

## SIN-GASHID'S ENDOWMENT OF THE TEMPLE Ê-ANA

TRANSLATED BY THEO. G. PINCHES

THIS short inscription of twenty-seven lines is one of peculiar interest. It is a record, written in the Akkadian language, of an endowment, made by an early Mesopotamian king with a Semitic Babylonian name, to the great temple at Erech called Ê-ana;<sup>1</sup> and it is not an original, but a copy in clay, written by a man named Nabû-baladhsu-iqbî, of a stone tablet kept, in ancient times, in the great temple known as Ê-zida, now the ruin called the Birs-i-Nimroud—the supposed tower of Babel. Great care has been taken by the copyist in inscribing the tablet; and the forms of the characters, as he has given them, probably reproduce fairly well the archaic style of the original. The text itself covers the greater part of the two sides of the clay tablet, which is, like most of the documents of this kind found in Babylonia and Assyria, flat—or nearly so—on the obverse, and curved on the reverse. The last three lines, which

<sup>1</sup> Written Ê-an-na in the inscriptions. The end-syllable -na is, however, generally regarded as a kind of phonetic complement, and the *n* is therefore not really double. The name means "House of heaven."

are separate from the others, are written smaller, and are in the later Babylonian style of writing. Unlike the rest, also, they are written in the Semitic-Babylonian language. The size of the tablet is  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches by  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches, the thickness in the thickest part being  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch. The colour is a very light yellow ochre.

As the word-order in Akkadian differs considerably from English, no attempt is made to preserve the divisions of the lines of the original; by this arrangement translations from these ancient tongues are much more easily understood.

## TRANSLATION OF THE INSCRIPTION OF SIN-GASHID

Sin-gashid,<sup>1</sup> king of ERECH,<sup>2</sup> king of AMNANUM, and patron<sup>3</sup> of Ê-ANA, to LUGAL-BANDA his god and NIN-GUL his goddess. When he built Ê-ANA he erected Ê-KANKAL, the house which is the seat of the joy of his heart.<sup>4</sup> During his dominion he will endow it with<sup>5</sup> 30 *gur* of wheat, 12 *mana* of wool, 10 *mana* of produce, 18 *qa* of oil according to<sup>6</sup> the tariff, and 1 shekel of gold. May his years be years of plenty.

### COLOPHON IN SEMITIC-BABYLONIAN :

Copy of the tablet of *ûsû*-stone, the property<sup>7</sup> of Ê-ZIDA, which Nabû-baladhsu-iqbî, son of Mitsirâa,<sup>8</sup> has written.

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It may not be without interest to give here a transcription of the original text into Roman char-

<sup>1</sup> This name is probably for *Sin-kashid*, "the Moon-god has made captive."

<sup>2</sup> The Akkadian form is *Unuga*.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "nourisher" (*ua*, equivalent to the Semitic-Babylonian *zaninu*).

<sup>4</sup> The Akkadians here use the compound *sha-ghulla*, "heartjoy."

<sup>5</sup> Literally, "measure out to it."

<sup>6</sup> Or, perhaps, "according to the tariff of the time."

<sup>7</sup> The original has the Akkadian word *nigga* = Semitic-Babylonian *mimmu*.

<sup>8</sup> Mitsirâa, "the Egyptian."

acters, omitting the determinative prefixes, which were probably not pronounced:—

Lugal-banda, dingiranir, Nin-gul amānir, Sin-gashid, lugal Unuga, lugal Amnanum, ua Ê-ana. Ud Ê-ana mu-dua, Ê-kankal, ê ki-tur shaghulakanē, munen-du. Bala nam-lugalakani ba she-gur-ta, ghumin mana sig-ta, ghu mana um-ta (ghu-ussa-qa<sup>1</sup>) sal-gish-ta, kilama dana-ka, guskin gi gê ghipdazig. Mua-ni mu ghigala ghia.

Gabri narua sha ūshî, nigga Ê-zida, Nabû-baladhsu-iqbî, âbil Mitsirâa, isdhur.

The text begins with an invocation to Lugal-banda and his consort Nin-gul, who seem to have been Sin-gashid's patron god and goddess. He then speaks of Ê-ana, one of the great temples of Erech (which was, perhaps, Sin-gashid's capital), and Ê-kankal, probably one of the shrines in Ê-ana. Judging from the wording, Sin-gashid seems to claim to be the founder of both those fanes, though it is probable that he only rebuilt them. Sin-gashid then gives a list of the amounts of produce, etc., with which he had endowed the shrine, and ends with a pious wish for his country. The date of the original of this inscription may be set down at about 2600 B.C. The copy which has come down to us, however, probably dates from the time of the antiquarian revival in Babylonia during the reign of Nabonidus, father of Belshazzar.

<sup>1</sup> This is represented on the tablet by a single character formed with four wedges (three horizontal and one upright) of the same form as the character *as*. This character is equivalent to 3 × 6 (= 18) *qa*.

It is to be noted that the inscription is dedicated to a god and a goddess whose names I provisionally transcribe as *Lugal-banda* ("powerful king," or "king of youthful strength") and *Nin-gul*, his consort (as we learn from the second volume of the *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, pl. 59, ll. 24 and 25<sup>1</sup>). This identification of Ningul as the consort of Lugal-banda is important, as it shows that Sin-gashid, who calls her his mother, and himself her son,<sup>2</sup> did not mean to imply that she was his real earthly parent, but that he simply traced his descent from her, thus asserting his divine origin. The late George Smith's double-queried "Belat-sunat" (as he transcribed the name *Nin-gul*), "the earliest known queen in the Euphrates valley," must therefore be erased from the list of historical rulers in Erech.

The temple Ê-ana was probably the principal fane in the city of Erech, and Ê-kankal<sup>3</sup> was probably one of the shrines within it. It is not improbable that the Ê-kankal mentioned here is the same as, or the fellow-shrine to, the Ê-ghili-ana mentioned by Assur-bani-pal as the sanctuary, apparently in or connected with Ê-ana, to which he restored the image of the goddess Nanâ, which was carried off by the king of Elam, Kudur-nankhundi, about 2280

<sup>1</sup> From a comparison of the other names in the text there published, it would seem that other possible readings of these two names are *Umun-banda* or *Ûn-banda* and *Ûn-gul* or *Ê-gul*. Fresh excavations in the East can alone determine these points.

<sup>2</sup> *Cun. Ins. of W. Asia*, vol. i. pl. 3, No. viii, (Brick from the summit of the Bowarich ruin at Warka).

<sup>3</sup> "The house of the sanctuary" (?).

years before Christ. As the date of Sin-gashid is doubtful,<sup>1</sup> it is impossible to say with certainty whether the capture of the image of Nanâ by the Elamites took place before or after his reign, but it was probably after.<sup>2</sup>

The inscription here translated and explained is a duplicate of one published in the fourth volume of the *Cuneiform Ins. of W. Asia*, pl. 35, No. 3, from two cones from Warka.<sup>3</sup> Of this text, which is rather roughly written, and which gives a few interesting variants from the text translated above, a tentative translation was given by the late George Smith in his "Early History of Babylonia," published in the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. i., and in the first series of the *Records of the Past*, vol. iii.

<sup>1</sup> He may be regarded as having reigned about 2600 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> The text of Assur-bani-pal's description is as follows:—"For 1635 years had the goddess Nanâ been angry, had gone, and had dwelt within Elam, which was not her proper place; and in those days she and the gods her fathers proclaimed my name to the dominion of the world. She intrusted to me the return of her divinity thus: 'Assur-bani-pal shall bring me out of the midst of wicked Elam, and shall cause me to enter within Ê-ana.' The words of the command of her divinity, which she had spoken from remote days, she again revealed to the later people. I grasped the hand of her great divinity, and she took the straight road, with joy of heart, to Ê-ana. In the month Kisleu, on the first day, I caused her to enter Erech, and in Ê-ghili-ana, which she loves, I caused an everlasting shrine to be founded for her."

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Erech, in which the temple Ê-ana was situated.

# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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