

# The Exaltation of Inanna

Queen of all cosmic powers, bright light  
shining from above,  
Steadfast woman, arrayed in splendor,  
beloved of earth and sky,  
Consort of Heaven, whose gem of rank is  
greatest of them all,  
Favored for the noblest diadem, meet for  
highest sacral rank,  
Who has taken up in hand cosmic powers  
sevenfold,  
My lady! You are warden of the greatest  
cosmic powers,  
You bore them off on high, you took them  
firm in hand,  
You gathered them together, you pressed  
them to your breast.

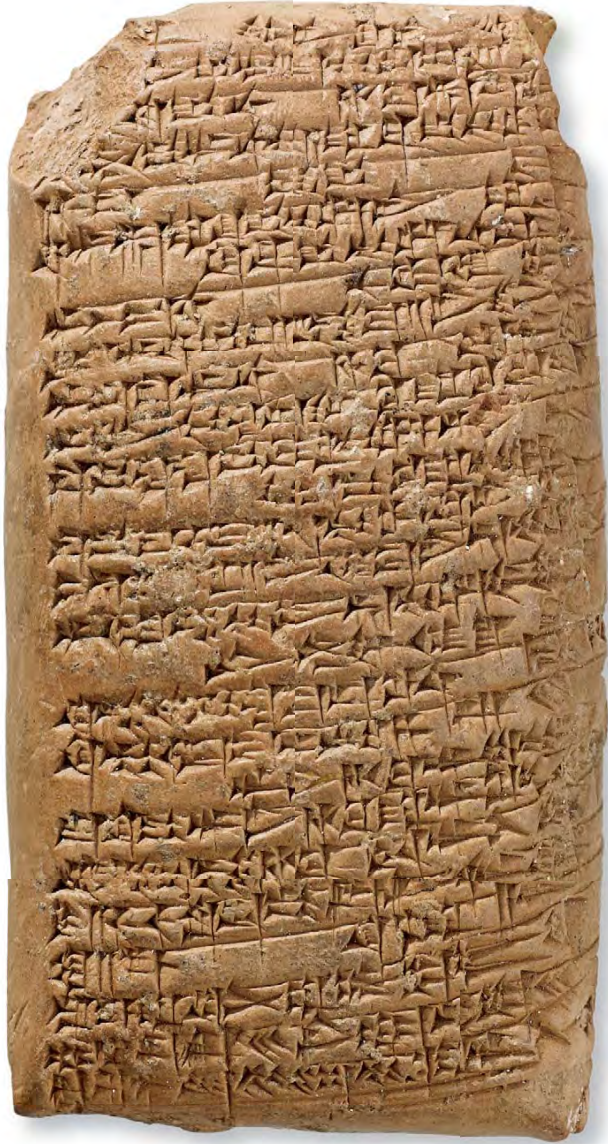
You spew venom on a country, like a dragon.  
Wherever you raise your voice, like a  
tempest, no crop is left standing.  
You are a deluge, bearing that country away.  
You are the sovereign of heaven and earth,  
you are their warrior goddess!



**Tablet inscribed with  
“The Exaltation of Inanna”**  
Mesopotamia, Nippur  
(modern Nuffar)  
Old Babylonian period, ca. 1750 BC

TRANSLATION: B/ET

# The Exaltation of Inanna



**Tablet inscribed with ex-tract  
from "The Exaltation of Inanna"**  
Mesopotamia, Larsa (modern Tell  
Senkereh)  
Old Babylonian period, ca. 1750 BC

Yes, I took up my place in the  
sanctuary dwelling,  
I was high priestess, I,  
Enheduanna.  
Though I bore the offering  
basket, though I chanted the  
hymns,  
A death offering was ready, was  
I no longer living?  
I went towards light, it felt  
scorching to me,  
I went towards shade, it  
shrouded me in swirling dust.  
A slobbered hand was laid  
across my honeyed mouth,  
What was fairest in my nature  
was turned to dirt.  
O Moon-god Suen, is this  
Lugalanne my destiny?  
Tell heaven to set me free of it!  
Just say it to heaven! Heaven  
will set me free!

TRANSLATION: B/ET



# The Exaltation of Inanna



**Tablets inscribed with  
"The Exaltation of Inanna"  
in three parts**  
Mesopotamia, possibly Larsa  
(modern Tell Senkereh)  
Old Babylonian period, ca.  
1750 BC

I am Enheduanna, let me speak to you my prayer,  
My tears flowing like some sweet intoxicant:  
"O Holy Inanna, may I let you have your way?  
I would have you judge the case.  
[...]

## ***Appeal to Inanna***

"O precious, precious Queen, beloved of heaven,  
Your sublime will prevails, let it be for my restoration!  
[...]

Show that you stand high as heaven  
Show that you reach wide as the world  
Show that you destroy all unruly lands  
Show that you raise your voice to foreign countries  
Show that you smash head after head,  
Show that you feed on kill, like a lion,  
Show that your eyes are furious,  
Show that your stare is full of rage,  
Show that your eyes gleam and glitter  
Show that you are unyielding, that you persevere,  
Show that you stand paramount,  
For if Nanna said nothing, he meant, 'Do as you will.'  
[...]

TRANSLATION: B

## ***Creative Process***

"One has heaped up the coals (in the censer), prepared the  
lustration.

The nuptial chamber awaits you, let your heart be appeased!  
With 'it is enough for me, it is too much for me!' I have given birth,  
oh exalted lady, (to this song) for you.

That which I recited to you at (mid)night  
May the singer repeat it to you at noon!"

TRANSLATION: C

## ***Restoration of Enheduanna***

The almighty queen, who presides over the priestly congregation,  
She accepted her prayer.

Inanna's sublime will was for her restoration.

It was a sweet moment for her [Inanna], she was arrayed in her  
finest, she was beautiful beyond compare,

She was lovely as a moonbeam streaming down.

Nanna stepped forward to admire her.

Her divine mother, Ningal, joined him with her blessing,

The very doorway gave its greeting too.

What she commanded for her consecrated woman prevailed.

To you, who can destroy countries, whose cosmic powers are  
bestowed by Heaven.

To my queen arrayed in beauty, to Inanna be praise!

TRANSLATION: B/ET