
This book inaugurates the new series Göttinger Arbeitshefte zur Altorientalischen Literatur (= GAAL). Haul’s reworking of his Magisterarbeit, which was completed under the direction of B. Groneberg, sets a high standard for this series as it presents reliable editions of all three recensions of the Etana epic, as well as thorough and well-rounded studies of related matters. The first five chapters — 1. Einleitung, 2. Die Gestalt des Epos, 3. Zur Geschichte der mythischen Etana-Tradition, 4. Schlangen und Adler und Etanas Himmelfahrt, and 5. Das Etana-Epos im Lichte der Folklore — make a competent attack on many difficult issues, including the arrangement of the text, the origin and background of the mythic tradition, and the significance of the serpent and the eagle. The last four chapters — 6. Katalog der Quellen, 7. Die altbabylonische Version, 8. Die mittelassyrische Version, and 9. Die späte Version — provide a catalogue of the positively identified exemplars and carefully prepared score (“Partitur”) transcriptions of the Old Babylonian, Middle Assyrian, and Late (Neo-Assyrian) recensions with detailed textual commentary. Since there are very few places where Haul’s transcribed text is incorrect, it can be used by scholars and students with confidence; for example, on p. 198, III 43, M₁₀ -lik is actually -lak!; and on p. 200, III rev. 5, M₁ should be read as ‘qe'-rēb!, not KIMIN, since the traces of a horizontal and a vertical wedge follow K₁. All the Middle Assyrian fragments in Berlin and the Neo-Assyrian fragments in London were collated; accurate, well-drawn copies of a few of these tablets and some collation notes are conveniently provided at the back of the book. These are a great improvement over the copies published in Harper, BA 2 (1894) pp. 439-463; Langdon, Babyloniaca 12 (1931) pls. IV-IX; Kinnier Wilson, The Legend of Etana pl. 7-8, 11, 13-19, 23, 26-28, 30; and Saporetti, Etana pl. I-II, VI-VII.

With regard to the copies of the Kuyunjik fragments, there are only a few places where the copies deviate from what is actually on the tablets. These minor inaccuracies are: ¹¹

¹¹ I wish to thank J.E. Curtis and C.B.F. Walker for the permission to collate the Etana fragments in the British Museum. Collations were made on two separate occasions, in February, 2001 and 2002. These tablets were originally collated for SAACT 2, but since that volume had already gone to press, none of the collations made it into the final version. These Etana fragments were recollated in preparation for this review.

pl. IV
1) K 2606 iv 1": [...] n]a1-'di'! [...] ³
2) K 2606 iv 2`: -šá! (blank space)!
3) K 2606 iv 3`: i-'ṣi'-r[u]! E

pl. V
4) K 2527:18": the TU after Ū is LA! DIŠ!

pl. VII
K 1547:8": u]š-ši should probably be read as "(?)!UTU(?)!’-ši

pl. XI
K 3651+:2: [b]e/-[lu]-l/m/l/i
illegible. Haul's choice of rendering these signs as legible in a shaded area is, in the reviewer's opinion, preferable to drawing them as they actually are on the tablets since they are very poorly preserved.

With regard to the arrangement of the text (Die Gestalt des Epos, pp. 5-33), Haul convincingly argues that Etana twice ascended on the back of an eagle a distance of three leagues into the heavens of Anum. This is in contrast to Langdon (Babyloniaca 12 pp. 43-52) and Horowitz (Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography pp. 47-65) who suggest that Etana flew up into the heavens only once for a distance of six leagues, and Kinnier Wilson (The Legend of Etana, pp. 10-12) who proposed that Etana and the eagle might have flown upwards as many as four times. Until now, the arrangement of the post-Tablet II material has been a major crux. Haul's main evidence stems from the observation that K 8563 ( = ex. K) represents the lower left corner of the obverse and upper right corner of the reverse of a large six-column tablet, that is, the end of col. 1 and the beginning of col. vi. This arrangement of the material is further validated by the fact that the first eight lines of K 3561+ ( = ex. N), that is Etana III 1-8, almost certainly narrate how Šamaš harmonized the speech of the Kišite king and the eagle. This episode makes sense only if it is placed at the very beginning of Tablet III, not halfway through it, since it fits perfectly into the natural progression of the narrative, that is, just after Etana discovers the wounded bird of prey (Etana II 148-150), and immediately before the two exchange words for the first time (Etana III 9-14). This passage makes absolutely no sense if it is placed after the two have already flown three leagues into the heavens and have already discussed a series of dreams. According to Haul's arrangement, which essentially followsg McColl (Mesopotamische Mythen pp. 119-120) and Dalley (Myths from Mesopotamia pp. 196-200), the following conclusions can be made about the SB recension:

1) The flatter side of K 3561+ is the obverse of the tablet and the rounded side, the side with the horizontal ruling at the bottom, is the reverse.

2) Since the obverse and the reverse of K 3561+ duplicate material from both faces of K 19530+ ( = ex. M) and since K 3561+ 1-8 are considered to be the first episode narrated on Etana III, then Etana and the eagle ascended a distance of three leagues into the heavens of Anum twice, and not once for a distance of six leagues into the heavens of Anum and beyond. The original flight was aborted immediately after the Kišite king panicked and requested to be taken back to the comfortable solid ground. The second ascent took place after Etana and the eagle had returned to Kiš, and had a series of dreams revealed to them. Unlike the first journey to the heavens of Anum, the second and final flight was successful. Furthermore, this reconstruction of the text lends further support to the notion that the Assyrians and Babylonians envisioned the heavens as being three distinct levels, with the heavens of Anum being the highest, exactly as it is in KAR 307:30-33 (Horowitz, Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography pl. 1) and AO 8196 iv 20-22 (Weidner, Afo 19 [1959-60] pl. 33). Another point of interest with regard to the flights as illustrated by Haul is that the verb elī (p. 196 III 38, M, [u]lī'-lišītu-sù-ma) is used in the narrative of the first flight, whereas the verb šaqi (p. 204 III rev. 35, M, ša-ša-gišu-sù-ma) is employed in the second and final ascent.

With regard to the beginning of the SB recension, some minor alternative readings to Haul's can be made in Etana I 1. 3, 6, and 24.

1) Haul (p. 166) reads the incipit as URU i-ši-su iš(?)-lu(?)-nu(?)-rabûtu(?), "Sie entwarten die Stadt, die grossen Götter?" admitted by him that the restoration, which is based on collation, is uncertain and the traces in K 2606 if 3 could also be ʾal-[g₉]-urna or ʾal-[g₉]-un-enna. Compare Polpa's equally conjectural restorations of ur(?)-tak(?)-li(?)-lu(?)-šû and ur(?)-te(?)-es(?)-bu(?)-u(?)-šù (Novotny, SAACT 2 p. 15). In any event, the reading of iš(?)-lu(?)-sù(?)-na-ru(bùtu(?)) in l. 3 is not possible since ilânum rabîtu is invariably written DINGIR.MES.GAL.MES (courtesy of Polpa), and since the final sign in 79-7-8.43 rev. 3 (= incipit) is clearly ŠU! not -šû, -šu, or even MEŠ.

2) Haul (p. 166) reads the beginning of Etana I 6 as [LUGAL*], following collation and the suggestion of von Soden (WZKM 55 [1959] p. 60). The restoration of šarru ("king") is probably incorrect since no king had yet been appointed over the inhabitants (Etana I 13 = ŌBM[a]rsh i 6) and since kingship had not yet descended from the heavens. The beginning of this line could also be read as [L]U(?)-(šamši), "man," Etana I 6-7 should probably be read as:

6) [LU(?)+] lu-u re-ūm-si-[n a]...
7) ʾal(?)[I]Lu-[a] na lu-u i-ti′[n]-ši-na e-[x a]...
6) Let [a ma][n]e? be their shepherd, [...]
7) Let [E]t[ana] be their master builder, [...]

Note also that there is the same number of syllables in both the preserved half-lines (3: 1: 4).

3) In K 2606 i 24 (p. 168), pa-rak-ki AN-ʾe(?)-u(?)+ probably should be read as pa-rak-ki ʾe(?)-lu(?)-na [...], as suggested by Kinnier Wilson (The Legend of Etana p. 84) since Etana I 26-28 give the impression that Enil had just nominated Etana to be the first human king and introduced kingship in Kiš.

With regard to the transliterations, they are accurate and they can be used with confidence. Restored passages are generally well-thought out and are founded on parallels occurring in the other versions. There are numerous improved readings, particularly in the MA version; these improvements are in part due to new collations and extensive comparisons with the OB and SB recensions. Unfortunately, all of these new readings cannot be listed here.

For the reviewer, the more interesting sections of the book, apart from the discussion of the arrangement of text and the text editions, are Chapter 3.1, Ein sumerisches Etana-Epos? (pp. 35-38), which explores the possibility of there being Sumerian Vorläufer as there are for the Gilgames Epic; Chapter 3.2.2, Die altakkadischen "Etana-Rollsiegel" (pp. 40-44); and Chapter 4.4.4, Die politisch-ideologische Erklärung (pp. 67-70), which discusses the animal names of the Kiš-I Dynasty and the serpent and the eagle as clan-totems.

In sum, this book is a thorough and professional treatment of all three recensions of the Etana epic and related matters. Das Etana-Epos is a very welcome addition to the field.

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5) Traces of this sign are no longer visible on the tablet.