

“The oldest photo of Darius's inscription in Behistun: A new document”

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Darius the Great's engraving on Mount Behistun is the longest and one of the most precious pieces of the world's cuneiform inscriptions. Apart from retelling the initial events of the reign of Darius, decoding its tri-lingual royal text established the starting point for the field of Assyriology. It was thought that the first photographs of this monument were recorded by American scholar “Abraham Valentine Williams Jackson” in 1903. In this article, for the first time, we introduced an Iranian pioneer Iqbal al-Saltanah, known as Reza Akasbashi. He prevails the royal photographer in the court of Naser-al-Din Shah Qajar. Aqa Reza's photo of the Behistun inscription is 33 years older than Jackson's Images and shows the general status of this important inscription in the second half of the nineteenth century. Study of this important document can be seen from two different angles. First: the history of Iranian's documentation activities for historical monuments and sites and secondly: an adequate understanding of the conservation status of the Behistun inscription in the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Behistun, Darius, Photography, Documentation, Aqa Reza Akasbashi, Assyriology