

Reconsidering the Shikafi Gul-Gul Cuneiform Inscription from Kabir Kuh, Luristan: A Turkic Linguistic Interpretation of an Early Turukku–Parsumash Political Text

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ABSTRACT

The Shikafi Gul-Gul cuneiform inscription from Kabir Kuh (Luristan) has long been interpreted within conventional Assyriological frameworks as an Assyrian royal inscription. This study re-examines the text through the Azerturk Linguistic Remodeling Method, a structural approach based on the agglutinative characteristics of Turkic languages and the reconstruction of continuous cuneiform syllabic sequences into meaningful lexical units. The proposed reading suggests that the inscription preserves an early political narrative concerning relations between the Turukku and Parsumash populations rather than a purely royal commemorative text. The analysis demonstrates that several passages acquire coherent semantic and grammatical structure when interpreted within a Turkic linguistic framework. The study argues that this alternative interpretation provides a new perspective on the linguistic and historical context of the Kabir Kuh inscription and contributes to ongoing discussions regarding the cultural and ethnic landscape of the ancient Zagros region.

KEYWORDS: Shikafi Gul-Gul inscription; Kabir Kuh; Luristan; Turukku; Parsumash; cuneiform; Turkic linguistics; Azerturk Linguistic Remodeling Method; epigraphy; ancient Near East

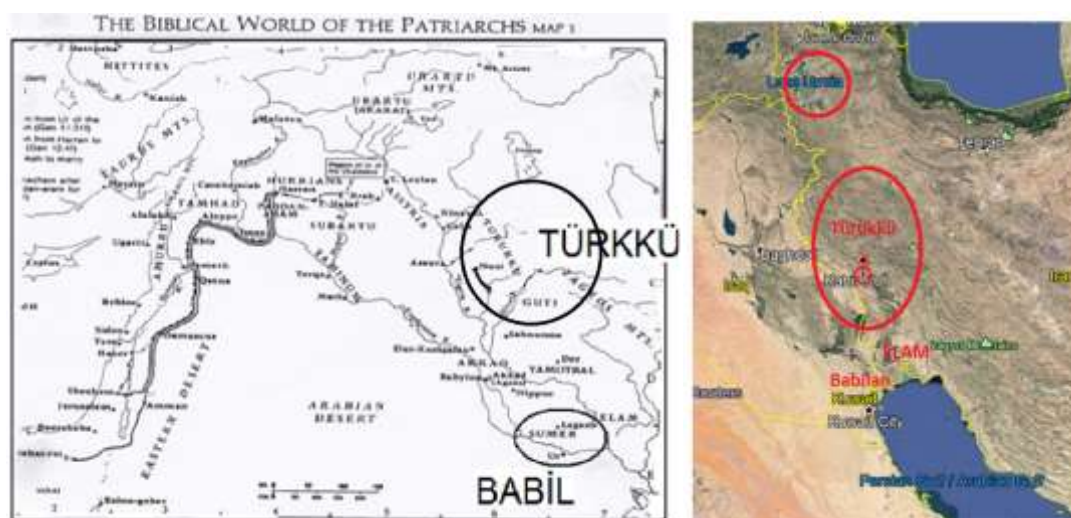
ARTICLE DETAILS

Published On:
25 July 2026

Available on:
<https://irijsh.com/>

INTRODUCTION

The ancient region of Luristan in western Iran has yielded numerous archaeological remains dating from the Bronze and Iron Ages. Among these monuments is a little-known Assyrian rock relief accompanied by a cuneiform inscription discovered in 1972 at **Shikafi Gul-Gul**, one of the northwestern peaks of **Kabir Kuh Mountain**. The site lies within the territory traditionally associated with the ancient **Turukku** population mentioned in Mesopotamian written sources and in biblical geographical traditions.



Maps 1, 2. Biblical geographical traditions likewise refer to the Turukku as one of the peoples inhabiting this broader region presents the approximate location of the ancient Turukku state south of Lake Urmia.

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Our attention was drawn to the important study "Assyrian Relief in Shikafi Gul-Gul" by A. K. Grayson and Louis Levine, published in *Iranica Antiqua*, Volume XI (1975). Their article provides the first scholarly description of the rock relief and its accompanying inscription discovered by Louis Vanden Berghe during archaeological investigations in 1972.



Figure 1. Carved portrait of Anshar on Shikafi Gul-Gul.

According to Grayson and Levine, the monument had already suffered extensive weathering and erosion at the time of its discovery. Parts of the relief were deteriorating rapidly due to natural exfoliation of the rock surface, although the inscription itself remained sufficiently preserved to allow epigraphic recording and transliteration.

The monument consists of a standing royal figure carved in profile together with an accompanying cuneiform inscription extending approximately **1.28 m** in height and **0.28 m** in width. Although the relief clearly follows the general iconographic tradition of Assyrian royal monuments, its artistic execution differs noticeably from the highly refined workmanship of major imperial reliefs. The surviving portions of the sculpture indicate that the king originally carried a ceremonial staff, wore a characteristic royal headdress, and displayed the conventional attributes of Assyrian sovereignty. However, much of the face, beard, right arm, and staff has since been destroyed through erosion.

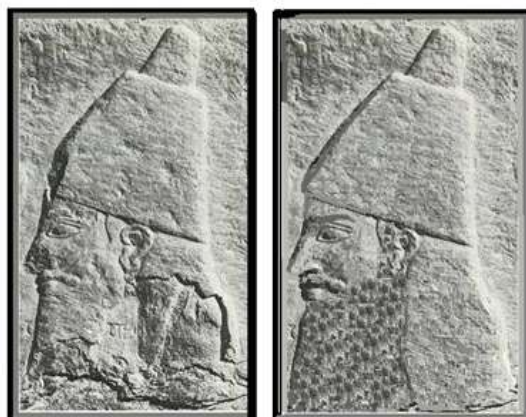


Figure 2-a, b. a) Head of Anshar in original; b) restored head by us in computer

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The cuneiform inscription itself appears to have been engraved more carefully than the relief. Grayson and Levine observed that its ductus resembles the Babylonian tradition more closely than the standard Neo-Assyrian monumental script. Instead of reproducing a hand copy of the inscription, the authors published only a Roman transliteration and their proposed Assyrian-language interpretation.

The present study re-examines this inscription from a different linguistic perspective. Rather than accepting the traditional Assyrian interpretation, it applies the **Azerturk Linguistic Remodeling Method**, a structural approach previously developed for the analysis of cuneiform texts. This method investigates whether the syllabic sequence of the inscription may permit an alternative phonetic and semantic segmentation consistent with Turkic agglutinative morphology.

If such an interpretation proves internally coherent, the inscription may contribute not only to the study of the monument itself but also to broader discussions concerning the linguistic history of the ancient populations traditionally identified as the **Turukku**.

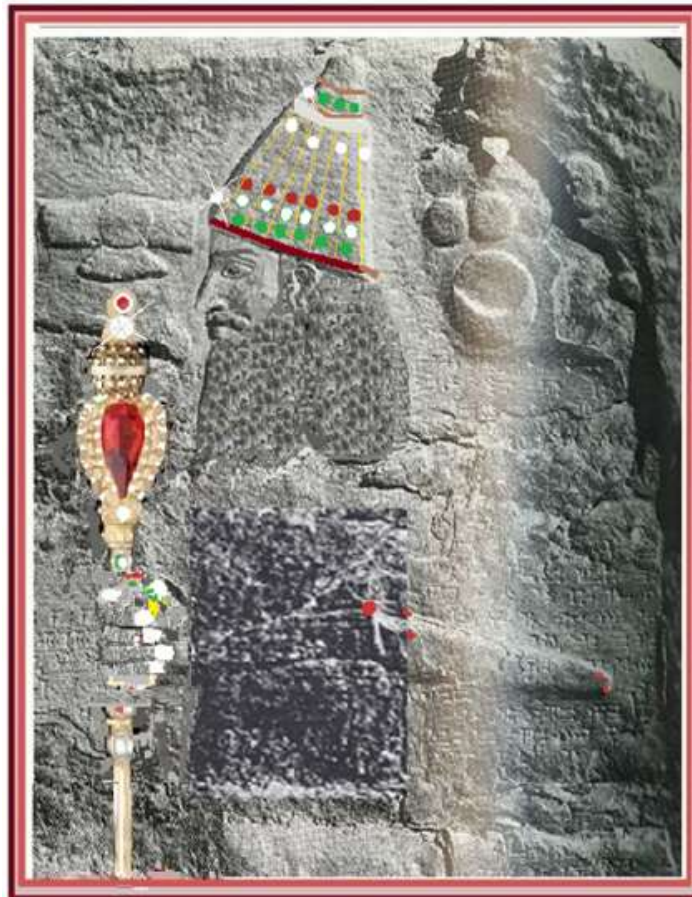


Figure 3. This is a restored version of the Turukku King Anshar with his face, hair and beard, his right hand holding a scepter, and the scepter itself completely destroyed. To return the symbol of courage to the king, I specially painted the scepter, and decorated the “bow cap” with precious stones, just as it was in life.

The Identification of Achamesh and the Historical Context of the Inscription

It is precisely in line 13 that the central meaning of the inscription begins to emerge. Reaching what we now consider to be its most accurate interpretation required almost nine years of repeated analysis.

In our earlier readings, we reconstructed the line as follows:

Teppelü yaxamaz Nəbü Mərduk

“The god Nabu-Marduk will not consign the brave man to his fire.”

Under that interpretation, the line appeared to correspond logically with the preceding passage:

“You who regard the Sun as your deity, either draw your dagger or summon me to battle.

Nabu-Marduk will not burn the courageous man in his fire.”

Although the two lines appeared mutually consistent, the broader meaning of the text remained historically undefined. A number of essential questions remained unanswered. Against the ruler of which neighboring country was Anshar conducting what might today be described as a rhetorical or indirect war? Upon which neighboring population was he attempting to impose—or strongly recommend—his own devotion to fire and the Sun? Who were the political neighbors of Turukku during this period?

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If a Turkic-speaking state existed in the territory of present-day Luristan, the Achaemenid Persians had evidently not yet established firm control over that region. The principal neighboring peoples would have included the Elamites, Hurrians, Assyrians, and Medes. Each of these societies possessed its own religious traditions. Moreover, a relatively small polity such as Turukku would scarcely have been in a position to impose its religious practices upon powerful states such as Elam, Assyria, or Media. It is also possible that some of these societies shared related religious concepts.

This reasoning suggested that the population addressed in the inscription must have been relatively new to the region and not yet firmly associated with an established local religious tradition. Among the known populations of the period, the early Persian tribal groups appeared to correspond most closely to these conditions.

On the basis of this historical analysis, we returned once again to line 13:

13. *tap-pa-lu a-xa-mesh Nabu dMarduk*

The proposed remodeled reading is:

Tapp alü Axameš Nəbu Mərduk?

This may be interpreted as:

“Does the exalted Akhamesh acknowledge Nabu-Marduk?” or, more explicitly:

“Does Akhamesh require the nobility, generosity, and supreme divinity of Nabu-Marduk?”

This line appears to unlock the principal historical meaning of the Kabir Kuh inscription. It clarifies the functional character of the text and provides potential answers to questions arising both from the inscription itself and from the broader historical background.

If the proposed identification is correct, the inscription constitutes a previously unrecognized written source relevant to the earliest history of the Achaemenid dynasty. It may preserve information transmitted by a contemporary or near-contemporary observer and therefore deserves particular attention from historians of early Persian political formation.

Contrary to the interpretation of Grayson and Levine, who regarded the figure named Anshar as an Assyrian ruler, the present study proposes that he was the ruler of Turukku and a contemporary of **Achaemenes**, the traditional founder of the Achaemenid dynasty and an ancestor of Darius I.

The earliest Persian groups who migrated into western Iran may not yet have possessed the fully developed religious system later associated with the Achaemenid monarchy. Their beliefs may instead have reflected a transitional or heterogeneous religious environment. By the reign of Darius I, however, the royal inscriptions present the king as a devoted adherent of **Ahura Mazda** and as a ruler whose authority derived directly from divine support.

Approximately two centuries separated the presumed period of Achaemenes from that of Darius I. Achaemenes did not necessarily bring the cult of Ahura Mazda with him in a fully established form from the Indian subcontinent. According to the interpretation advanced in our previous research on the writings attributed to **Shamshi-Adad Abi**, comparable concepts were already present farther west, including in Babylonia and in the region identified in our work as *Ete Eli*. Within the framework of the present study, this religious tradition is regarded as part of an earlier cultural environment associated with Turkic-speaking populations.

The Kabir Kuh inscription may therefore preserve evidence that the ruler of Turukku attempted to introduce Achamesh and his people to the religious system represented by Nabu, Marduk, the Sun, and the supreme divine principle later expressed through the name Ahuramazda.

This raises an important historical question. How did the descendants of an early tribal leader who had not yet adopted this religious system eventually come to regard Ahura Mazda as the supreme source of royal authority throughout the Achaemenid Empire?

The Kabir Kuh inscription may provide an early indication that interaction with neighboring populations played a role in that process.

Darius repeatedly invokes the favor of Ahura Mazda in the Behistun inscription. In one passage, he states in substance that he accomplished his military victories through the will and protection of Ahura Mazda and that, within a single year, he fought numerous battles, overthrew rival rulers, and took them captive. These campaigns took place in approximately 522–521 BCE.

The inscriptions of Darius also support the possibility that the Kabir Kuh text concerns the earliest period of Achaemenid development. Once the later Achaemenids consolidated their position in the Iranian plateau, they began pursuing an increasingly expansive imperial policy. Within a relatively short period, they incorporated or eliminated many of the smaller and larger political entities that had previously existed throughout the region.

The name of the dynasty’s founder appears in Greek as **Achaemenes** and in Old Persian as **Haxāmaniš**. In the remodeled Turkic reading of the Kabir Kuh inscription, however, the name appears in the form **Achamesh**. A review of the conventional royal chronology may therefore help establish the approximate age of the inscription.

Greek Form	Old Persian Form	Approximate Reign or Leadership
Achaemenes	Haxāmaniš	c. 705 BCE–unknown
Teispes	Čišpiš	c. 675–640 BCE

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Greek Form	Old Persian Form	Approximate Reign or Leadership
Cyrus I	Kuruš	c. 640–580 BCE
Cambyses I	Kambūjiya	c. 580–559 BCE
Cyrus II the Great	Kuruš II	c. 559–530 BCE

According to this chronology, Achaemenes may have led his tribal group during the eighth century BCE.

A summary traditionally associated with the *Encyclopedia Iranica* proposes that the Achaemenid clan may have begun leading a Persian tribal group as early as the ninth century BCE. During this initial period, the group may have lived near Lake Urmia in northern Iran and paid tribute to Assyria. No direct historical evidence conclusively establishes that an individual named Achaemenes ruled them as a king. Nevertheless, during the period traditionally attributed to his leadership, Persian groups may have migrated southward under pressure from the Medes, Assyrians, and Urartians.

According to this reconstruction, they eventually established a small political unit known as **Parsumash**, possibly in the region of Masjed Soleyman near the Bakhtiari Mountains and close to the frontier of Elam.



MAP 3. The Median Empire, the Turukku State, Elam, and Babylonia: The Migration of Early Persian Tribal Groups from the Lake Urmia Region toward the Territory Between Elam and Turukku and the Formation of the Parsumash Tribal Polity

The territory of Parsumash could therefore have shared a frontier with the Turukku polity indicated in biblical and Mesopotamian geographical traditions. This approximate relationship is illustrated in Map 3.

It is therefore possible that during the eighth or seventh century BCE, the Turukku and the early inhabitants of Parsumash lived in adjoining territories. If this reconstruction is correct, the arrival and political activity of the newly settled Parsumash groups would inevitably have affected the older populations of the region, including the Turukku, the Lullubi, and the Elamites.

From the perspective of the present study, the Turukku population possessed a long-established cultural tradition, including a highly developed agglutinative language, writing practices, music, religious beliefs, educational institutions, and organized political structures. The arrival of a newly migrating tribal confederation with different customs and social practices may therefore have generated tension between the two communities.

The hostile characterization of Achamesh in the inscription should consequently be read as the viewpoint of the Turukku author rather than as an objective ethnographic description. The text appears to portray the neighboring leader as ambitious, provocative, and dismissive of the cultural and religious traditions of the surrounding peoples.

A substantial difference must also have existed between the social and political organization of Persian society in the period of Darius and that of the much earlier Parsumash tribal community traditionally associated with Achaemenes. Over the course of nearly two centuries, mobile or semi-settled tribal groups could have developed into a centralized and highly sophisticated imperial society. A modern anecdote has occasionally been cited in popular media in connection with extremely unusual practices of personal isolation and avoidance of washing. In 2014, several news outlets reported the case of an elderly Iranian man, commonly known as **Amou Haji**, who had allegedly avoided bathing for several decades, lived in isolation, consumed unconventional food, and used dried animal matter in a smoking pipe.

This modern case should not, however, be treated as historical evidence about ancient Persian society. At most, it illustrates how isolated individual practices may survive outside prevailing social norms. It cannot establish cultural continuity over a period of more than two millennia and should therefore be excluded from the principal historical argument or confined to a brief methodological note concerning the dangers of using modern anecdotes to interpret ancient populations.

Line 16

Tabış üshshi buninnə, inə giz kuushse abiya, belu utmatı [ki anu]?

This line appears to preserve a metaphor that remains familiar in modern Turkic speech and has nearly acquired the status of a proverb. When an arrogant or self-important person is encouraged to seek reconciliation, one may say:

“The ornament of his sword will not fall merely because he goes to an elder and asks forgiveness.”

A comparable idea seems to underlie the inscription:

Tabış usi? “Will its brilliance become covered with soot?”

In other words:

“Its splendor will not diminish if he speaks privately with Abi, adopts a conciliatory tone, and seeks his counsel; no calamity will consume him for doing so.”

The line therefore appears to encourage Achamesh to meet Anshar discreetly, even if not publicly, and to consult him in private.

Line 17

u nishmes u maallu ana qateia URU x [...] x'da

The form conventionally read as **nishmes** may not have been segmented correctly. Although the proposed reconstruction preserves a colloquial and somewhat coarse expression, it may correspond to a vernacular Turkic term used for an excessively miserly or avaricious person.

The line appears to emphasize both the great wealth and the extreme stinginess of Achamesh. Its sense may be reconstructed approximately as:

“Why has the Creator granted so much wealth and abundance to one so ungenerous and grasping?”

The expression is intensified through two separate characterizations of the ruler’s miserliness: one suggesting extreme parsimony and the other describing a person who never releases anything from his possession.

Lines 18–22

Lines 18 through 22 are almost entirely destroyed. Their loss is particularly regrettable, because these damaged passages may once have preserved a substantial portion of the historical narrative.

Line 23

[sh]e-ru-ush-shu ta-nitti (...) ep-shi-tu

Proposed remodeled reading:

Şərü uşşu tanıttı (...), epşitü?

The final element, **epşitü**, does not occur in standard modern Turkic dictionaries. It may, however, correspond to the dialectal Azerbaijani form **əfsidi**, meaning “he became frightened” or “he was afraid,” a form still known in the speech of Nüvədi and possibly in some South Azerbaijani dialects.

The line may therefore be interpreted as:

“He revealed the face of his hostility; what happened—has he now become afraid?”

The lexical element **şər**, usually regarded in modern lexicography as an Arabic loanword, appears here in a context that the present study interprets as native to the language of the inscription. Within the reconstructed narrative, hostility and slander are presented as defining features of Achamesh’s conduct toward others.

Line 24

Epüşu əlişü uzaştırma, a nə tamartı

Proposed translation:

“If he comes before you and wishes to kiss your hand, do not extend it to him; what kind of lineage does he possess?”

The expression “**what kind of lineage does he possess?**” appears to question the social and dynastic background of Achamesh. In modern terms, it portrays him as someone who did not descend from an established aristocratic, princely, or royal house.

This line also appears to confirm the preceding argument. The efforts of Anshar—perhaps accompanied by political pressure—may have compelled Achamesh to moderate his position and possibly promise acceptance of the religious system associated with the Sun and Ahura. Encouraged by this apparent concession, the author adopts a more confident tone:

“What happened—has he become frightened?” “Do not extend your hand for him to kiss; what noble lineage does he possess?”

Within the ideological framework of the inscription, Anshar is presented as the representative of an established ruling dynasty of Turukku, whereas Achamesh is portrayed as the leader of a recently arrived tribal confederation lacking comparable dynastic prestige.

Later history, however, produced a striking reversal. The descendants of Achaemenes eventually established the Achaemenid dynasty, assumed imperial authority, and came to rule a vast portion of the ancient world. Several generations later, Darius I emphasized his dynastic legitimacy in the Behistun inscription:

“Darius the King says: My father was Hystaspes; the father of Hystaspes was Arsames; the father of Arsames was Ariaramnes; the father of Ariaramnes was Teispes; the father of Teispes was Achaemenes.”

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He continues:

“For this reason, we are called Achaemenids. From ancient times we have been noble; from ancient times our dynasty has been royal.”

And further:

“Eight members of my family were kings before me. I am the ninth. From ancient times we have been kings.”

Against this later dynastic declaration, the expression “**What kind of lineage does he possess?**” becomes particularly noteworthy. By the time of Darius, neither the Turukku polity nor the ruler Anshar, who allegedly sought to bring the newcomers under an older religious and political order, remained on the historical stage.

Line 25

Şarranimez, mar‘imez ya[tır] ana arkadu [guya] mey əzib

Proposed interpretation:

“He observes neither sacred law nor proper respect; relying upon his accumulated wealth, he behaves arrogantly and indulges his own will.”

This line reinforces the statement in line 17:

“Why has the Creator granted so much wealth to such a grasping man?”

Achamesh is presented as trusting in his possessions and acting with ostentation and contempt. In the reconstructed narrative, he neither acknowledges Anshar’s authority nor treats him with proper respect.

For publication, the significance of this passage should remain confined to the characterization found in the inscription itself. It is more methodologically sound to interpret it as the hostile political rhetoric of one ancient ruler toward another than to extend it to modern ethnic or governmental groups.

Line 26

Rübü arku, u inə şer‘animez mer‘iya səə, Anşar? U il animaz?

Proposed translation:

“He relies upon only a small circle; he understands neither sacred law nor loyalty. Will such a man respect you, Anshar, when he does not even respect his own people?”

This passage may indicate one of two circumstances.

First, the Parsumash tribal confederation may still have been relatively small.

Second, Achamesh may have ruled oppressively while relying upon only a limited group of supporters—perhaps those entrusted with collecting wealth, tribute, or property on his behalf.

The line also suggests that the hopes expressed earlier in the inscription had failed. The possibility that Achamesh might come before Anshar, consult him privately, or make a gesture of submission appears to have disappeared. Relying upon wealth and a narrow group of powerful supporters, he again adopts a provocative attitude toward Anshar and his people.

Line 27

Rəbü timəz, anu bel uyutmatı, u nishe, zakkaru şümsüy

Proposed interpretation:

“He does not invoke the Lord. Why did the calamity not subdue him? He remains a thorn, roaming like a hunting dog.”

The metaphor is clear. Achamesh is compared to an acquisitive hunting dog that searches restlessly for whatever it can seize.

Line 28

Na nar a tanıdı, il animes, Rəbü timəz, lim urma

Proposed translation:

“He recognizes neither fire, nor people, nor the Lord; do not attempt to solder him together.”

Here **nar** is understood as “fire.” The entire line may therefore be interpreted as:

“He does not recognize the sacred fire, his own people, or the Lord. Do not attempt to solder faith into him artificially.”

The final phrase, **lim urma**, is especially interesting. It may correspond to the Turkic expression **lehim vurma**, “do not solder.”

If this interpretation is correct, the line preserves a notable technological metaphor. It would suggest that the process of joining or repairing metal vessels through soldering was familiar to the author of the inscription.

The literary image is highly effective. When a corroded copper vessel is coated and soldered with tin, its surface becomes clean, bright, and restored. Achamesh, however, is portrayed as so deeply corroded in character that neither the fire of Ahura nor the radiance of the Sun can purify him.

The instruction is therefore:

“Do not solder him; do not exhaust yourself trying to reform him.”

Line 29

shamna lip-shu-ush niqe liq qi-sha-sha-al-mu shu-a-ti

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Proposed remodeled reading:

Şam nalip şu üzñə kəllik, qisas almış üyədü

Tentative translation:

“The candle burned and scattered marks across his face; it appears as though it had taken revenge upon him.”

This line appears to provide a physical description of Achamēsh. The reference may be to a face heavily marked by pitting or scars. On this basis, the present study reconstructs a tentative portrait of him using the headdress appropriate to the proposed historical period.

The passage may also contain an element of religious irony, contrasting devotion to the Sun with a lesser association with candlelight.

More significantly, the line may indicate that Achamēsh’s face bore extensive pockmarks. The author interprets these marks as possible evidence of smallpox contracted before or during the migration of the early Persian groups.

Smallpox is known to have existed in parts of Egypt, India, and China from remote antiquity. The mummy of the Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses V, who died approximately three thousand years ago, has frequently been discussed as possible early physical evidence of the disease because of lesions visible on the face.

The Kabir Kuh inscription, under the proposed reading, may therefore preserve an additional early literary reference to pockmarked facial scarring. This interpretation should nevertheless be presented cautiously, because the linguistic reconstruction alone cannot establish a medical diagnosis with certainty. The line may describe scarring, disfigurement, or another visible skin condition without allowing a definitive identification of the disease.

Line 30

ultu ashri shuu nakkaru Anshar u il animes

Proposed remodeled reading:

Oldu aşrı soyu nökarı, Anşur; u el animaz.

Tentative translation:

“He has become the tax-collecting servant who strips his own people, Anshar; he does not value his nation.”

This line appears to continue the inscription’s criticism of Achamēsh’s harsh treatment of his own population. More specifically, it seems to accuse him of impoverishing the people through excessive taxation.

The lexical element **aşrı** may be connected with a tax calculated as one tenth of a person’s income or produce. Although the term is frequently explained through later linguistic traditions, the present interpretation treats it as denoting both the tithe itself and the official responsible for collecting it.

The line may further imply that Achamēsh did not fully trust subordinate officials and therefore personally supervised, or directly benefited from, the collection of taxes and tribute. Within the hostile rhetoric of the inscription, this practice is presented as evidence of avarice and oppressive rule.

Line 31

u rabu times mala inan a nar e annee shumu nabu

Proposed remodeled reading:

U Rəbü deməz, u mala yenən; omu anlayacaq ki, Nar—Od—Nəbidir?

Tentative translation:

“He does not invoke the Lord; he is consumed by wealth. How could such a man understand that the sacred Fire is divine?”

The line contrasts material greed with religious understanding. Achamēsh is represented as a man absorbed in wealth and therefore incapable of comprehending the sacred significance of fire, the Sun, or the divine principle symbolized by Nabu.

Line 32

ezzi ishli ikkilmushu ina mithuush gish kakkimes

Proposed remodeled reading:

Əzzi işlə əggilmüşü (əyilmişü), inə gizli mithüüş (müdhiş) çəkir.

Tentative translation:

“He bends them beneath exhausting labor and secretly subjects them to severe suffering.”

According to this interpretation, the ruler does not merely burden the population through visible labor demands; he also inflicts concealed punishment and coercion. The line portrays workers physically bent under prolonged labor and exposed to harsh treatment beyond public scrutiny.

The reading should be understood as the inscription author’s political accusation against a neighboring ruler rather than as an independently verified description of labor conditions.

Line 33

qirib tahaz seri idashu aa izi zuma

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Proposed remodeled reading:

Qərib tahaz (təhəzlə) sərir ədası[n], [az qalır] Aya özü Cuma !..

Tentative translation:

“The stranger displays his arrogance so extravagantly that he appears almost ready to leap toward the Moon.”

The line employs deliberate hyperbole. Achamesh is mocked as a foreign or recently arrived leader whose pride has become limitless. The image of leaping toward the Moon emphasizes his exaggerated self-confidence and political ambition.

Line 34

ash ki ta shesh [...] liir dushu

The first sign, tentatively read as **ash**, may instead represent **at**, “throw” or “cast.” The surviving sequence may therefore be remodeled as:

A[t] ki, ta şeş-beşlər düşü!

Tentative translation:

“Go on, cast the dice—perhaps a six and a five will fall for you!”

The reference appears to be to a dice or board game, most plausibly an early form of backgammon. The expression **şeş-beş**, literally “six-five,” remains familiar in the terminology of the game and functions here as a sarcastic idiom of exceptional good fortune.

The preceding line describes Achamesh as almost leaping toward the Moon in arrogance. Line 34 then ridicules his confidence:

“Since you are so certain of your fortune, go ahead—perhaps you will throw a six and a five as well.”

If this interpretation is correct, the passage may preserve an early linguistic reference to gaming terminology that remained productive in later Turkic usage.

Line 35

The surviving text of line 35 is incomplete, and any reconstruction must remain provisional. It appears to continue the warning that the ruler’s authority, name, or dynasty will not remain secure if his conduct does not change.

A cautious translation may be offered as follows:

“His royal power will be overturned, and his name will not endure.”

Because several signs are damaged, this line should not be used as independent historical evidence without further epigraphic confirmation.

Line 36

zera shuina mat ilu balluqu

Proposed remodeled reading:

Cirə suyuna mət olu balluğu[n].

The word **zera** may correspond to **cirə/zirə**, “cumin.” Cumin has long been used in regional culinary and medicinal traditions and may have been valued for its effects on digestion.

The line appears to be satirical and may be rendered approximately as:

“Take cumin water so that your stomach may be relieved.”

The original Azerbaijani interpretation understands the line as a coarse mockery of the neighboring ruler’s eating habits and digestive condition. For an academic publication, however, the scatological details should be omitted. The essential point is that the inscription concludes with a humiliating medicinal or bodily joke directed at Achamesh.

This ending is significant because it demonstrates that the text is not written in the solemn tone of a conventional royal dedication. Instead, it contains political invective, ridicule, metaphor, and personal satire. Within the interpretation proposed here, the inscription functions as a polemical address to a neighboring ruler rather than as a standard Assyrian religious monument.

CONCLUSION

The present study has reconsidered the thirty-six-line cuneiform inscription carved beside the rock relief at Shikafi Gul-Gul on Kabir Kuh Mountain in Luristan. The inscription has traditionally been classified as an Assyrian royal text because it contains the name Anshar and employs a cuneiform ductus associated with Mesopotamian scribal traditions.

The analysis proposed here reaches a different conclusion. By applying the **Azerturk Linguistic Remodeling Method**, the syllabic sequence has been resegmented and interpreted through the phonetic, morphological, and semantic structures of an early Turkic language.

According to this reconstruction, Anshar is not necessarily the author of the inscription or an Assyrian deity. He appears instead as the ruler being addressed by the author. The text concerns political tension between the Turukku polity and a neighboring tribal leader identified in line 13 as **Achamesh**, a form compared in this study with **Achaemenes/Haxāmaniš**, the traditional ancestor of the Achaemenid dynasty.

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The inscription portrays Achamash as wealthy, ambitious, avaricious, politically provocative, and resistant to the religious traditions of the surrounding population. It repeatedly contrasts his materialism and arrogance with the religious principles represented by the Sun, sacred fire, Nabu, Marduk, Ahura, and the Lord. The text also appears to accuse him of oppressive taxation, severe labor demands, and disregard for his own people.

Several lines preserve imagery that remains intelligible through Turkic metaphor and idiom. These include the statement that seeking counsel would not diminish a ruler's brilliance, the comparison of moral reform to soldering a corroded metal vessel, the image of a ruler roaming like a hunting dog, and the sarcastic invocation of a "six-five" throw in a board game.

The inscription therefore appears to combine political commentary, religious argument, social criticism, personal caricature, and satire. Such features distinguish it from the conventional formulae of Assyrian royal inscriptions and support the possibility that it belonged to a different local linguistic and political environment.

If the proposed identification of Achamash is accepted, the monument may date approximately to the eighth or early seventh century BCE, when early Persian tribal groups were moving southward and establishing themselves in the region later associated with Parsumash. This chronology would place the inscription within the formative period of relations among Turukku, Elam, Media, Assyria, and the earliest Achaemenid-associated communities.

The interpretation advanced here also contributes to the broader question of the presence of Turkic-speaking populations in the territory of present-day Iran before the establishment of Persian imperial power. Within the author's wider research, the Shikafi Gul-Gul text is not treated as an isolated example. It is compared with other cuneiform materials from Hamadan, Mughan, and neighboring regions that have likewise been interpreted through Turkic linguistic structures.

Particular attention may be drawn to a recently reported mummified religious figure discovered near Khudaferin in the Mughan region. Talismans placed upon the chest reportedly contain cuneiform signs that, in a preliminary reading, have been interpreted as Turkic. The text is said to begin with a phrase approximately meaning:

"The sacred place adorned by the holy father Hadi, the guide to truth."

This material requires a separate study, and no definitive conclusion should be drawn before the object, provenance, signs, and archaeological context are independently documented. Nevertheless, it may represent another potentially important source for investigating the cultural and linguistic history of the region.

The Shikafi Gul-Gul inscription should therefore be approached not merely as a damaged provincial relief, but as a possible historical record of early political and religious interaction in western Iran. Its re-examination may open a new field of discussion concerning the relationship between the Turukku population, the earliest Persian tribal formations, and the multilingual cuneiform culture of the ancient Near East.

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