Original Text

Quirxacsi, urdoymasa, rona iey poyvini texa, reyes iu reyi, squeyrey ippirx decretu: Heycossa hiusangarda glijáut ann titeyvinuc iey on quiupey. Rulu itíu, on yispi ioy soltistoy, Heycossa heunéyt yanu uyjuyu av nouvoy iey, piules ambares av graunoy ney quirmey, diu buy regimentus av ronay, filmasos ad murvinu on Quirxacsi ioy quiroy. Mirsti av ippirvinoy ployausoy queubreyeyt tinques slayvavanos diu reparaçonos fissivanos.[1]

Original Text (English Translation)

Kirshaksi, most high, people's sacred leader, king of kings, delivers clear decree: the kingdom of Heicosa will be punished because of her actions in war. Each year, on summer solstice, Heicosa will sacrifice one-eighth of her gold, many vessels of grain or beer, and two regiments of men, trained for battle into Kirshaksi's army. Failure to deliver on time will cause lands to be looted and reparations to be increased.

Translated Text

Kirsaksiya, hassusar-ez pit sec, ninivip kąstecac tenizzar sec, nassui-ez nassuizar ot sec, ta sąsamsecik kaspeya ker-im-tę rami: yifat-ez sąsamik tąspaya u tęsaya im-Aykasaya pit-tę yatas-im-ebar vęci-hakzar. Ąkasnat-tę sąsamsecik Aykasaya, tarté-im há atki ti, u metka-im tusta ató tǫr atavará, u consa-im ocza kąsá kąstatvíp hakra-tę kagąsaya-im-tę Kirsaksiya ahatrata-im-ah yatassuizar tustazar. Egi apsat-ah huhi rasketik taratosya otvip, su tartęnat-tę sąsamą amazzá, sekin ossat-ez sąsamik ąkasya pit-tę.

Interlinear Gloss

(1) **Kirsaksiya**[2]
   Kirsaksi-ya
   NAME-PROX
   'Kirshaksi,'

[2] The PROX form is used because Heicosa already knows Kirshaksi, although the form also captures a braggadocious sense (ie. 'you should be familiar with him').

(2) **hassusar-ez pit sec**[3]
   hassusar＝ez pit   *sec*
   exalt＝PREP AUX.MEDP 3
   'who is exalted,'

[3] Translated 'who,' the pronoun **sec** here serves to create a relative clause. The construction is intentionally archaic to capture the period of the original text.

(3) **ninivip kąstecac tenizzar sec**
   nini-vip   *kęstat-sec*   *tenis-zar*   *sec*
   be.wholesome-CVB lead-3C＞3C people-PL 3
   'who divinely[4] leads the people,'

[4] Literally 'wholesome, baby-like' but metaphorically extended to 'holy, righteous, pure' esp. with the verb **kęstat** 'lead'

(4) **nassui-ez nassuizar ot sec**
   nassui＝ez   *nassui-zar ot*   *sec*
   king＝PREP king-PL   COP 3
   'who is king of kings,'[5]

[5] Although **nassui-im nassuizar** is the literal translation of 'king of kings', 'king among kings' is more idiomatic.

(5) **ta sąsamsecik kaspeva ker-im-tę rami**
   ta   *sęsam-sec-ik*   *kaspe-ya*   *ker＝im＝tę*
   INTJ say-3C＞3C-PROX decree-PROX thick＝POSS＝PREP
    rami
    glass
   'yes![6] he clearly[7] decrees:'

[6] The interjection **ta** refocuses the sentence on its subject, Kirshaki.

[7] Literally 'through glass'

(6) **yifat-ez sąsamik tąspaya u tęsaya im-Aykasaya pit-tę yatas-im-ebar vącihakzar**
   yifat＝ez   *sęsam-ik*   *tąspa-ya*   *u*   *tęsa-ya*
   punish＝PREP AUX.IRR-PROX sea-PROX CONJ shore-PROX
    im＝eykosa-ya   *pit＝tę*   *yatas＝im＝ebar*
    POSS＝NAME-PROX AUX.MEDP＝PREP sun＝POSS＝PREP
    vącihak-zar
    tactic-PL
   'the kingdom[8] of Heicosa will be punished due to[9] (her) tactics.'

[8] literally 'sea and shore'

[9] literally 'under the sun of'

(7) **ąkasnat-tę sąsamsecik Aykasaya**
   ąkasnat＝tę   *sęsam-sec-ik*   *eykosa-ya*
   tribute＝PREP AUX.IRR-3C＞3C-PROX NAME-PROX
   'Heicosa will tribute'

(8) **tarté-im há atki ti**

tarté-im   há   atki ti

gold\DIST = POSS one\DIST part eight

'one-eighth of (her) gold (we've heard about),'[10]

(9) **u metka-im tusta ató tǫr atavará**

u   metka=im   tusta ató   tǫr   atavará

CONJ vessel=POSS many grain\DIST CONJ beer\DIST

'and many vessels of grain and/or beer (we've heard about),'

(10) **u consa-im ocza kąsá kąstatvíp hakra-tę kagąsaya-im-tę Kirsaksiya**

u   consa=im   ocza kąsá   kęstat-víp

CONJ regiment=POSS two soldier\DIST train-CVB.DIST

   hakra=tę   kagąsa-ya=im=tę   Kirsaksi-ya

   battle=PREP army-PROX=POSS=PREP NAME-PROX

'and two regiments[11] of soldiers (we've heard about) trained for battle in Kirshaki's army'

(11) **ahatrata-im-ah yatassuizar tustazar.**

ahatrata=im=ah   yatassui-zar tusta-zar

summer.solstice=POSS=PREP year-PL   many-PL

'on each year's summer soltice.'

(12) **egi apsat-ah huhi rasketik taratosya otvip**

egi   apsat=ah   huhi reskat-ik   taretas-ya

INTJ point=PREP fast AUX.NEG-PROX commodity-PROX

   ot-vip

   COP-CVB

'if[12] these commodities aren't on time,'[13]

(13) **su tartęnat-tę sąsamą amazzą́r**

su   tartęnat=tę   sęsam-ǫ   emas-zą́r

CONJ be.looted=PREP AUX.IRR-DIST lands-PL.DISTAL

'both lands (we've heard about) will be looted'

(14) **sekin ossat-ez sąsamik ąkasya pit-tę**

sekin   ossat=ez   sęsam-ik   ǫkas-ya

CONJ increase=PREP AUX.IRR-PROX payment-PROX

   pit=tę

   AUX.MEDP=PREP

'and this[14] payment will be increased.'

[10] All the demands are translated in DIST form, implying that they are rumored to exist; Kirshaksi's kingdom has not actually seen them. Pragmatically, DIST form is often used for requests or demands of this nature, especially in IRR mood.

[11] This isn't the literal translation; **consa** is actually just a counting word for adult humans, which could be translated 'regiment' in this context.

[12] The conditional meaning is captured by a discourse particle implying disappointment or coming short.

[13] Literally 'at the fast point.'

[14] The PROX form here takes on a more English meaning, marking the referent as already known in the discourse.

Phonology

Ther are 13 consonant phonemes, although there are other phones that occur as the result of morphological processes.

Table 1: Consonant inventory

	Labial	Alveolar	Sibilant	Velar
Stop	p	t	t͡s ⟨**c**⟩	k
Fricative	f		s	x ⟨**h**⟩
Nasal	m	n	n͡z ⟨**z**⟩	
Approximant	w ⟨**v**⟩		ɹ ⟨**r**⟩		j ⟨**y**⟩

Voicing Nasal and stop clusters allophonically become voiced stops, reflected in the orthography as ⟨**b d z g**⟩. These clusters assimilate in place to the stop. Clusters where the nasal is the onset of a syllable, not a coda, do not assimilate.

Affrication Alveolar plosive and fricative clusters allophonically become affricates, reflected in the orthography. Cross-syllable /ts/, /tʃ/, and /tx/ clusters all neutralize to [t͡s], written as ⟨**c**⟩. The /tn͡z/cluster likewise affricates, but is realized as [t͡s̃ː], written as ⟨**cz**⟩. This cluster is notoriously hard for non-native speakers to pronounce and is often used as a shibboleth.

Assibilation Fricative clusters with the sibilants /s n͡z/ become assibilated, surfacing as [sː ž ː]. Orthographically, these clusters are written as ⟨**ss zz**⟩.

There are 8 vowel phonemes, although only three distinctions are made in unstressed syllables.

Table 2: Vowel inventory

	Front	Mid	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e ẽ ⟨**ę**⟩	(ə ə̃)	o õ ⟨**ǫ**⟩
Low		a ã ⟨**ą**⟩	

Vowel Neutralization Mid and low vowels /e a o/ and their nasal counterparts are reduced to [ə ə̃] in unstressed syllables. Schwa is not phonemic, but neutralization is common. The surface form is typically written ⟨**a**⟩ even when representing underlying /e o/. Dictionaries typically denote the underlying form, or *shadow vowel*, as **e nbm.** or **o nbm.**, an abbreviation of **nabami** 'shadowy.' In speech, the underlying vowel becomes evident when stress is shifted due to morphological processes.

Morphology

Nouns

Nouns are morphologically marked for deixis and number.

Deixis   Nominal deixis has a variety of uses, including evidentiality, distance, familiarity, and topicality. Verbs and adjectives exhibit agreement for deictic reference. There are three deictic categories, **generic**, **proximal**, or **distal**.

Generic The unmarked or dictionary form of a noun is used when the noun is widely understood or well-known, for immaterial referents that cannot be deictically located, or if evidence of the referent is not known. If direct or reported evidence exists, it's felicitious or questionably grammatical to use unmarked form.

Proximal The proximal form of a noun is used when the speaker is certain, nearby, or familiar with the noun. It can also be used for the conversational topic. This form most commonly denotes direct evidence, meaning the speaker has personal experience with the marked NP. It is marked with the suffix **-ya** or **-va**, which also shifts stress to the ultimate syllable of the root.

Distal The distal form of a noun is used when the speaker is uncertain, far, or unfamiliar with the noun. It can also be used for the conversational focus. This form typically denotes indirect evidence, including inference, meaning the speaker has heard of or can make an educated guess about the existence of the marked NP. Reported deixis is marked by shifting stress to the ultimate syllable of the word.

Number   Plurality is indicated through the suffix **-zar**, which also shifts stress to the ultimate syllable of the root. Plural marking precedes deictic marking, so when marking for deixis, the suffix **-zar** is treated as part of the root. When number is specified with a conjunctive numeral, the noun is not marked for plurality.

Verbs

Finite verbs are morphologically marked for polypersonal and deictic agreement. Non-finite verbs appear in either participle form or as an adjunct with a preposition.

Polypersonal Agreement Transitive verbs exhibit polypersonal agreement, but intransitive verbs don't mark for person agreement at all.

Below are some of the polypersonal agreement markers that may be used in the text.

Agent		Patient		
		1	**2**	**3**
	1	-	-ţąf	-sec
	2	-pat	-	-sec
	3	-tat	-sąf	-sec

Deictic agreement   Verbs agreeing with distal form take the suffix **-ǫ**, while verbs agreeing with the proximal form take the suffix **-ik**. Both suffixes shift stress.

Participle   The participle is formed with the suffix **-vip**. The primary use of the participle is converbial, expressing actions that occur simultaneously. Typically, verbs of motion remain finite while verbs of manner because converbial. Many auxiliary verbs use the converbial form to demote the semantic verb. The participle is also used to form verbal adjectives.

Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs are used to convey aspect, modality, and voice. These verbs have a variety of lexical meanings. Auxiliary verbs can also be viewed as forming periphrastic expressions, since the auxiliary still has other, semantic meanings. In auxiliary constructions, the auxiliary bears all finite marking, and the semantic verbs are demoted to adjuncts.

Perfective The perfective auxiliary **ot** 'be' is used for actions that occurred at a single point in time. Its semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition **tę**. The usage of this form generally conveys the event time was in the past, but it can be used for current or future events as well.

Mediopassive The passive auxiliary **pit** 'hold' is used to change the valency of the verb by demoting the agent and promoting the object. Its semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition **ez**.

Irrealis The irrealis auxiliary **sęsam** 'say' is used to express actions that are not yet or may not be realized or happening. It can express desire, doubt, or conditionality. Its semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition **tę**. The usage of this form generally conveys the event time is in the future, but it can be used for current or past events as well.

Negation The negative auxiliary **reskat** is used to expression negation. Its semantic verb is put in participle form.

Focus-shifting **Ot** can also be used to allow a verb phrase to become the focus. Syntactically, a finite verb must always be second position, which prevents them from being fronted for focus. The auxiliary **ot** can be used as a dummy finite verb, allowing the semantic verb to shift position. The semantic verb is put in participle form.

There are more auxiliary verbs than those listed here, and not all auxiliaries listed here are used in the text.

Other Morpheme Types

There are three other types of morphemes found in the text.

Clitics Clitics are distinguished from suffixes by the stress pattern of the head they bind to. Suffixes shift stress to the preceding syllable, maintaining the penultimate stress of the head. Clitics, on the other hand, do not cause stress shifts. Most prepositions and the possessive marker **im** are clitics, typically binding to the head noun. The possessive marker **im** is different; it can occasionally bind to the possessor noun, not the possessed noun, if the NP being possessed is conjoined with **u** or **tọr**.

Interjections Interjections are particles that convey discourse-relevant information. Interjections are distinguished from other lexical classes by their lack of movement; they are required to be the first word in an utterance.

Adjectives Most adjectives are derived from nouns and are therefore morphologically similar. However, true adjectives differ from nouns because they cannot be one of the arguments of a finite verb, whereas nouns can be. Although adjectives are not bound to their head NP, they cannot exist independently.

Syntax

Phrases

Phrasal elements are typically head first, so nouns precede their modifiers. However, clitics are usually in postposition. Conjuctions and co-ordinators typically appear before the noun they are conjoining; most constructions use a single conjuction, but verbal conjuction requires that both elements be marked.

Clauses

The base-generated word order is SVO, but this order rarely surfaces. The finite verb must always be in second position, and adjuncts typically come after core arguments, so a common word order in declarative sentences is SAuxOV. More often, however, the order of elements in the clause is governed by deictic reference and focus.

Focus   The most proximal, most newsworthy information is placed before the finite verb. More focal arguments and adjuncts are prioritized, but when two are equally newsworthy, the more proximal or evident is fronted. In practice, this means that the first argument or adjunct in an utterance is its focus.

Fronting Hierarchy   The most likely NPs to be fronted are proximal or experiential NPs, followed by distal or reported NPs. Pragmatically speaking, generic or unmarked NPs are rarely newsworthy, and thus are rarely in first position. Adjuncts (typically semantic verbs) are also likely to be fronted, which serves as a form of emphasis.

Verb Movement   If an auxiliary verb is present in the utterance, then it bears all inflection and is placed in V2 position. The semantic verb phrase is treated as a kind of adjunct and thus can be fronted base on its newsworthiness (it cannot be fronted based on proximity since adjunct VPs are not diectically marked).

Pied-piping   Prepositions are bound to their dependent phrase and thus each must pied-pipe the other when being fronted.

Lexicon

ah • *prep.* • at, on top of, on (some time)

ahatrata • *noun* • something that's very hot; anger, rage; (sci.) summer solstice

apsat • *noun* • place, point; (meta.) timely, on time;

atki • *noun* • part, piece; plank or brick (of a fence or wall); (math) denominator

conso • *noun* • counting word for adult people

ebar • *prep.* • underneath

egi • *intj.* • just, only (a few of...); conveying disappointment or failure

emas • *noun* • land, property; (sci.) intellectual property

eta *(o nbm.)* • *noun* • grain (referring to the class of crop); **atavara** beer, alcholic beverage

ez • *prep.* • in, inside; among, surrounded by

ha • *adj.* • one; specific

hakra • *noun* • battle, skirmish; (pl.) conflict, campaign; (pl. idiom.) semester (of school)

huhi • *adj.* • fast, quick; smart; accurate

im • *prep.* • of; marking a possessed noun

kaspe • *noun* • legal document, contract; declaration, decree (esp. royal); (slang) stuffy person, someone who is boring

kąsa • *noun* • soldier; **kagąsa** army, battalion;

kęstat *(e nbm.)* • *verb* • to lead (smne.); **kęstat tę (sat)** to train for smth.

ker • *noun* • thickness, fat; large thing; (idiom.) conveying movement through or between

Kirsaksi • *name* • male given name

metka *(o nbm.)* • *noun* • bowl, basket, vessel, rounded semi-circle hollow container; counting word for agricultural crops (and by extension animals to be consumed)

nassui • *noun* • someone adorned by jewelry; king, ruler

nini • *verb* • to giggle, to act childish (not pejorative); to be wholesome, pure; to be divine, holy (esp. when in a leadership role)

ocza *(e nbm.)* • *adj.* • two

ǫkas • *noun* • payment; price; **ąkasnat** to be made to pay, to be charged; to tribute, to tithe, to donate (for political purposes)

ossat • *verb* • to increase; to grow (personally, intellectually); to encourage; to cheer for

ot • *verb* • to be; (aux.) perfective aspect, demoting with **tę**; (aux.) dummy verb, demoting as participle

pit • *verb* • to have; to hold; (aux.) mediopassive voice, demoting with **ez**; **pit tę** to take from smne.

husar *(o nbm.)* • *verb* • to shout (at someone); to praise, to compliment; **husar sat** to shout out loud; **hassusar** to exalt, to shower with praise

reskat *(e nbm.)* • *verb* • (aux.) negation, demoting as participle

sec • *pron.* • he, she, it, they; (arch.) relative pronoun

sekin • *conj.* • and

sęsam • *verb* • to speak; to say smth.; to want, desire; (aux.) irrealis mood (usually more certaintative than subjunctive); **sęsam tę (sat)** to speak up, to stand up for smth.

su • *conj.* • and

ta • *intj.* • yes! indeed!; conveying reaffirmation; reemphasizing adjuncts or arguments

taspa • *noun* • sea; (idiom.) part of a fixed expression meaning kingdom

taretas *(o nbm.)* • *noun* • marketplace, bazaar; (idiom.) commodity, good

tę • *prep.* • movement toward or away from; for; from; to; around

tęsa • *noun* • hair line, brow, forehead; shore; (idiom.) close to, near; (idiom.) part of a fixed expression meaning kingdom

tenis • *noun* • citizen, person of a nation; store patron, customer

tertą *(e nbm.)* • *noun* • gold; the color yellow; (adj.) valuable; (adj. slang) cool; **tartęnat** to be shaken down, to be ransacked, to be looted

ti • *adj* • eight

tọr • *conj.* • or (inclusive)

tusta *(e nbm.)* • *adj.* • many, each

u • *conj.* • and

vącihak • *noun* • tactic, strategy (esp. in war); schedule, daily calendar

yifat • *verb* • punish

yatas • *noun* • sun; (idiom.) cause, reason, motivation; **yatassui** (pl.) year