk Empire, and the form and content of this commemorative text reflects what Toñuquq felt were his most important accomplishments described in the most effective way. By analyzing the narrative structure and representational strategies in relation to the narrated events in this inscription, I show how Toñuquq simultaneously manages rhetorical effects and information availability for both narrated agents and narrative audiences.

We do not know if this text reflects an established oral genre because of its uniqueness: it is the first extensive stone inscription in Turkic, and the only one extant that adopts this particular narrative style. Nonetheless, this complex composition undoubtedly reflect skills learned as an audience member and performer of oral genres, and from listening to and using reported speech in narratives, and learning to take into account audience understanding and responses. This elaborate text appears to be based in similar oral interactions and performances, and through describing

communication within social contexts the author represents speech community conventions.

In this paper, I present my edition and translation of the complete text of the Toñuquq inscription arranged to show formal poetic and episodic structures.[2] I analyze the ways that Toñuquq arranges the narrative and uses reported speech to justify his authority and decisions, and to manage audience understandings of causal sequences and meanings. Toñuquq's use of pragmatic markers, deictic forms, reported speech and episodic structures provide important evidence about how he intended to guide audience interpretations.

My sociolinguistic analysis here explores one writer's understanding of linguistic effects and managing it in a historical texts as an example of the strategies and resources available in unfolding a narrative. Narrators differentially manage information available to audience members and agents within a narrative. The interplay among the linguistic forms used to regulate understanding inside a story, those that disclose information to audience members, the kinds of information conveyed, and the ways events are presented, reflect the narrator's ideas about the relationships of language and life (cf. Bauman 1986, Urban 1984).

I move beyond the emphasis on strips of talk embedded in well-understood ethnographic and linguistic contexts to understanding language use by individual authors to accomplish particular goals in lesser known contexts. Despite extensive historical analysis of pragmatics, discourse and dialogue (e.g. Jucker 1995, Jucker 1999, Collins 2001, and the *Journal of Historical Pragmatics*) and work in the growing field of historical sociolinguistics, few of the methods used in the analysis of oral performances have been brought to bear on individuals' strategic use of conversations within written narratives. (cf. Johnstone 2000).

The issue of text making or language symbolization has been explored in relationship to better understood oral genres, such as in the investigations of Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs into the intertextual relations among oral performances and written representations (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Bauman 1993, Briggs and Bauman 1992). They have extended this work into a larger project of understanding the origins of modernity in relation to the ways that "texts are produced, circulated, received, and infused with authority." They show that textual practices have been central to "constructing modern subjects and discourses and ... linking them to supposedly pre-modern subjects and discourses in linear and teleological ways" (Briggs and Bauman 1999: 521; Bauman and Briggs 2003). They focus on the ways individuals create written texts from talk and other cultural performances in order to partici-

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[2]    I rely primarily on Berta 2004, Tekin 1968, 1994 and Clauson 1972, although I have made emendations to express nuances of sense and render the translation more consistent and the poetic patterns more clear. The most important change in my transliteration is to mark the use of the particle *oq* to make clear where I think the author is stressing the connection among the narrated events and narrative frame. I use the initials KT (Kül Tegin) and BQ (Bilgä Qaghan) to indicate the two other well-known monuments that I refer to.

pate in or respond to the ideologies and institutions that dominate the economic and political structures of the modern world. Folklore texts as recorded in elite written sources have likewise been widely studied as evidence for the ways representations of language are used within more specific political contexts (e.g. Raheja 1996, Davis 1975, Stewart 1991).

Social historians such as Carlo Ginzburg, Natalie Zemon Davis, Lawrence Levine, and Peter Burke have extensively explored individual lives as represented in written texts, but they have not considered how individuals' theories of language are revealed in written practice. Historians exhibit a curious double-vision in which they either deeply investigate the content of an individual's life, or study the interaction of language, culture and social history, but less often investigate individuals' symbolic practices. As has been discussed by Barbara Johnstone, the interpretation of individual symbolic practices and their implicit theories of communication and knowledge remains largely the domain of anthropologists and folklorists, while sociolinguists and discourse analysts tend to avoid the focus on individuals in favor of developing models of collective practices (2000).

In literary studies, the author and his or her approach to poetics, narration and language are all-important, but the texts chosen emerge from a canon of values generally organized around a concept of individual genius. In contrast, Wallace Chafe has developed sensitive processual analyses of the many ways authors activate and manage information and cultural schemata in narrative. In the end, however, he is more interested in community discourse conventions rather than individual language practices, even when he relies on examples from established literary canons (Chafe 1987, 1992, 1994).

In the present study, I examine community conventions to the extent that authorial reflexivity allows, relying on analysis of narrative logic and information to improve understanding of the text itself and the author's ideas about narrative and language. Anthropological and folkloristic studies of cultural practices examine the creative reflexivity in the acts of representing and using cultural resources as part of communicative activity. Despite the limitations imposed by generic conventions, writing does reflect many authors' active appropriation of linguistic forms from social experience. Analyses should be sensitive to individuals writing reflexively about communicative practices and conventions.

## Methods and concepts

The methods I use in the following analysis depend upon the following concepts and consequences:

1.  The author should be understood as managing the information available to the audience. To analyze an author's text means to interpret it as speech events with expected or intended illocutionary and perlocutionary effects (effects on people and on events). The author presents information to be understood by and affect his audience in particular ways. Since I do not have ethnographic access to the author

or the audience, I infer from the text the author's strategies for managing access to information and expectations about audience understandings. The author also manages the information available to agents within the narrated frame, often by using other agents as interlocutors or actors who disclose information. My argument is closely related to Greg Urban's analysis of the ways Shokleng myths encode ideas about the relationship between speech and social action (1985, 1993). But where he attends to the myths as the source of potentially shared ideas about the relationship of speech and reality, I find it more precise to focus on Tońuquq as a particular narrator strategically using language to shape cognitive processes of both narrative agents and audience members. Myths for Urban show how speech and action should relate, but Tońuquq both represents and creates social effects.

2.   Through understanding the differential management and representation of information flow we can understand—at least provisionally—how the author understands the effects of narrative and reported speech. Such self-monitoring is related to that which occurs in performance and is represented when describing an agent's self-awareness inside narrative frames. When monitoring is highlighted, narratives become meta-commentary on performance (Duranti, 2004: 453f).

3.   Many narratives are—at least in part—accounts of the origin and changes in people's knowledge as much as they are stories about the origin and changes in things, people and events. For this reason the statements through which stories are told have to be seen as illocutionary acts, both within the narrative and in the context of its telling. Narrative challenges the distinctions of ontology from epistemology and informative statements from speech acts such as promises, pleas, or name-giving. Acts of telling about historical events can also create new information for an audience which can lead them to take action as well. Information, debate and discussion shape events.

4.   The focus on ontology and epistemology neglects the essential dynamism of knowing and being in narrative. The narrative representations do not emerge against a static background or context: the narrator shifts perspective and contextualizes events, especially with quoted speech and evidential markers (cf. Hanks 1992). But the interacting ontological and epistemological processes of stories cannot be reduced to the dynamics of what one might call *ontogeny* and *epistemogeny*. Narratives also demonstrate management of information and disclosure, often including meta-commentary or meta-narratives about the processes of discovery and disclosure. Narratives about expressive performances often comment on and evaluate the perlocutionary effects of disclosure strategies.

5.   Accurate analyses of reported speech, conversational interaction, and thought processes in narrative depend on understanding the dynamics of information flow. Linguistic analyses too readily reduce the ongoing accomplishment of communication to static referential content. Many aspects of how pragmatic markers and deictic forms work in narrative and quotation are overlooked when they are reductively interpreted as simply commenting on an unfolding story.

6.   While texts are often read to extract referential content about stable meanings, stories are also interesting precisely because they enlist audience members as participants in the unfolding events and feeling, thinking and decision processes of agents. Audiences follow stories through imagining themselves inside the events, participating in the ongoing processes of listening, talking, asking, discussing, thinking, deciding, and acting. Stories hence are not static but dynamic in their essence. Texts and other repeated stories remain interesting because audiences suspend knowing the whole in order to embrace the contingency of each moment as it unfolds.

7.   Key pragmatic markers in narrative are those that call attention to major ontological and epistemological transitions in the narrated and narrative events. Such markers can be overlooked because they are neither about evidential conditions nor cognitive states, nor deictically refer to the text, context or content, but call attention—inter alia—to cognitive and emotional transitions or saliencies in narrator, narrated agents or audience, or all three. They link a moment in the narrative itself (the verbal representation) with the experiences of those represented, those representing, and/or those understanding the representation. Examples might be, "here is where the story begins to get interesting", or "you might be beginning to see what was in store for me". By marking the coincidence of audience, text, narrator and narrated experience, the author reveals his or her internal models of what the audience should feel or know, and what agents in the narrative should feel or know, and what the audience should know about the agent. The author's models of these participants guide the narrative telling as a process of disclosing knowledge.

8.   Narrative appeals to audience members in many cases because of its use of such linguistic (and non-linguistic) deixis to connect several different levels of communicative experience simultaneously. The power of quotation to reproduce a verbatim piece of information (Lucy 1993, Sidnell 1998), and the deictic arrangement of narrative events in conceptual space and time have both been widely analyzed (e.g. Jakobson 1957, Silverstein 1976). However, the concept of ostension best evokes the power of narrative to bring levels into the dramatic connection of simultaneity (McDowell 1982, Degh & Vazsonyi 1983). Deixis connects narrated and narrative events, but it is not necessarily salient: ostension is a more unique performance element that calls evaluative attention to an abrupt and significant connection.[3] In written language, the ostensive display of quoted speech has to be

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[3]   A popular culture example that suggests the power of ostension in narrative can be seen in the *Seinfeld* episode known as "The Marine Biologist" (Episode #78, originally aired on Wednesday, February 10, 1994, 9:30 pm) in which George tells the story of rescuing a struggling whale and rather than describing what he found obstructing its blow-hole, he holds up the golf ball that he extracted. See the script at http://www.seinfeldscripts.com/TheMarineBiologist.htm (accessed 2/12/2005). Clearly this is concrete action rather than quotation, but has similar narrative use: quoting the

marked as a quotation, and often given additional deictic markers that call attention to its significance in the unfolding of the represented event.

These points, particularly the final two will be elaborated on in the present analysis: the episodes in the Tońuquq narrative are organized around speech events in which the narrator demonstrates for the audience what the participants in historical events said and did. The narrator shows how new information influenced action, and uses a number of linguistic markers to indicate when new information was being provided. By showing how these markers are used, I propose new ways of reading Old Turkic, particularly the *oq* enclitic, as not simply having referential content that can be translated, but having pragmatic effects within narration that must be analyzed as linking the events told about to the context in which they are told, in other words, connecting the narrated event and the narrative event (Bauman 1986).

### Text and analysis

In my analysis, I have identified eight distinct episodes and a final summary in the Tońuquq narrative. Most of these episodes consist of three segments. The first segment briefly presents an initial situation. The second segment describes the process of gathering and reporting information, discussing and assessing the information, and arriving at decisions. The third segment describes the actions and events that occur as consequences of the decisions. These events and actions usually include organized movement, warfare, pursuit, and defeat of opponents. Although these structural elements vary in length, they are present in most episodes. They are also used recursively, such that some episodes can be seen as describing the initial situation for the next episode, and others include reported speech narratives containing episodes with this same structure.

I use the following conventions for shading and bold face within the translation:
- Initial situation ……..
- Discussion, deliberation and decision.
- Action………… [no shading]
- Text in **bold face** highlights formulaic language and repetitions within the inscription.
- ( ) contain supplementary text in the translation to clarify sense.
- [ ] in the transliteration contain indications of words that are illegible and suggested readings, and in the translation contain line numbers and ellipses that indicate missing text.
- < > in the transliteration contain reconstructions or emendations of apparently missing words or morphemes that may have been left out, in order to make sense.
- ____ Underlining indicates a verb with an ambiguous or missing subject.

words that were used is more powerful than delivering them in an indirect speech description.

| Episode I: Subjects of China<br>(West face of the main monument) ||
|---|---|
| Bilgä Twńwqwq bän özwüm<br>Tabğač eliñä qïlïndïm.<br>Türk bodwn Tabğačqa körwür ärdi.<br>Türk bodwn qanïn bulmayïn,<br>Tabğačda adrildi, qanlandï,<br>  qanïn qodwp Tabğačqa yana ičikdi. | I, myself, Bilgä Tońuquq,<br>was born in the realm of China (the Tabghach).<br>The Turk people were subjects of China.<br>The Turk people having no khan,<br>broke away from China and enthroned a khan,<br>(but) losing their khan they again submitted to China. |
| Täñri anǰa temiš äriňǰ:<br>    qan berdim,<br>    qanïñïn qodwp ičikdiñ.<br>ičikdw-ük üčwün, Täñri öl temiš<br>äriňǰ. | Heaven must have spoken thus:<br>    "I gave a khan,<br>    (but) losing your khan you submitted".<br>Indeed it is because they submitted, that it seems<br>Heaven must have said, "Die!" |
| Türk bodwn öldi, alqindi, yoq boldi.<br><br>Türk Sir bodwn yerindä bod kalmadï. | The Turk people died, were destroyed, and disap-<br>peared.<br>In the Turk Sir lands no clans remained. |

## Genesis and plight

The memorial begins with Tońuquq's description of himself, the Turk people, and the Tabghach, which was the Turkic term for Tang China. The Turk people were subject to China, gained their independence, and then "lost their khan" and submitted to China again. The slightly later memorial inscriptions for Bilgä Qaghan and Kül Tegin explicitly address readers or listeners using the second person pronoun and the phrase "the Turk people", but Tońuquq does not directly address the audience. Instead, only in the reported speech of Heaven's supposed address to the Turk people is the second person marked by the *–iñ* possessive marker and the *–diñ* second person past tense verb marker: "I gave a khan, (but) losing your khan you submitted". The reader of this inscription can choose to include him- or herself in Heaven's address to the Turk people, but by using quoted speech Tońuquq does not impose this reading.

In reporting Heaven's speech, the hearsay verb marker is used, suggesting that such inferences about supernatural intentions share the same evidential status as information reported by others, or, as we shall see, as the interpreted meaning of proverbs. In addition, the particle *ärinǰ* is also used to mark Heaven's speech, as it is in the Kül Tegin and Bilgä Qaghan inscriptions. The precise meaning of *ärinǰ* remains unclear: morphologically it is derived from *är-* 'to be' and a relatively obscure ending. Functionally it appears to soften an assertion into a supposition or inference, and in contrast to Clauson's 'perhaps' and Tekin's 'indeed', I translate it as 'must have (been)' in the sense of 'doubtless.' *Ärinǰ* often appears after finite verbs using the -*mïš* hearsay ending (Clauson 1972: 234). In other inscriptions *ärinǰ* is used to mark reports and suppositions about positive or negative qualities of historical figures: "It is said that their officials also *must have* been wise and brave…" or "it is said that the Qaghan *must have* been without wisdom" (KT 2-5, Tekin 1968: 261, I modify Tekin's translation). In Episode III and VIII in the present narrative, Heaven's ac-

tions are narrated without hearsay or inferential evidential markers when Heaven is said to have 'granted' or 'commanded' victory (*yarlïq-*). This suggests that although in general Heaven's intentions were evidentially marked to show uncertainty, it was acceptable to be more declarative about Heaven's will when one was victorious in battle.

Although the addressee is never explicitly mentioned or addressed in Tońuquq's text, the author makes the origin of these utterances abundantly clear by frequently linking his name, Tońuquq, his title *Bilgä* or counselor to the Qaghans, and the pronouns *bän özwüm* "I myself." From the first line, most mentions of Tońuquq as an agent in the narrative are clearly linked to Tońuquq the author of the narrative with pronoun forms *bän* "I" or *bän özwüm*. On the other hand, the message itself and its stone substrate are only mentioned once towards the end when Tońuquq states, "In the realm of the Turk Bilgä Qaghan I had (this) written, I, Bilgä Tońuquq," even here referring only elliptically to the monument and the inscription upon it. This message refers extensively to acts of telling within the narrative and to the narrator as both actor and speaker, but avoids mentioning either the other participants in the narrative event, or its place and media. Since the message was presumably composed by Tońuquq himself before his death, and was probably not inscribed until later, it would make sense that he would not mention the inscription itself as a particular object or location. Similarly, while the two longest of the other inscriptions are both narrated by Bilgä Qaghan, a secondary section in each inscription details its carving: "Having remained (here) twenty days, I, Prince Yollugh, inscribed (this) on this stone and this wall" (Tekin 1968: 278, cf. 281).

This first episode establishes the conditions for the entire life narrative and presents the problem that Tońuquq will spend the rest of his life solving: the Turk people "lost" their Khan (Qaghan and Khan alternate in this inscription as terms for the emperor) and the Turk Empire was destroyed. Whether through abandonment by the people, conquest by the Chinese, or the will of Heaven, the Turks lost their independence as a separate polity. In his final summary in Episode Nine, Tońuquq explains that without him and the Qaghans he enthroned and served, the "territory and people would not exist." Because of the many victories by the Qaghans and Tońuquq, "the territory became a territory again and the people became a people again."

Between these opening and closing situations are 7 episodes describing successful political and military organization and action. In addition to being structured into situation, discussion and action sections, most episodes highlight quoted speech that precipitates discussion, planning and action. Formulaic language, logical sequences and parallelism mark language intended to persuade through its poetics and logic.

| Episode II: Rebellion and Independence ||
|---|---|
| ïda tašda qalmïšï qubranïp yeti yüz boldï. | 700 who remained in the scrub and stony (wastes beyond Turk lands) were joining forces. |
| eki ülwügi atlïq ärdi, | Two parts had horses, |
| bir ülwügi yadag ärdi. | one part was on foot. |
| | |
| yeti yüz kišig udwzwğma ulwği Šad ärdi. | The chief leading the 700 people was a Sad. [5] |
| ayğïl tedi. | He said (to me), "advise (me)." |
| ayïğmasï bän ärdim: Bilgä Twńwqwq. | (So) I was his advisor: Bilgä Tońuquq. |
| qağan mw qïsayïn, tedim saqïndïm, | "Should I make him Qaghan?" I said, and I thought, |
| twrwq buqalï sämiz buqalï ïraqda bilsär, | **"If you (try to) distinguish fat bulls and lean bulls from afar,** |
| sämiz buqa twrwq buqa teyin bilmäz ärmiš, | **it seems you cannot say which are lean and which are fat,"** |
| teyin anǰa saqïndïm. | saying thus I thought. |
| | |
| anta kesrä täñri bilig berdi-ük üčwün | After that, it was exactly because Heaven gave wisdom, |
| özwüm ök qağan qïsdïm. | That it was indeed I that made him Qaghan. |
| Bilgä Twńwqwq Bwyla Bağa Tarqan birlä, | With Bilgä Tońuquq Boyla Bağa Tarqan, |
| Elteriš Qağan bolayïn, | he became Elterish Qaghan, and indeed many |
| beryä Tabğačïğ, | **Chinese to the south,** |
| öñrä Qitańïğ, | **Qitan to the east,** |
| yïrya Oğwzwğ, ükwüš ök ölürdi. | **Oghuz to the north,** did he kill. |
| bilgäsi čabïšï bän ök ärdim. | It was indeed I who was his counselor and army commander. |

## Making Decisions

The second episode shows the initial decisions that led to Tońuquq's importance in Turk history: the future Elterish Qaghan, leading the Turk remnants, chooses Tońuquq as advisor. This decision has no apparent cause, but gives Tońuquq the authority to decide to make him a Qaghan, which he does based on a somewhat ambiguous metaphorical image and supernaturally granted wisdom. The metaphor reflects Tońuquq's thinking process: although it seems to help him decide, it expresses the unknowability of the future, and specifically the uncertain value of a person when immature. Although the saying seems presented to help clarify the uncertain situation, it is more a speculation about the possibility of knowing the future, and it appears that wisdom granted by Heaven overcomes Tońuquq's uncertainty. It is possible that Heaven gives wisdom in the form of the proverb, but comparison with later episodes suggests that the proverb functions as the rhetorical question which is common at the end of the discussion section of these episodes.

In the first episode, when Tońuquq calls attention to the cause of the Turk peo-
ple's loss of their khan, he marks the cause with an emphatic particle that I have
translated as 'indeed it is' in the phrase *ičikdw-ük üčwün* "indeed it is because they
submitted" to stress the cause and effect linkage. In the present episode, the same
*-ük/-ök/-uq/-oq* particle is used in the phrase *tañri bilig berdi-ük üčwün* "it was
exactly because Heaven gave wisdom". Here the particle marks each element in a
sequence of decisive events in the progress of the Qaghan's successful campaigns.
The particle is used to stress the agent who caused the events, as well as the events
that are caused, so we have "it was indeed *I* that made him Qaghan", "indeed *many*
… did he kill" and "indeed *I* was his counselor and commander". The information is
not merely about the events, but about the strong and important link among actors
and effects. Heaven, the Qaghan, Tońuquq and the historical accomplishments are
tightly linked by marking their involvement with this particle. Although Tońuquq
uses these emphatic particles extensively, there are few examples of their use
elsewhere, so the pragmatic function of the particle remains slightly obscure, but it
seems to call attention to words that mark the transitions within the narrated process
as well as in the narrative process.

By stressing cause and effect relationships, this particle links the ontological
process of the sequence of events with the verbal process of story-telling, and the
epistemological unfolding of the audience's understanding. Tońuquq places great
importance on linking the knowledge of agent, teller, and audience with these words.
He calls attention to particular actions and agents that propel events forward, and
reminds the audience that these are key turning points, without which there would be
no point in telling the story.

William Hanks discusses managing context through deixis, but he suggests that
there is a durable and fixed referential content that can be found in the "relational
structure of deictic reference" (1992: 51). Instead, I propose that such transition
markers should be seen as invoking, calling attention to, adjusting and managing
emotions and knowledge. They do not refer to, but create and change information
availability or call attention to emotions, providing "modal" reminders to the audi-
ence about what is going on and what awareness should be accessible. Hanks uses
the figure-ground analogy because it focuses "our attention on the fact that deixis is a
framework for organizing the actor's access to the context of speech at the moment
of utterance. Deictic reference organizes the field of interaction into a foreground
upon a background, as figure and ground organize the visual field". (1992: 61, origi-
nal emphasis). Instead, I argue that in the cases I am examining, the transition itself is
made salient, rather than the relationship of event to static frame. By analyzing the
processes of information change and management, we can approach understanding
the narrative in the same way as a participant who has to act on the basis of new in-
formation. These particles emphasize the ways that the unfolding of new knowledge
for audience members closely reflects that for agents within the narrative.

In fact, Tońuquq's entire narrative demonstrates his use of information, commu-
nication, and planning to act appropriately and often swiftly to gain advantages and

maintain control over events. In such a narrative, the arrival of information and ideas have to be carefully marked to show how these lead to events.

| Episode III: Defeating the Allied Enemies and Taking the Ötükän Country | |
|---|---|
| Čwğay quzïn, Qara qumwğ olorwr ärđimiz<br>keyik yeywü,<br>tabišğan yeywü olorwr ärđimiz.<br>bodun boğzï toq ärđi,<br>yağïmïz tägrä wĕwq täg ärđi,<br>biz aš ‹tä›g ärđimiz. | On the north slopes of the Choghay and in the Qaraqum desert we were living,<br>**eating deer,**<br>**eating rabbits** we were living. [8, south face]<br>The people's stomachs were full,<br>**(but) our enemies surrounded us like an oven,**<br>**(and) we were like food.** |
| anǰa olorwr ärikli Oğwzdwndwn küräg kälđi.<br>küräg sabï andağ:<br>    Toqwz Oğwz bodwn üzä qağan olorđi ter.<br>    Tabğačğarw Qwni Säñwünwüg ïdmïš<br>    Qitańğarw Twñra Sämig ïdmïš.<br>    Sab anǰa ïdmïš:<br><br>    azqïńa Türk [bodwn] yorïywr ärmiš.<br>    qağanï alp ärmiš,<br>    ayğwčïsï bilgä ärmiš,<br>    ol eki kiši bar ärsär,<br>    seni Tabğačïğ ölwürđäči, termän.<br>    öñrä Qitańïğ ölwürđäči, termän.<br>    beni Oğwzwğ ölwürđäči-(ö)k, termän.<br>    Tabğač bärdin yän täg<br>    Qitań öñdwün yän täg<br>    bän yïrđïnda yan tägäyin.<br>    Türk Sir bodwn yerinđä idi yormazwn.<br>    usar idi yoq qïsalïm termän. | While living thus, an informer came from the Oghuz.<br>His words were as follows:<br>    "Over the Toquz Oghuz people a qaghan has sat (on the throne)", he said.<br>    "He is said to have sent General Ku to the Chinese,<br>He is said to have sent Tongra Säm to the Qitan.<br>He is said to have sent the following message:<br>    [10]<br>'The few Turk people seem to be on campaign.<br><br>**Their qaghan is said to be brave,**<br>**their advisor is said to be wise,**<br>and if these two people exist,<br>**they will kill you Chinese, I say,**<br>**they will kill the Qitan to the east, I say,**<br>**they will certainly kill us, the Oghuz, I say.**<br><br>**(So) from the south you Chinese attack,**<br>**(and) from the east you Qitan attack,**<br>**(and) I from the north will attack.**<br>Do not allow the Turk Sir people to campaign at all outside their land,<br>    and if possible **wipe them out completely**, I say'". |

| | |
|---|---|
| ol sabïğ äšidip,<br>tün udwsïqïm kälmädi,<br>kündwüz olorswqwm kälmädi. | **Hearing these words,**<br>**my sleep did not come by night,**<br>**my rest did not come by day.** |
| anda ötrwü Qağanïma ötwünđwüm.<br>anǰa ötwünđwüm:<br>    Tabğač, Oğuz, Qitań,<br>    bo üčägwü qabsar qaldačï biz.<br>    özči tašïn tutmwš täg biz.<br><br>    yuyqa ärikli topolğalï učwz ärmiš,<br>    yinǰgä äriklig üzgäli učwz.<br>    yuyqa qalïn bolsar topolğwlwq alp<br>ärmiš,<br>    yinǰgä yoğwn bolsar üzgwülwük alp<br>ärmiš.<br>    öńrä qitańda,<br>    bäryä tabğačda,<br>    qurya qurdwnda,<br>    yïrya oğwzda,<br>    eki üč biń sümwüz kälit(t)äčimiz bar<br>mw nä?<br>    anǰa ötwünđwüm. | After that I addressed my Qaghan<br>I addressed him thus:<br>    "If the Chinese, Oghuz, and Qitan<br>    —these three—unite, we will lose.<br>    It seems our inner (ranks) must hold the out-<br>      side.<br>    **It seems that to pierce thin things is easy,**<br>    **to break small things is easy.**<br>    **It seems if thin becomes thick piercing is**<br>      **hard,**<br>    **it seems if small becomes big breaking is**<br>      **hard.**<br>    **In the east from the Qitan,**<br>    **in the south from the Chinese,**<br>    **in the west from the westerners,**<br>    **in the north from the Oghuz,**<br>    will our 2-3000 troops make people come<br>      and join us?"<br>thus I addressed him. |
| Qağan[im bän] özwüm bilgä Twńwqwq<br>ötwünđwük ötwünǰwümwün äšidwü berđi.<br>    köńlüńčä udwz tedi. | My Qaghan listened to what I myself, Bilgä<br>    Tońuquq told him. [15]<br>He said, "Lead (the troops) as you see fit". |
| Kök Öńwüg yoğwrw<br>Ötükän yišğarw udwzđwum.<br>ingäk kölwükwün Twğlada Oğwz kälđi.<br><br>[süsi üč bïń] ärmiš.<br>biz eki bïń ärđimiz.<br>süńwüšdwümwüz.<br>Täńri yarlïqadï yańdïmïz.<br>ögwüzkä tüšdi.<br>yańdwq yolda yämä ölđi kök.<br>anta ötrwü oğwz qopwn kälđi.<br><br>Tü[rk qağaniğ] Türk bodwnuğ ötükän<br>     yerkä<br>bän özwüm bilgä Twńwqwq <kälürtüm>.<br>ötükän yerig <u>qonmwüš</u> teyin äšidip,<br><br>bäryäki bodwn, quryaqï yïryaqï öńräki<br>bodwn kälđi. | Crossing the Kök Öngüg<br>I led (the troops) towards the Ötükän highlands.<br>(Pulling) oxcarts, the Oghuz came from the Tola<br>River.<br>Their troops numbered 3000(?).<br>We were 2000.<br>We fought.<br>Heaven favored (us); we routed them.<br>They fell into the river.<br>Those routed also died on the road.<br>Thereupon all of the Oghuz came (and joined<br>us).<br>I myself Bilgä Tońuquq <led> the Turk Qaghan<br>    and Turk people to the country of the<br>    Ötükän.<br>Hearing reported that (people) were settling (in<br>    the Ötükän country),<br>**people of the south, west, north and east**<br>**came.** |

### Discussing Discussions and Presenting Strategies

Episode III begins by describing how the Turks live in the Choghay—likely the pre-
sent-day Changgai—mountains, and the Qaraqum desert: they are not hungry, but
they are surrounded by enemies, as if they were food in an oven. The metaphor of
being trapped in an oven and cooked echoes a motif of enclosure and emergence
found in Turkic origin myths (DeWeese 1994: 243-73). Despite their successes in
warfare with the surrounding polities, the Turks were not able to shift their homeland
back to their original Turk lands closer to China until they organized a series of cam-
paigns against the enemies who were threatening to unite and exterminate them.
They remained able to withdraw from China—and perhaps from the Oghuz and
Qitan—to avoid counterattacks. The situation at the beginning of this episode is de-
scribed in the first person plural, the first place that Tońuquq uses this –imiz ending.
He has made a transition from speaking of Heaven, himself, the Qaghan, and the
Turk people separately, to speaking about the group as including himself. The verb
ending reveals a shift in his identity: he has thrown in his lot with the Turks that he
leads and the Qaghan he advises, and now speaks of them as we. Nonetheless, while
the narrative reveals this, Tońuquq is not highlighting this transition: he either
chooses not to call attention to it, or does not see the change as noteworthy in itself.
In this case the narrative discloses an event that perhaps is not part of Tońuquq's
design.

This episode provides an elaborate example of recursively embedded speech that
comments on the process of communication and decision-making. The enemy dis-
cussing plans stimulates Tońuquq to make plans to ward off enemy attacks. The in-
former from the Oghuz reports on both the new political situation as well as quotes
the message of the Oghuz Qaghan to the Chinese and the Qitan to persuade them into
an alliance. The informer's talk reflects the episodic structure found in Tońuquq's
narrative: he first describes the situation, and then the discussion. The reported mes-
sage from the Toquz Oghuz Qaghan likewise describes a situation and then argues
for a response.

These reported speech events drive Tońuquq into a restless apprehension and a
quest for a solution. In fact, he does not propose a solution, but a way of organizing a
strategy, and he persuades the Qaghan to authorize him to lead a military campaign.
Tońuquq argues that they must keep the Chinese, Oghuz and Qitan from uniting, or
they will be too strong to resist. This theme of united strength is common in Turkic
mythology: in many versions of the Oghuz Khan myth, Oghuz Khan uses arrows
bundled together to show his sons that they will be stronger if they are united. Here
Tońuquq feels that the few Turk troops should face each opponent separately.

The close parallels in structure between the argument of the Toquz Oghuz
Qaghan in his message to the Qitan and Chinese and the argument Tońuquq ad-
dresses to the Qaghan suggest that these are language forms Tońuquq considers rhet-
orically necessary, authoritative and persuasive. Logical and poetic parallelism are
particularly salient in this description of the problem and the dangers. The details of

decisions and actions are less important: the statement of the problem implies actions to resolve it. When Tońuquq responds to the report of the Toquz Oghuz Qaghan's message to his allies as presenting an imminent threat, it underscores that he interprets these parallel lines as having persuasive, perlocutionary effect, and will push the allies into action.

Not only does he respond to the words of the Toquz Oghuz Qaghan with a similarly parallelistic argument of his own, but the response arises from an anxious restlessness described in the formula, "my sleep did not come by night / my rest did not come by day". As in the repeated listings of Oghuz, Chinese and Qitan, or north, south, east and west, the persuasion seems to arise not merely from logical parallels but from the sense of totality or completeness: all directions, night and day. Both Tońuquq's use of metaphor to encompass a situation and his totalizing lists help control the uncertainty of historical contingency and thus underwrite his narrative authority and validate his causal explanations (cf. Fernandez 1985: 28-70).

Tońuquq's verbal argument to the Qaghan links cause and effect through the logical sequence of growth. Metaphorically, the thin should not be allowed to get thick, nor the small big, so they should attack the Oghuz, Chinese, Qitan, and westerners soon to avoid facing a united enemy. The persuasiveness of this argument is suggested by the lack of any other information about Tońuquq's plan, and the rhetorical question of the final line. According to this representation of effective argument, formal completeness and metaphor influence the listener more than specific plans and assertive conclusions. The author suggests that successful action should be guided by ideas and strategies rather than constrained by plans and commands. As we will see below, problems arise when the Qaghan gives specific orders to Tońuquq and others. In this case, Tońuquq's address to the Qaghan persuades him to authorize Tońuquq to lead the troops as he sees fit: action leads to success where inaction would not. The narrative moves quickly to the defeat of the Oghuz, with Heaven's help. The Oghuz join the Turks, and Tońuquq leads or otherwise participates in the return of the Turks to their Ötükän homeland.

The enemy's description of Qaghan as brave and his advisor as wise emphasizes Tońuquq's effectiveness as both historical actor and as narrator, despite arriving as Tońuquq's report of the informer's report of the Toquz Oghuz Qaghan's report of hearsay (indicated by the *-miš* verbal ending). Enemies, who would logically wish it were not so, reportedly recognize Tońuquq and Elterish Qaghan as threats and propose to act upon the information. The hearsay marker actually adds verisimilitude to this fourth-hand report, and reinforces mimetic precision and narrative authority: an audience who understands the pragmatics of the *-miš* marker will not tolerate its absence in a context where they recognize that the information could not be first-hand.

| Episode IV: Campaign to the Sea (east face) | |
|---|---|
| eki bïñ ärdimiz, biz eki sü boldi. | We were 2000, and we became two armies. |
| Türk bodwn olorğalï, | **Ever since the Turk people were made,** |
| Türk qağan olorğalï, | **ever since the Turk qaghan sat (on the throne),** |
| Šandwñ balïq(q)a | Apparently neither the towns of Shandong |
| talwy ögwüzkä tägmiš yoq ärmiš. | nor the shores of sea had they reached. |
| | |
| Qağanima ötwünwüp sülätdim. | Informing my Qaghan I took the troops on campaign. |
| Šanduñ baliqa talwy ögwüzkä | I led them to the towns of Shandong and the shores of |
| tägwürdwüm. | the sea. |
| üč otwz balïq sïdï. | (They) captured 23 towns. |
| wsin bwndwtw | Sleeping badly |
| yurtda yatw qalwr ärdi. | they/he(?) stayed at home. |

## Reaching the eastern limits

This brief episode begins by summarizing Episode III: "we were 2000 and we became two armies" before describing a campaign to Shandong and to the sea in China that both provides further evidence of Tońuquq's unique accomplishments and gives the overall narrative completeness and structural symmetry by showing that Turks campaigned in all directions. The move east parallels the move west in Episode VIII when Tońuquq leads troops to the Iron Gates, and describes it as the furthest west the Turks had ever reached. This episode also serves structurally in the overall narrative to provide for a symmetrical eastward attack on Qitan or Chinese lands, but its brevity suggests that Tońuquq's actual history does not fit this structure well, and that this campaign was not very important or productive compared to campaigns against the Oghuz, Qirqiz and On Oq that he describes in more detail.

This episode's limited discussion informs the audience not of a threat, but of a limit to earlier accomplishment. Intending to overcome this limit seems an adequate plan for Tońuquq to declare to the Qaghan, whose response is not even necessary to report. The actual accomplishments are vague as well because the ambiguous last line about someone sleeping poorly and staying at home may refer either to the Qaghan or be an idiom expressing the disruption of the people whose cities were captured.

| Episode V: Defeating the Qirqiz | |
|---|---|
| Tabğač qağan yağïmïz ärđi, On Oq qağanï yağïmïz ärđi, (20) arđwq Qïrqïz küčlwüg qağan yağïmïz boldï. | The Chinese qaghan was our enemy, the On Oq qaghan was our enemy, and the numerous Qirqiz and (their) mighty qaghan became our enemies. [20] |
| Ol üč qağan ögläšip Altwn yiš üzä qabïšalïm temiš. anǰa öglašmiš: öñrä Türk qağanğarw sülälim temiš. | These three qaghans seem to have consulted and agreed to gather in the Altay highlands. They apparently consulted thus: "Let's wage war on the Eastern Turk Qaghan", they seem to have said. |
| añarw sülämäsär qač näñ ärsär ol bizni, [qağani alp ärmiš], ayğwčisi bilğä ärmiš, qač näñ ärsär ölwürđäči kök. üčägwün qabïšïp sülälim anï yoq qisalïm temiš. | "If we do not attack him, at some time —[since their qaghan is said to be brave,] [21] (and) their advisor is said to be wise— some time they will kill us for sure. Let us three join together and attack, (and) wipe them out", they seem to have said. |
| Türgeš qağan anǰa temiš: bäniñ bodwnwm anda ärwür temiš. [Türk bodwnï yämä bulğanǰ ol temiš, Oğwzï yämä] tarqïnč ol temiš. | The qaghan of the Turgesh (division of On Oq) apparently spoke thus: "My people will be there", he seems to have said. "The Turk people are in disorder", he seems to have said, [22] "Their (subjects, the) Oghuz are dissatisfied", he seems to have said. |
| Ol sabïn äsidip tün yämä udwsïqïm kälmäz ärđi <kün yämä> olorswqwm kälmäz ärđi. Anta saqindim a[...]: [...]a s[üläsär ...]miš tedim. Kögmän yolï bir ärmiš; tomwš teyin äšidip, bo yolwn yorïsar yaramačï tedim. | Hearing these words, by night my sleep did not come, <by day> my rest did not come. Then I thought: [first] marching [against the Qirqiz seems better], I said. There seems to be only one road through the Kögmän mountains; hearing that it was blocked (by snow), I said, "If they take that road, they will fail". |
| [...] yerči tilädim. čwülgi Az äri bulđum. özwüm Az yery[oli] nïb [...] ärmiš, bir at orwqi ärmiš, anïn barmïš. Añar aytïp bir atlïğ barmïš teyin, ol yolwn yorïsar unǰ tedim, saqïndïm. | I sought a guide. I found a man from the steppe Az people. I thought ... road to the Az [follows] the Ani river, it is the width of one horse, and he said he had traveled it. Asking him, "It seems one horseman can go?" "If they take that road it is possible", I said, and thought. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Qağanïma ötwündwüm, sü yorïtdïm. | I informed the Qaghan and set off with the troops. [25, north face] |
| At aldïn tedim. | 'Have (the troops) mount (horses)' I said. |
| Aq Tärmäl käčä ug arqalatdïm. At üzä äbin terä qarïğ sökdwüm. yoqarw at yetä yadağïn ïğač tutwnw ağdwrdwm. | Crossing the White Termel, I saved time. Having (the troops) mount the horses I broke through the snow. I had (them) ascend on foot leading the horses and holding onto trees. |
| öñräki är yoğwrča tägirip ïbar baš ašdïmïz, yubwlw endimiz. on tünkä yandaqï toğ äbirwü bardïmïz. yerči yer yañïlïp boğwzlandï. buñadïp qağan yälwü kör temiš. | Sending the forward troops to pack down the snow, we crossed a wooded summit, and descended rolling. For ten days we traveled skirting the spurs of the mountain. Because the guide mistook the land he was slaughtered. Worrying, the Qaghan apparently said, "See that you ride fast". |
| Ani sub[qa] baralïm, ol sub qudï bardïmïz. sanağalï tüšwürdwümwüz, atïğ ïqa baywr ärdimiz. | We went to the Ani River, we rode along that river. We dismounted (only) to ascend, we tethered the horses to bushes. |
| kün yämä tün yämä yälwü bardïmïz. Qïrqïzïğ uqa basdïmïz. [...]nw süñwügwün ačdïmïz. qanï süsi terilmiš. | We rode fast both day and night. We fell upon the Qirqiz in their sleep. We opened their [...] with lances. [28] Their khan and army were reported to have gathered. |
| süñwüšdwümwüz sanjdïmïz. qanïn ölwürdwümwüz. Qağanqa qirqiz bodwnï ičikdi yükwündi. | We fought and defeated them. We killed their khan. The people of the Qirqiz submitted and kneeled to the Qaghan. |
| yandïmïz Kögmän yïšïğ äbirwü käldimiz qïrqïzda yandïmïz. | We returned, skirting the Kögmän highlands. We returned from the Qirqiz. |

### Information, planning a route, and campaigning

This episode has a similar structure to Episode III, but the Turks face a changed enemy alliance: instead of Oghuz and Qitan, now the On Oq and the Qirqiz are meeting with the Chinese to discuss how to attack the Turks. In this case, Tońuquq does not mention how he knows what they discussed. We have to assume an informer pro-

vides the information as in the earlier episode, and again the narrative consists of reports about speech events. The Turk Qaghan and Tońuquq are again reported as threateningly capable, but political unrest in the Turk Qaghanate, particularly on the part of the Oghuz, is also disclosed through the enemy's reported speech.

Tońuquq again uses reported speech that simultaneously reveals why the enemy is preparing to attack, and explains why he undertakes a pre-emptive campaign. Whereas in Episode III he uses his speech to the Qaghan to explain the logic of his strategy to both the audience and at the same time to persuade the Qaghan to author-ize his command, here he explains the process of gathering relevant information for planning his pre-emptive attack. His narrative focuses on the guide's knowledge, the planning process and the route traveled. Although he does not explain his decision, Tońuquq chooses a military strategy that depends on a surprise attack on the Qirqiz before they leave their home territory. Planning a route through difficult terrain and describing their progress become more important than their attack itself.

The guide plays a vital role in this process, but he seems unable to find a readily navigable route and is executed. The cultural importance of guides to Central Asian Turks can be seen in the many Turkic proverbs that metaphorically connect guides to political and ethical guidance and wise words. A brief collection of Uighur proverbs recorded shortly after 925 C. E. explicitly equates counselors (*bilgä*, which is also Tońuquq's own title) and guides: "with a counselor one will not err, with a guide one will get lost" (Light 1998: 120-29). The role of the guide here concretely reflects the centrality of informing, counseling and command throughout this entire narrative. Each episode describes the process of finding out about and developing responses to threats. Scouts and informers provide information about dangers, and inspiration from Heaven, proverbs, and metaphors guide solutions to these dangers, and lack of awareness and inaction lead to others' defeats or failures.

Despite their guide's failure, they are able to find a route and defeat the Qirqiz. By using information effectively and attacking before the Qirqiz are aware, Tońu-quq's plan is successful. The battle's apparent ease compared to the difficulties of the approach reflects Tońuquq's sense that effective military action depends upon proper preparation and control of information.

An important sequence develops across these episodes: in each one a different character makes the decision and puts it into effect, generally using an imperative verb that connects the discussion and action sections. In Episode I, Heaven "must have" said to the Turk people, "Die!" In Episode II, the future Qaghan says to Tońu-quq, "Advise me", and then Heaven gives Tońuquq wisdom that guides his decision. In Episode III, the Qaghan says "lead the army as you see fit", while in the fourth Tońuquq simply states his decision to the Qaghan. Here in Episode V, Tońuquq in-forms the Qaghan of his plans and then he himself utters the imperative that begins the action segment, "Have them mount horses!" The progression underscores Tońu-quq's growing confidence and autonomy in planning and carrying out courses of action. The following episodes complicate this sequence as a rift develops between Tońuquq and the Qaghan.

| Episode VI: Holding the Altay Highlands | |
|---|---|
| Türgeš qağanda küräg käldi.<br>sabïndäg:<br>öñdwün qağanğarw sü yorïlïm temiš. | From the Turgesh Qaghan came an informer. His words were thus:<br>    "Let us campaign against the Qaghan from the east", (the Turgesh qaghan) seems to have said. |
| yormasar bizni,<br>qağanï alp ärmiš,<br>ayğwčïsï bilgä ärmiš<br>qač näñ ärsär (30) bizni ölwürđäči kök temiš. | "If we do not campaign—<br>    **their qaghan is said to be brave,**<br>    **their counselor is said to be wise—**<br>    **sometime they will certainly kill us**",<br>he seems to have said. [30] |
| Türgeš qağani tasïqmïš, <u>tedi</u><br>On Oq bodwnï qalïsïz tašïqmïš ter.<br>Tabğač süsi bar ärmiš.<br>ol sabïğ äšidip Qağanïm,<br>bän äbgärwü tüšäyïn tedi.<br>Qatun yoq bolmwš ärđi.<br>ani yoğlatayïn tedi.<br>sü barïñ tedi,<br>altwn yïšda olorwñ tedi.<br>sü baši Inäl Qağan<br>Tardwš Šad barzwn tedi. | "The Turgesh qaghan seems to have set off", he said.<br>"The On Oq people seem to have all set off.<br>And there seem to be Chinese troops as well".<br>Hearing these words my Qaghan said,<br>    "I will return home", he said.<br>    "The qatun seems to have died.<br>    I will hold her funeral", he said.<br>    "Troops, you go", he said,<br>    "stay in the Altay highlands", he said.<br>    "Have Inal Qaghan, the Tardus Sad, go as the commander of the troops", he said. |
| Bilgä Twñwqwqa baña aydï:<br>bo süg elt tedi.<br>qïyïnïğ köñlüñčä ay<br>bän saña nä ayayïn tedi.<br><u>kälir</u> ärsär körwü kälwür,<br>kälmäz ärsär tïlïğ sabïğ alï olor tedi. | To me Bilgä Tońuquq he spoke:<br>    "Lead this army", he said.<br>    "Command as you see fit.<br>    What can I tell you to do?" he said.<br>    **"If (the enemy) comes, keep watch,**<br>    **if they do not come, stay (here) and gather words (information)"**, he said. |

## Talk without action

Episode VI continues episode V's discussion of the potential alliance of the Qïrqïz, On Oq and Chinese. We begin with an informer bringing the reported speech of the Turgesh Qaghan. In addition, the informer reports on the movements of the combined forces of the Turgesh Qaghan, the On Oq people and some Chinese troops. Here Tońuquq only reports the words of others, and the only actions are the enemies' reported actions and the Qaghan's imperatives and incipient withdrawal. The threats in this episode are those of enemy movements and the Qaghan's withdrawal to mourn his wife, the Qatun. By using the gerund form of *äšid-* ('to hear') in *ol sabïğ äšidip* ('hearing these words') Tońuquq implies that the Qaghan withdraws at least partly in response to news about enemy movements, which adds to the evolving im-

age of the Qaghan as fearful and reluctant to undertake military actions. The Qaghan's apparent withdrawal in response to enemy movements seems to correlate with his worry and reported "see that you ride fast" in Episode V, with the hearsay marker implying that he was not with them, and wanted them to return more quickly. Episode IV also suggests the Qaghan's lack of confidence if he is the one staying home and sleeping badly. This contrasts with Tońuquq's consistent offensive posture.

Clearly, the Qaghan's imperative sentences (including the "I will return home" using the first-person singular imperative) are the primary "actions" of this episode, establishing the situation that stimulates Tońuquq's own actions in the next episode. As a consequence of these orders, the troops and Tońuquq remain in the Altay highlands and observe the enemy and potentially defend against attack. Whereas other episodes conclude with decisive action, this episode lacks the action section precisely because the Qaghan's orders have no narrative-worthy consequences, but establish the tense situation at the beginning of the next episode. This episode cannot be complete because the Qaghan does not allow a campaign against the enemy. Tońuquq is preparing his audience for his subsequent rebellion against this Qaghan, identified as Bügü.

| Episode VII: Bügü Qaghan Undermines Tońuquq | |
|---|---|
| Altwn yïšda olorđwmwz. | We stayed in the Altay highlands. |
| üč küräg kiši käldi, sabï bir: | Three informers came, saying the same thing: |
| qağanï sü tašïqdi, | "The qaghan and army have set out, |
| On Oq süsi qalïsïz tašïqdï ter. | the On Oq army have all set out" they said. |
| Yarïš yazïda terilälim temiš. | "They apparently said, 'Let's gather on the Yarish plain'". |
| ol sabïğ äsidip qağangarw ol sabïğ iddim. | Hearing these words I sent them on to the qaghan. From the khan was sent a return message. |
| qanda yan sabïğ yana <sab> kälddi. | He seems to have said, "Stay there". |
| olorwñ teyin temiš. | "Arrange your patrols and watch towers prop- |
| yälmä qarğu ädgüti urğïl basïtma temiš. | erly and avoid being attacked", he seems to have said. |
| Bwüg qağan bañarw ańja ayïdmïš, | Such (words) Bügü Qaghan seems to have sent me, |
| Apa tarqanğarw ičrä sab ïdmïš: | (but) he apparently sent secret words to Apa Tarqan: |
| Bilgä Twńwqwq ańïğ ol, öz ol [...] | "Bilgä Tońuquq is bad and clever. |
| sü yorïlïm tedäči, unamañ. | He will say, 'Let us set off with the troops'. but do not agree". [35] |
| ol sabïğ äšidip sü yorïtdïm. | Having heard these words, I set off with the troops. |
| Altwn yïšïğ yolswzwn asdïm, | I climbed over the Altay highlands with no road |
| Ärtiš ögwüzwüg käčigsizin käčdimiz. | We forded the Irtysh river with no ford. |
| tün aqïtdïmïz, | (Even) by night we made them march, |
| Bwlčwqa tañ ünđwürwü tägdimiz. | and arrived in Bolču as dawn broke. |

**Tońuquq's defiant campaign**

In episode VII, the enemies' movements are clearer because they are attested by multiple reports, and the Qaghan's unwillingness to allow a campaign against them is reiterated, although some ambiguity remains about the source of the Qaghan's response to Tońuquq's message. Not only does the Qaghan apparently tell him to hold a well-defended situation and wait, but he also seems to assume that Tońuquq will not listen, and assigns Apa Tarqan the task of forestalling Tońuquq's disobedience. Again these messages come as imperatives from the Qaghan: "stay and arrange your defenses" to Tońuquq, and "do not agree" sent to Apa Tarqan.

There is a symmetry between the last episode when the Qaghan responds to news of enemy movements by stating his intention to withdraw and here when Tońuquq responds to the Qaghan's order by setting off with his troops anyway. In both cases information and messages no longer generate expected responses, and cooperative planning and shared command between the Qaghan and Tońuquq have broken down. Apparently seeing in the secret message of the Qaghan as much a threat as in enemy movements, Tońuquq rejects the Qaghan's authority and defiantly sets off. This campaign establishes the initial conditions for his final dramatic defeat of the gathered enemy without the Qaghan's support but with the apparent intervention of supernatural powers.

| VIII: Surprise Attack on the On Oq (beginning of west face of pillar II, line 36) | |
|---|---|
| tïlïğ kälwürdi sabï andağ: <br> Yarïš yazïda on tümän sü terildi ter. <br><br> ol sabïğ äsidip bäglär qopwn <br> yanalïm, arïğ ubwti yeg tedi. | A scout was brought, his words were thus: <br> "On the Yariš plains 100,000 troops have been collected", he says. <br> Hearing these words, the begs all said, <br> "Let us return. The shame of being unscathed is better (than a risky battle against so many troops)". |

| | |
|---|---|
| bän anǰa termän, bän Bilgä Twńwqwq:<br>Altwn yïsïğ aša käldimiz<br>Ärtiš ögwüzwüg käčä käldimiz.<br>kälmäsï alp tedi, tuymadï.<br><br>Täñri Umay, ïduq yer sub basa berđi<br>ärinǰ.<br><br>näkä täzärbiz, ükwüš teyin?<br>näkä qorqwr biz, az teyin?<br>nä basïnalïm, tägälim, tedim.<br><br>tägdimiz, yulïdïmïz.<br>ekinđi kün örtčä qïzïp käldi.<br>süñwüsdwümwüz.<br>bizinđä eki učï sïñarča arđwuq ärđi.<br><br>täñri yarlïqadi-uq üčwün ükwüš teyin biz<br>qorqmadïmïz, süñwüšdwümwüz.<br>Tardwš Šadra udï yańdïmïz.<br>qağanïn tutđwmwz.<br>Yabğwsïn Šadïn anda ölwürđi.<br>äligčä är tutđwumwz.<br>ol oq tün bodwunïn sayw ïddïmïz.<br><br>ol sabïğ äšidip On Oq bägläri bodwnï<br>qop käldi, yükwünđi.<br>käligmä bäglärin bodwnïn etip yïğïp,<br>azča bodwn täzmiš ärđi.<br><br>On Oq süsin sülätdim.<br>biz yämä sülädimiz, ani erđdimiz.<br>Yinǰwü ögwüzwüg käčä<br>Tensi oğlï aytïğma<br>bäñlig Äk Tağïğ erđü<br>tämir qapïğqa tägi erđdimiz.<br><br>anda yandwrđwmwz.<br>Inäl Qağanqa [.... saqa] täzik toqarsïn<br>[....] anda bärwüki swq bašlïğ<br>soğdaq bodwn qop käldi, yükwünđi [...] | I say thus, I, Bilgä Tońuquq:<br>    "We came by crossing the Altay highlands,<br>    we came by fording the Irtysh river.<br>    They said, 'Approach would be difficult', and<br>    did not notice (us).<br>    Heaven and Umay and the spirits of earth and<br>        water must have given us (this chance to)<br>        attack.<br>    Why should we flee, if (they are) many?<br>    Why should we fear, if (we are) few?<br>    Let's not be downcast. Let's attack!" I said.<br><br>We attacked and plundered. [40]<br>The next day, they came burning like flames.<br>We fought.<br>(Their) two wings were much larger than ours.<br><br>Indeed, it was because of Heaven's favor that we<br>did not fear their numbers, and we fought. [41]<br>We pursued the enemy towards the Tardus Sad.<br>We took their Qaghan (prisoner).<br>Their Yabğu and their Sad were killed there.<br>We took around 50 men prisoners.<br>That very night we sent (messages) to all their<br>people.<br><br>Hearing these words, the On Oq begs and people<br>all came and kneeled (in submission). [42]<br>Gathering and organizing the begs and people<br>who came,<br>(we found that) some people seemed to be fleeing.<br>I had the On Oq troops set off.<br>We also set off and caught up with (those flee-<br>ing??).<br>Crossing the Pearl River,<br>passing the mountain called Son of Heaven<br>and snowy(??) Äk Mountains,<br>we reached the Iron Gates. [45, south face]<br><br>There we made (those fleeing) turn back.<br>There the Arab, Tokharian [...] and Soghdian<br>people led by Ashok who were on the side of the<br>foregoing, all came and kneeled to Inal Qaghan. |

| Türk bodwn tämir qapïğqa | The Turk people had never before reached the |
|---|---|
| Tensi oğli tensi oğli aytïğma tağqa | Iron Gates |
| tägmiš idi yoq ärmiš. | and the mountain called Son of Heaven. |
| ol yerkä bän bilgä Twńwqwq tägwürtw- | Indeed, because I Bilgä Tońuquq led them to |
|    ük üčwün sarïğ altwn ürwüñ | these lands, |
|    kümwüš | **yellow gold and white silver,** |
| qiz qodwz ägri täbä | **girls, women and hump-backed camels,** |
| ağï buñswz kälwürđi. | **and silks they brought (to me) without misgiv-** |
| | **ings.** |

## Persuasion and attack

In this climactic episode, the discussion is not prolonged, but decisively demonstrates Tońuquq's powers of persuasion against overwhelming odds. The narrative tells of a complex debate about information, interpretations, judgments and decisions by at least five different individual and group participants: Tońuquq, the Begs, the home community of the Turks, the enemy, and the deities.

When the scout reports that 100,000 troops have gathered, Tońuquq faces a new problem. Like the Qaghan, the Begs (chiefs) are reluctant to attack. They argue that returning unscathed but in shame is better than such a foolhardy attack. This decision reflects a selection among a number of different possible community interpretations of signs for military actions and their meanings: no shame would accompany those returning victorious, or those returning defeated but with injuries as proof of valor. Shame results from returning without victory and without injury because others will infer that this shows the warriors retreated. The community will make these judgments despite not having observed the actual battles. On the other hand, the Begs have to estimate an uncertain future based on what they can see is the much larger force that they face, and they interpret this as meaning that their choices are reduced to returning in shame or not returning at all.

The Begs' terse "ariğ ubuti yeg" summarizes this logic quickly and persuasively: they have judged their chances and concluded that the possibility of living down the shame is the best option. Since Tońuquq now lacks the Qaghan's authority he invokes supernatural authority and argues that they have supernatural protection in the form of Heaven, Umay (a 'mother earth' spirit) and spirits influencing the enemy's ideas and awareness. He does not use the hearsay marker –miš, but only the suppositional marker ärinč 'must have'. Tońuquq seems to avoid using the –miš that would express uncertainty about supernatural intentions because it might make his argument less persuasive. Just as the will of Heaven was inferred above from the outcome of battles, here supernatural involvement is inferred from the enemy's lack of vigilance. The enemy's lack of information provides information about the intentions of the otherwise uncommunicative deities. Thus, argues Tońuquq, the Begs are wrong that defeat and death are assured because they have the advantage of being informed and prepared.

The perlocutionary effectiveness and importance of this speech among Tońuquq's historical accomplishments are reinforced by the introductory line: *bän anča termän, bän Bilgä Tońuquq* ('I say thus, I, Bilga Tońuquq') which contains three pronouns and one name all referring to the speaker, and breaks out of the narrative directly into quoted speech. Unlike all other instances of quoted speech in this text, he makes no introduction with a past-tense "I said" or "my words were" but uses instead the present-future "I say". The Begs' threatened retreat compels Tońuquq's rapid response. Although the apparent demand for haste is in the narrated event, it propels Tońuquq to disrupt his narrative conventions and make the first line of his past speech serve as its own introduction. Only after the speech does he reframe it as past tense with "I said". As with Tońuquq's speech to the Qaghan in Episode III, he ends up with rhetorical questions, but then adds the exhortation "let's not be downcast, let's attack!" using first-person plural imperatives. Again his speech is effective: action is a sufficient response once he has clearly defined the situation, and there is no need for further planning.

The complex action segment of this episode combines battles, taking of captives, assessing situations, sending messages and pursuing. They attack and plunder on the first day and face counterattack the next. The enemy is far larger, but Heaven grants them victory precisely (marked with *oq* emphatic particle) because Heaven prevents them from being afraid despite the great numerical disparity. Just as deities controlled their enemies' vigilance and suspicions, they have also intervened to limit the attackers' fears.

They capture the Qaghan, kill the Yabğu and Sad officials, and capture prisoners. Such actions do not simply defeat those directly attacked but also provide the content of a persuasive message to others: by announcing these actions to the On Oq people, they persuade them to submit. They then pursue those who flee far to the west and turn them back, as well as making their Tazik, Tokharian, and Soghdian allies submit.

Tońuquq leads the Turks further west than they have ever gone. In fact, exactly (again marked by an emphatic particle) because he leads them this far, the troops willingly share their spoils with Tońuquq. They return laden with plunder: gold, silver, girls, women, camels and silks.

In this military life, women have only been mentioned twice: once when the Qatun dies and the Qaghan returns to mourn her, and once here when women are part of the booty rewarded at the end of a long campaign. This does not accurately reflect the role women have in Turk society, nor do other inscriptions deny women so completely an active role in political and military activities. Tońuquq also only mentions the female earth deity Umay once, although she probably had a much more important role in Turkic beliefs. In other inscriptions, Blue Heaven and Brown Earth are the nearly equal parallel entities between which humans come into being.

The other Turk inscriptions mention the Qatun as co-ruler with the Qaghan and as mother of Bilgä Qaghan, and even explicitly compare her to Umay (BQ E25 and E31, Tekin 1968: 234-5), and the Uighur inscriptions from later in the 8th century

specify the rulers as Qaghan and Qatun (Klyashtorny 1982: 343). In addition, the other Turk inscriptions mention women in the context of forming alliances through marriage (BQ N9, Tekin 1968: 237).

The Qaghan's return to mourn the Qatun seems to associate withdrawal with loyalty to his wife. Withdrawal, passivity and defeat seem closely linked in this narrative. Only Episodes IV and VIII conclude with people or towns being captured. In all the other battles, people come and submit, and captives only promote this process, because they are nomads who are not annihilated, but incorporated as the people (*bodun*) of the realm (*el*). The Empire is not built by adding land or spoils, but by incorporating nomadic peoples. In reality this would include both men and women, but in Tońuquq's narrative world women seem to represent more passive objects of conquest or causes of withdrawal.

Tońuquq distinguishes the Turks' submission and destruction by enemies in Episode I from his use of the term 'come' (*käl-*) to refer to the defeated Oghuz coming to join the Turks in Episode III. More distant and politically less important people, such as the Qirqiz or On Oq are described as explicitly submitting and kneeling (*ičikdi yükünti*) in Episodes V and VIII, although their defeat was not meant to destroy or capture them, but to incorporate them into the Turk Empire or reduce their threat.

| Conclusion: Generalizing Summary of the History (line 48- of monument II) | |
|---|---|
| Elteriš qağan bilgäsin üčwün, alpïn üčwün Tabğačqa yeti yegirmi süñwüšdi, Qitańqa yeti süñwüšdi, Oğwzqa beš süñwüšdi. | Because of Elterish Qaghan's wisdom and bravery, **he fought the Chinese 17 times,** **he fought the Qitan 7 times,** **he fought the Oghuz 5 times.** |
| anđa ayğwči yämä bän ök ärđim, yağïčï yämä bän [ök] ärđim. Elteriš Qağanqa [...] Türk Bwügwü Qağanqa Türk Bilgä Q[ağanqa] | It was indeed I, who was then both his advisor, and indeed also I who was his army commander. For Elterish Qaghan, ... for Turk Bögü Qaghan, for Turk Bilgä Qaghan ... |
| ———————— Qapğan Qağan eliñä r [...] nta [... ä]rti] Qapğan Qağan olorđwum. | ———————— [51, beginning of east face II] Qapghan Qaghan (ruled over??) the realm. I enthroned Qapghan Qaghan. |

| | |
|---|---|
| tün udïmatï kündwüz olormatï,<br>qïzïl qanïm tökwüti<br>qara tärim yügwürđi<br>ešig küčwüg berđim ök. | **Not sleeping by night or resting by day,**<br>**my red blood flowed,**<br>**my black sweat ran,**<br>**Indeed I gave my work and my strength.** |
| [bän özwüm] uzwn yälmäg yämä ïddïm<br>oq,<br>arquy qarǧwǧ olǧwrtdwm oq.<br>yanïǧma yaǧïǧ kälwürir ärđim.<br><br>qaǧanïmïn sülätdimiz.<br>Täñri yarlïqazw bo türk bodwnqa<br>yarïqlïǧ yaǧïǧ kälđwürmädim,<br>tögwünlwüg atïǧ yügwürtmädim. | Indeed, I myself sent long-distance patrols, [53]<br>indeed, I established networks of watch towers.<br>I made retreating armies come (to us and submit).<br><br>I led my Qaghan's troops on campaigns.<br>By Heaven's favor, among the Turk people<br>I did not let armed enemies ride,<br>I did not let branded horses run (wild). |
| Elteris qaǧan qazǧanmasar<br>udw bän özwüm qazǧanmasar<br>el yämä bodwn yämä yoq ärđäči ärđi.<br><br>Qazǧandï-uqïn üčwün<br>udw özüm qazǧandi-wqwm üčwün<br>el yämä el boltï<br>bodwn yämä bodwn boltï.<br><br>özwüm qarï boldwm, ulwǧ boldwm.<br>näñ yerdäki qaǧanlïǧ bodwnqa bünđägi<br>bar ärsär<br>nä buñï bar ärđäči ärmiš?<br><br>Türk Bilgä Qaǧan eliñä bititdim,<br>bän bilgä Toñwqwq. | **If Elterish Qaghan had not won, [54]**<br>**and if I myself had not won,**<br>**neither the realm nor the people would have**<br>**existed.**<br><br>**Exactly because of his victories,**<br>**and exactly because of my own victories,**<br>**the realm became a realm again**<br>**and the people became a people again.**<br><br>I have become aged, I have become old. [56]<br>If, in any land, people ruled by a qaghan had such<br>a one (as me),<br>what troubles would they have?<br><br>In the realm of Turk Bilgä Qaghan I had (this)<br>written,<br>I, Bilgä Toñuquq.<br>　　　　　　[end line 58, end of east face II] |

| | [north face II, lines 59-62] |
|---|---|
| Elteriš qaǧan qazǧanmasar,<br>yoq ärđi ärsär,<br>bän özwüm bilgä Tońwqwq<br>qazǧanmasar,<br>bän yoq ärđim ärsär,<br>Qapǧan qaǧan türk sir bodwn yerinđä | **If Elterish Qaghan had not won,**<br>**or did not exist,**<br>**if I myself Bilgä Tońuquq had not won,**<br>**or did not exist,**<br>**in the lands of Qapghan Qaghan and the Turk**<br>**Sir people,** |
| bod yämä<br>bodwn yämä<br>kiši yämä idi yoq ärđäči ärđi. | **neither clans**<br>**nor people**<br>**nor humans would have existed at all.** |
| Elteriš qaǧan bilgä Tońuquq qazǧanti-uq<br>üčün,<br>Qapǧan qaǧan Türk Sir bodwn yorïdï-<br>wqï bo [...],<br>Türk Bilgä Qaǧan Türk Sir bodwnwǧ,<br>Oǧwz bodwnwǧ igidü olorwr. | It is exactly because Elterish Qaghan and Bilgä<br>Tońuquq were victorious,<br>that Qapghan Qaghan and the Turk Sir people are<br>thriving,<br>and the Turk Bilgä Qaghan continues to rule the<br>Turk Sir people and the Oghuz people. |

## Closing arguments

The concluding section does not narrate the course of events, but summarizes them into a final discussion of the causes and effects of history: in this case, Tońuquq is identifying his role as being nearly equal in importance to that of the Qaghans that he helped. He lists his own and his Qaghans' accomplishments to show completeness: Elterish Qaghan fought Chinese, Qitans and Oghuz. Tońuquq rested little and worked constantly, giving his blood and strength. He established watch towers and patrols, and prevented horse-borne incursions. Elterish Qaghan and Tońuquq are responsible for resurrecting the *el* (realm) and the *bodun* (people), exactly because of their victories. He begins closing this narrative by mentioning that he had this inscription written in Bilgä Qaghan's realm, preceded by a rhetorical question stressing his value to the Qaghan and people.

Finally, on the north face he sums up his argument again, using poetic parallelism to motivate a persuasive logical connection among the existence and victories of the Qaghans and Tońuquq, the continued existence of clans, people and humans, and the continued rule of Qapghan Qaghan and Bilgä Qaghan. His ultimate closure is marked by his description of Bilgä Qaghan's ongoing rule with the only present-future verb (*olur-* 'to live, reside' + *-ur*) used in this inscription with reference outside of the narrative itself. It refers to the context in which this narrative can be told, after his death. With this verb Tońuquq opens the narrative to the ongoing present beyond his own life, neatly enclosing his life story entirely within the inscription.

In this closing presentation Tońuquq seeks to make his argument explicit. Whereas in the narrative he uses quoted speech to both persuade listeners of his effectiveness and push forward the narrative, here he uses repetition and summary. The

ostension of the reported speech enables audiences to connect narrator and narratee understandings through experiencing the exact words of prior speech events. In contrast, the summary directs understanding, and persuades the audience of completeness through its totalizing parallelism. The summary abandons the narrative effects that draw the audience into others' experience, and dictates instead what the audience should believe. Tońuquq does not, however, go so far as to command the audience to believe or accuse them of straying from allegiance to their Qaghan as the BQ and KT inscriptions do.

## Conclusions

This monument has been extensively mined as a source of cultural, linguistic, historical and poetic information about Turks, but the complex narrative and rhetorical structure has been generally overlooked. This commemoration of the political and military life of Tońuquq is rich with details about how political intentions shape his communicative strategies. As I have shown, Tońuquq composed this text to have many overlapping effects.

The workings of Tońuquq's dense but clear narrative demands unpacking through my long analysis, but this analysis overwhelms the very effects I attempt to investigate. Narrative, metaphor and poetic structures have impact without extensive explanation: they can do their work without being much noticed. Long analyses do not necessarily improve understanding, especially for native speakers, but they do explicitly raise questions that can be investigated in other contexts. Nonetheless, those questions will not get asked if people do not read the analyses and keep the issues in mind.

The problem of "bibliographic control" may seem distant from Tońuquq's world, but it is essential to the world in which his narrative exists now. Many thousands of texts like this one will never be read or heard again by native speakers. They can only be understood in full by analysis, but the work often does not seem justified by the ends. Many historians avoid the complex analyses to understand the cognitive and linguistic dimensions of narrative: they would prefer to critique documentary sources by more traditional means such as collating sources to choose the better attested facts. But clearly, the facts in a narrative such as this one are a loose assemblage around logic and purposes drawn from the world of communicative practices and political goals. The historical evidence for political events available in this text is very limited. Likewise, the speech community conventions are only contingently accessible, because how these few written documents relate to oral genres is not clear. But the flow of information and its marking as a means to draw the audience into the knowledge processes of the narrated agents and the narrator are salient and concrete. My analytic methods reveal the features that Tońuquq puts into his narratives to accomplish specific effects. My interpretations may have to be tentative, but the issues I address clearly fit the way Tońuquq calibrates his language to the participants in these communicative events.

Tońuquq's narrative organization of information remains far shorter than my analysis. Only roughly 1200 Turkic words in the present article are his. Under analysis such texts are inflated, burying the original author's intentions and skills under verbiage. The narrative depends on effective, compact timing, and no analysis or translation can fully do justice to these complexities. Nonetheless, without analysis such as the foregoing, Tońuquq's work remains a trivial and neglected fragment of a great political enterprise.

I assume that every part of this painstakingly inscribed text is carefully composed and valuable to its writer, and I ask what exactly Tońuquq was trying to do. I ask the reader to attend to the places where Tońuquq points out cause and effect, infers messages, and treats messages and even rhetorical questions as causing action. The entire narrative is organized not just in Tońuquq's mind, but around the minds of participants and their messages, their plans, their thought processes, and their decisions. All the events are intentional: nothing happens by chance—except perhaps Tońuquq's birth and the Qatun's death—and nothing is without meaning and consequences. Tońuquq is equally thrifty when he makes speech events simultaneously meaningful to audience and agents. Tońuquq's masterful compaction of this plot highlights his core understandings of minds, communication, and historical process, and his use of expressive forms shows that he is not just describing events, but differentially managing the ways participants understand and experience these events.

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