

RAI LX Fortune and Misfortune in the Ancient Near East Inanna and Gilgamesh: rejected lover or fight for power?



Gilgamesh kills the Bull of Heaven

When Enkidu had spoken thus to Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh himself smote its skull with his axe weighing seven talents. The Bull reared up so high, so high that it overbalanced. It spattered like rain, it spread itself out like the harvested crop.

Gilgamesh hardly insults Inanna

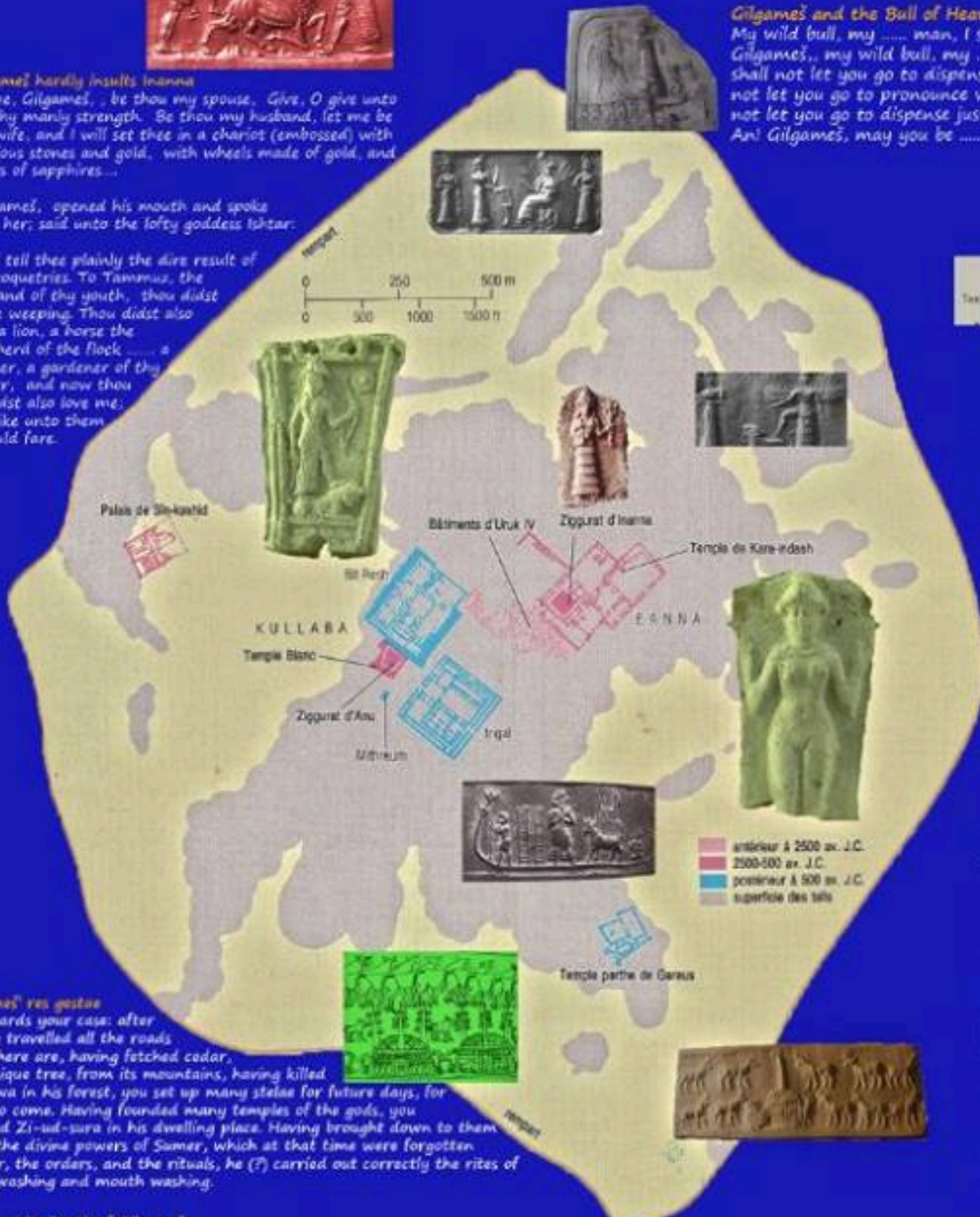
"Come, Gilgamesh, be thou my spouse. Give, O give unto me thy manly strength. Be thou my husband, let me be thy wife, and I will set thee in a chariot (embossed) with precious stones and gold, with wheels made of gold, and shafts of sapphires..."

Gilgamesh, opened his mouth and spoke unto her; said unto the lofty goddess Ishtar:

I will tell thee plainly the dire result of thy coqueries. To Tammuz, the husband of thy youth, thou didst cause weeping. Thou didst also love a lion, a horse the shepherd of the flock, a farmer, a gardener of thy father, and now thou wouldst also love me; but like unto them I would fare.

Gilgamesh and the Bull of Heaven

My wild bull, my man, I shall not let you go! Lord Gilgamesh, my wild bull, my man, I shall not let you go! I shall not let you go to dispense justice in the E-ana! I shall not let you go to pronounce verdicts in my holy jipar! I shall not let you go to dispense justice in the E-ana beloved by An! Gilgamesh, may you be, may you be



Gilgamesh helps Inanna

Utu, however, did not stand by her in the matter. When dawn was breaking, when the horizon became bright, when the little birds, at the break of dawn, began to clamour, when Utu had left his bedchamber, his sister holy Inanna said to the warrior Gilgamesh: "My brother, in those days when destiny was determined, when abundance overflowed in the Land, when An had taken the heavens for himself, when....."

In the matter which his sister had told him about, her brother, the warrior Gilgamesh, stood by her. He strapped his belt of 50 minas weight to his waist -- 50 minas were to him as 30 shekels. He took his bronze axe used for expeditions, which weighs seven talents and seven minas, in his hand. He killed the snake immune to incantations living at its roots. The Anuud bird living in its branches took up its young and went into the mountains. The phantom maid living in its trunk left (?) her dwelling and sought refuge in the wilderness. As for the tree, he uprooted it and stripped its branches, and the sons of his city, who went with him, cut up its branches and bundled them (J. ms. has instead: piled them up). He gave it to his sister holy Inanna for her chair. He gave it to her for her bed. As for himself, from its roots, he manufactured his ellag and, from its branches, he manufactured his ekilma (the correct pronunciation of this word is unknown). He played ellag in the broad square, never wanting to stop playing it, and he praised himself in the broad square, never wanting to stop praising himself. (ms. from Urim add: The young men of his city were playing ellag.)

Gilgamesh's res gestae

As regards your case: after having travelled all the roads that there are, having fetched cedar, the unique tree, from its mountains, having killed Huwawa in his forest, you set up many stelae for future days, for days to come. Having founded many temples of the gods, you reached Zi-usur in his dwelling place. Having brought down to them Land the divine powers of Sumer, which at that time were forgotten forever, the oracles, and the rituals, he (?) carried out correctly the rites of hand washing and mouth washing.

The Death of Gilgamesh

Oh Gilgamesh! Enlil, the Great Mountain, the father of gods, has made kingship your destiny, but not eternal life -- lord Gilgamesh, this is how to interpret (?) the dream. The and of life should not make you feel sad, should not make you despair, should not make you feel depressed. You must have been told that this is what the fate of being human involves. You must have been told that this is what the cutting of your umbilical cord involved. The darkest day of humans awaits you now. The solitary place of humans awaits you now. The unstoppable flood-wave awaits you now. The unavoidable battle awaits you now. The unequal struggle awaits you now. The skirmish from which there is no escape awaits you now. But you should not go to the underworld with heart knotted in anger. May before Utu. palm-fibre "Go ahead

Gilgamesh and Agga

Gilgamesh, the lord of Kullaba, placing his trust in Inanna, did not take seriously the advice of his city's elders. Gilgamesh, presented the issue again, this time before the able-bodied men of his city