

## 199. 250, Ishtar Statue

*ReGenesis* is the first open-access encyclopedia to  
liberate pre-colonial research  
to its rightful 3,000,000 BCE origins  
- and -  
liberate female spirituality.  
(RGS.)

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### *Inanna/Ishtar.*

Throughout ancient civilizations,  
polytheistic double goddess Inanna/Ishtar  
consolidated political efforts, sacred literature,  
theology, and crucial community endeavors  
as well as national celebrations including  
sacred marriage-rites and blood mysteries.  
(IQ: xv.)

### *Semite and Sumerian Deities.*

Female deities were worshipped and adored  
all through Sumerian history ...  
but the goddess who outweighed, overshadowed,  
and outlasted them all was a deity known to the  
Sumerians by the name of Inanna, 'Queen of Heaven,'  
and to the Semites who lived in Sumer by the name of Ishtar.  
(IQ: xv.)

According to Mesopotamian records, Ishtar was worshipped as the Lady of Vision, Prophetess, and Directress of the People. (GW: 4.) At Gezer, ten monoliths are associated with the culture of Ashtoreth/Ishtar. (TEG: 85.) \* Numerous archaeological figures of Ishtar (Ashtoreth/Asherah) were found at the Nahariyah temple center. At Nimrud Temple where Ishtar was highly regarded, women also seemed to hold a certain prominence including high positions "as judges and magistrates in the court of law." (GW: 4.) But in all her various renditions, it is the exquisite statue of Ishtar with rubies for which she is so widely known – and – without doubt speaks volumes of her multiplicity. (For her counterpart, see the disputed Burney plaque of Inanna in the GSA Section below.)

\* Ashtoreth is a northwest Semitic goddess whereas Asherah is Ugaritic. (COA: 38-54, 59.) A further consideration is that Ashtoreth is the Phoenician (Sidonian) name form of Hebrew Ashtaroth. (DDDB:113.)

In BCE entry, 1750 Ishtar, the order and disorder of polytheistic double goddess Inanna/Ishtar's somewhat complicated roles and liminal aspects are discussed at length.

'Mesopotamians saw Inanna – Ishtar as a single unified deity' (QH: 29).

Northern Sumerian goddess Inanna was fused together with her counterpart, southern Akkadian Ishtar. As throughout ancient civilizations, polytheistic double goddess Inanna/Ishtar consolidated political efforts, sacred literature, theology, and crucial community endeavors as well as national celebrations including sacred marriage – rites and blood mysteries (RGS: 1750, Ishtar). (RGS.)

Female deities were worshipped and adored all through Sumerian history ... but the goddess who outweighed, overshadowed, and outlasted them all was a deity known to the Sumerians by the name of Inanna, 'Queen of Heaven,' and to the Semites who lived in Sumer by the name of Ishtar (IQ: xv; RGS).

Rivkah Harris says that Inanna – Ishtar was a liminal figure, embodying irreducible paradoxes: she was superhuman, androgynous, marginal and ambiguous. (II: 263-5.) As the antitheses of ambiguity incarnate and contradictions, this double goddess embodied a *delicate balancing of order and disorder*. (II: 267.) The inversions of boundaries between male – female, human – animal, life – death were freely and frequently transcended. Aspects of such anomalies including Kilihi are demonstrated by Jacobsen's interpretation of the Burney plaque.

The Burney Relief portrays a winged goddess with "bird's claws, flanked by owls and standing on two lions couchant." (II: 272-3; FLANE: 1-11.)

Inanna as 'Lady Owl' who, when named Kilihi, 'denotes the harlot who like the owl comes out at dusk.' ...[Jacobsen] suggests that the Burney Relief may have 'served as a cult [culture] – relief at the house altar of an ancient bordello.' If so, and Jacobsen makes a convincing case, then the very depiction of the goddess breaks down the boundary between species, between the divine and the ornithic (II: 272-3; FLANE: 1-11).

The following remarks summarize boundary inversions relative to transvestite festival – celebrations that Harris says may have 'simulated the androgyny of Inanna – Ishtar.' (II: 277.)

[These celebrations were] perhaps the inversions of the male/female binary opposition that thereby neutralized this opposition. By emulating their goddess who was both female and male, they shattered the boundary between the sexes. Thus at her festival time the full range of human emotions might be freely manifested without regard to the stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity. The function of transvestism, as Eliade observed, was 'a coming out of one's self, a transcending of one's own historically controlled situation ... a paradoxical situation impossible to maintain in profane time, in an historical epoch, but which is important to reconstitute periodically in order to restore, if only for a brief moment, the initial completeness, the intact source of holiness and power.' The cultic personnel of the goddess in their costumes, words, and acts had but one goal: 'to delight Ishtar's heart, give themselves up to (otherwise) forbidden actions. Inanna – Ishtar cuts across socioeconomic and gender distinctions: 'Be it slave, unattached girl, [Ishtar] preserves her. Women and men indeed revere her' (II: 277).

Perhaps Clifford Geertz's words best explain her enormous and abiding popularity. 'The strange opacity of certain empirical events, the dumb senselessness of intense or inexorable pain, and the enigmatic unaccountability of gross inequity all raise the uncomfortable suspicion

that perhaps the world, and hence man's life in the world, has no genuine order at all – no empirical regularity, no ambiguities, puzzles and paradoxes in human experience.’ (II: 278).

For research on alternative gender identities and rituals of Inanna/Ishtar devotees: Frymer-Kensky, Tikva Simone. *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth*. New York, NY: Free Press, 1992. 45-57. (WOTG.)

Harris, Rivkah. “Inanna – Ishtar as Paradox and a Coincidence of Opposites.” *The History of Religions* 30.3 (Feb. 1991): 261-278. (II.)

Roscoe, Will. “Priests of the Goddess: Gender Transgression in Ancient Religion.” *History of Religions* 35.3 (Feb. 1996): 195-230. (POG.)

Taylor, Patrick. “The Gala and the Gallos.” *Anatolian Interfaces: Hittites, Greeks, and Their Neighbours: Proceedings of an International Conference on Cross-Cultural Interaction, September 17-19, 2004, Emory University, GA*. Eds. Billie Jean Collins, Mary R. Bachvarova, and Ian Rutherford. Oxford, England: Oxbow Books, 2008. 173-180. (GATG.)

Given Roscoe’s unique cross – cultural focus, gender – variant subject expertise and extensive notes, also recommend “Priests of the Goddess” (POG) for further research of: the rites and rituals of Galli priests (*tertium genus*) of Cybele (neo-Hittite Kubaba/Phrygian Matar Kubileya [or Kubeleya] (198) and Attis: Corybantes and Curetes (202); eunuch priests of Artemis at Ephesus (217); Semitic Qedesh, pl. Qedeshim (217-218); the Des-Demeter veneration (217); Caria Eunuchs (217); Indian Hijra (197); plus the Berdaches nascent priests of the North American Oikumene, Lakota, and Pueblo tribes. (223-224.) (POG.)

For Re-Genesis research on Ishtar: 1750, Hammurabian Dynasty, Babylon, Ishtar, and Inanna; 1750, Ishtar; and 630-620, Goddess Kore, Izmir Turkey. (RGS.)

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IMAGE: TRANSLATION OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES.  
PHOTO: GSA DESCRIPTION: TRANSLATION OF ALABASTER STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES, c. 250 BCE.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 4, ROW 4, SLEEVE 2, SLIDE #36, c. 250 BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S4\_R4\_SL2\_S36.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE: PARIS, FRANCE. (FURTHER INFORMATION PENDING, INCLUDING THE ORIGIN OF THE ISHTAR STATUE.)  
NOTE 1: IN ALL OF ISHTAR’S VARIOUS RENDITIONS, IT IS THIS EXQUISITE STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES FOR WHICH SHE IS SO WIDELY KNOWN –AND – WITHOUT DOUBT SPEAKS VOLUMES OF HER MULTIPLICITY (RGS).  
NOTE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1980-1989.

IMAGE: EXQUISITE ALABASTER STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES.  
PHOTO: GSA DESCRIPTION: ALABASTER STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES, c. 250 BCE.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 4, ROW 4, SLEEVE 2, SLIDE #36, c. 250 BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S4\_R4\_SL2\_S36.jpg  
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NOTE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1980-1989.

IMAGE: EXQUISITE ALABASTER STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES.

PHOTO: GSA DESCRIPTION: ALABASTER STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES, c. 250 BCE.

SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 4, ROW 4, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #24A, c. 250 BCE.

CU\_NEA\_S4\_R4\_SL3\_S24E.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE: PARIS, FRANCE. (FURTHER INFORMATION PENDING, INCLUDING THE ORIGIN OF THE ISHTAR STATUE.)

NOTE 1: IN ALL OF ISHTAR'S VARIOUS RENDITIONS, IT IS THIS EXQUISITE STATUE OF ISHTAR WITH RUBIES FOR WHICH SHE IS SO WIDELY KNOWN –AND – WITHOUT DOUBT SPEAKS VOLUMES OF HER MULTIPLICITY (RGS).

NOTE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1980-1989.

IMAGE: WINGED HUMAN – HEADED BULL: NEO-ASSYRIAN NIMRUD TEMPLE.

PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: WINGED HUMAN – HEADED BULL, FROM NORTH-WEST TEMPLE OF ISHTAR AND ASHURNASIRPAL II AT NEO-ASSYRIAN NIMRUD TEMPLE, (MODERN IRAQ).

SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 9, ROW 2, SLEEVE 5, SLIDE #28, 865 BCE.

CU\_NEA\_S9\_R2\_SL5\_S28.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON ENGLAND.

NOTE 1: ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS OF NIMRUD TEMPLE, WHERE ISHTAR WAS WORSHIPPED, REVEALED THAT WOMEN SERVED AS JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES IN THE COURT OF LAW (GW: 4; RGS).

NOTE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT: 1992.

IMAGE: TREE – OF – LIFE AND SPREAD EAGLE (ANZU?): NIMRUD, ASSYRIA.

PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: ASSYRIAN (MODERN IRAQ) TREE – OF – LIFE WITH PROTECTIVE WINGED SUN DISK AND SPREAD EAGLE (ANZU) OR GENII OVERHEAD, NIMRUD NORTH PALACE.

SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 9B, ROW 2, SLEEVE 5, SLIDE #20, BCE.

CU\_NEA\_S9B\_R2\_SL5\_S20.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: BRITISH MUSEUM: LONDON, ENGLAND.

NOTE 1:

ASHERAH'S ICONOGRAPHY IS ALL FORMS OF THE TREE MANIFESTED IN RITUAL GROVES, TREES, MAY POLES, TEMPLE PILLARS, PRIMEVAL FORESTS, AND GODDESS PILLAR FIGURES WITH FULL NOURISHING BREASTS (AMST: 42-44; AH: 398; COA; APL; RGS).

NOTE 2: "WAS THE STORY OF THE DENIAL OF THE TREE – OF – LIFE TO HUMANS IN GEN 3:24 A PROHIBITION OF WORSHIP OF THE GODDESS ASHERAH? IT IS SUGGESTED THAT AN AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER MAY RESPECTABLY BE GIVEN (ATLM)." (SOURCE: RGS)

NOTE 3: ASHERIM, \* ICONOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF ASHERAH.

NOTE 4: \* FOR FURTHER INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ASHERIM, SEE AH: 385-408, PLUS 1 KINGS 15:13 AND 2 KINGS 21:7.)

NOTE 5: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1998-2002.

IMAGE: WHITE OBELISK FROM ISHTAR'S NINEVEH TEMPLE.

PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: WHITE OBELISK FROM ISHTAR'S NINEVEH TEMPLE.

SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 10, ROW 2, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #20, 1050-1032

BCE. CU\_NEA\_S10\_R2\_SL3\_S20.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON ENGLAND.

NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT: 1992.

IMAGE: ISHTAR, MESOPOTAMIA.

PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: ISHTAR HOLDING HER BREASTS IN THE CLASSIC *ISHTAR POSE*.

SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 6, ROW 2, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #32E, 2000 BCE.

CU\_NEA\_S6\_R2\_SL3\_S32E.jpg

SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE: PARIS, FRANCE.

NOTE 1: "THE PATRON DEITY OF THE EYE TEMPLE COMPLEX WAS ISHTAR [OR ESH-TAR], PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS INANNA (TEG: 25; RGS)."

NOTE 2: "FEMALE CLAY FIGURES WITH THEIR HANDS RAISED TO THEIR BREAST RESEMBLE IDOLS [ICONS] OF THE MOTHER GODDESS WHICH WERE LATER WIDELY DISSEMINATED IN THE NEAR EAST (ROTGG: 23)."

NOTE 3: FIELDWORK PROJECT: 1980'S

IMAGE: INANNA WITH LIONS: BURNEY RELIEF.  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: WINGED INANNA WITH CROWN OF HORNS AND TALON FEET STANDING ON TWO LIONS AND FLANKED BY OWLS. BURNEY RELIEF. SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 6, ROW 1, SLEEVE 4, SLIDE #16cE, c. 2000. CU\_NEA\_S6\_R1\_SL4\_S16cE.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION, BRITISH MUSEUM: LONDON, ENGLAND. (II: 272-3; FLANE: 1-11.)  
NOTE 1: D. COHEN SUGGESTS THAT INANNA'S NAMES INCLUDE: ERESHKIGAL, ISHTAR, LILITH, OR LILITU. (SOURCE: 4-20-04 CORRESPONDENCES.)  
NOTE 2: ISHTAR'S COUNTERPART IS INANNA AND THE DISPUTED BURNEY RELIEF IS INANNA'S SIGNATURE STATUE (RGS).  
NOTE 3: ACCORDING TO HARRIS, INANNA – ISHTAR WAS A LIMINAL FIGURE, EMBODYING IRREDUCIBLE PARADOXES: SHE WAS SUPERHUMAN, ANDROGYNOUS, MARGINAL AND AMBIGUOUS. (II: 263-5.)  
NOTE 4: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1986.  
PHOTO NOTE: REMOVE LEFT LIGHTS, CHRISI KARVONIDES' TEAM.

IMAGE: WOMAN WITH TURBAN FROM ISHTAR'S GATE: MARI, MESOPOTAMIA.  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION WOMAN WITH TURBAN FROM ISHTAR'S GATE AT MARI, MESOPOTAMIA.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 11, ROW 4, SLEEVE 5, SLIDE #29, 2500-2400 BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S11\_R4\_SL5\_S29.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE: PARIS, FRANCE.  
NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT: 1980'S

IMAGE: THE ISHTAR GATE: BABYLON.  
PHOTO GSA DESCRIPTION: THE BABYLONIAN GATE OF ISHTAR INCLUDING WILD BOVINE, LIONS, AND DRAGONS.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 6A, ROW 2, SLEEVE 1, SLIDE #89, 575 BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S6A\_R2\_SL1\_S89.jpg  
LOCATION: PERGAMON MUSEUM: BERLIN, GERMANY.  
NOTE 1: VARIOUS ASPECTS/EXHIBITS OF THE ISHTAR GATE ARE LOCATED IN GERMANY, ISTANBUL, LONDON, NEW YORK, BOSTON, YALE, RHODE ISLAND, CHICAGO, DETROIT, ETC.  
NOTE 2: FIELDWORK PROJECT.  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATOR, CHRISI KARVONIDES.  
PHOTO NOTE: © BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY (1993).  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATION TBD, CHRISI KARVONIDES' TEAM.

IMAGE: ISHTAR, QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH: OLD BABYLONIA.  
PHOTO GSA DESCRIPTION: ISHTAR, QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET, 10, ROW 4, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #36, BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S10\_R4\_SL3\_S36.jpg  
LOCATION: OLD BABYLONIA.  
PHOTO NOTE: © BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY (1993).  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATION TBD, CHRISI KARVONIDES' TEAM.

IMAGE: WINGED ISHTAR: KARAHÖYÜK, (ANATOLIA) TURKEY.  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH ISHTAR WITH WINGS, HORNED HEADRESS, AND RAISED ARMS IN KA POSTURE. (ACI: 221.) KARAHÖYÜK, (ANATOLIA) TURKEY.  
SLIDE LOCATION TURKEY, SHEET 74, ROW 1, SLEEVE 2, SLIDE #972, BCE.  
CO\_TUR\_S74\_R1\_SL2\_S972  
SHOT ON LOCATION: KONYA MUSEUM: KONYA, TURKEY.  
NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1989.  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATOR, CHRISI KARVONIDES.

IMAGE: SEATED ISHTAR.  
PHOTO GSA DESCRIPTION: SEATED ISHTAR.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 6A, ROW 2, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #21, BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S6A\_R2\_SL3\_S21.jpg  
LOCATION: NORTHWESTER SEMITIC AREA.

NOTE: FIELDWORK PROJECT.  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATION ENHANCEMENT, CHRISI KARVONIDES.  
PHOTO NOTE: ILLUSTRATION TBD, CHRISI KARVONIDES' TEAM.

IMAGE: SEATED CRONE FROM ISHTAR'S TEMPLE: MARI, MESOPOTAMIA.  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: SEATED CRONE WITH HEADDRESS AND FEATHERED ROBE FROM ISHTAR'S TEMPLE, MARI, MIDDLE EUPHRATES.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 5, ROW 1, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #28E, BCE.  
CU\_NEA\_S5\_R1\_SL3\_S28E.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE: PARIS, FRANCE.  
NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT: 1980-1988.

IMAGE: SERPENT – DRAGON TIAMAT ON ISHTAR'S GATE: MESOPOTAMIA.  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: UPPER REGISTER INC. RELIEFS OF TIAMAT WITH SERPENT TAIL AND UNICORN BROW ON ISHTAR'S GATE, RE. BABYLON CREATION EPIC, *ENUMA ELISH*.  
SLIDE LOCATION NEAR EAST, SHEET 6A, ROW 1, SLEEVE 3, SLIDE #35, 604-562 BCE  
CU\_NEA\_S6A\_R1\_SL3\_S35.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION: ISTANBUL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM: ISTANBUL, TURKEY.  
NOTE 1: "THE ASSEMBLY ASKS THE GOD MARDUK TO DESTROY THE GODDESS TIAMAT – THE ORIGINAL PROGENITOR AND CREATOR OF ALL (PPSF: 63) (PPSF: 60-65)."  
NOTE 2:

ALTHOUGH BABYLONIAN/MESOPOTAMIAN MARDUK WAS APPARENTLY THE FIRST GOD TO CONQUER THE DEITY TIAMAT AND THEN CLAIM VICTORY OVER THE MOTHER GODDESS AND MATERNAL LINEAGE, OTHER GODS ALSO STRUGGLED FOR SIMILAR SUPREMACY IN PERSIA, INDIA, ANATOLIA, CANAAN, GREECE AND EGYPT (MG: 275; RGS). (SOURCE: ENTRY ABOVE.)

NOTE 3: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1986.

IMAGE: ISHTAR (JUDY CHICAGO EXHIBITION, SCOTLAND).  
PHOTO: © GSA. DESCRIPTION: ISHTAR AS INTERPRETED BY JUDY CHICAGO. EXHIBITIONS INCLUDED LONDON, ENGLAND AND EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND.  
SLIDE LOCATION JUDY CHICAGO, SHEET 1, ROW 1, SLEEVE 4, SLIDE #4, BCE.  
IT\_JCH\_S1\_R1\_SL4\_S4.jpg  
SHOT ON LOCATION: LONDON, ENGLAND AND EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND.  
NOTE 1: FIELDWORK PROJECT 1980-1985.