**Abhandlung**

Sara J. Milstein

# The Origins of Adapa

**Abstract:** Antoine Cavigneaux's (2014) recent edition of the Tell Haddad version of Adapa allows for a fresh assessment of the myth in all of its available versions. Close examination of the Tell Haddad version and the Amarna Tablet in particular reveals that the two display different sets of logic and foci, with only the latter concerned especially with Adapa and his fate. This distinction is reflective not merely of fluidity in copying but instead appears to indicate evidence of revision in the course of transmission.*

DOI 10.1515/za-2015-0004

In 1993, Antoine Cavigneaux and Farouk Al-Rawi tantalized Assyriologists with the announcement that excavations at Tell Haddad (= ancient Meturan/Sirara) had yielded two copies of a Sumerian version of Adapa.[1] Up until that point, the myth had been available only in the form of a handful of Akkadian tablets dating to the MB and NA periods. The Tell Haddad version (TH) now offered Sumerian origins for the Adapa tradition that predated the well-known MB tablet from Amarna ("Fragment B" in Shlomo Izre'el's 2001 nomenclature) by four centuries.[2] Cavigneaux/Al-Rawi (1993, 92) reported that TH was "very near to the Akkadian version as far as the Adapa story proper [was] concerned": in both, Adapa set sail, broke the wing(s) of the South Wind, and was summoned to heaven by Anu. They also alluded to two units that were present in TH but not in the Amarna Tablet: a 100-line "introduction" that set the plotline within the broader context of postdiluvian humanity, and a concluding incantation. Outside of this brief report, however, the specifics of TH were left to the imagination.

The long wait is now over. At last Cavigneaux (2014) has published his outstanding edition of TH. The article, "Une version sumérienne de la légende d'Adapa: Textes de Tell Haddad X", includes drawings and detailed descriptions of the two TH copies (A and B), a number of photographs of the two tablets, a complete score, including indication of verbal overlap between TH and the Akkadian material, a translation of TH, a meticulously detailed commentary, and general interpretive remarks. The article also includes an edition of the badly broken Nippur fragment 4436, the contents of which do not correspond to TH. With this comprehensive edition of TH now available, it is finally possible to take stock of the Sumerian version in full. At the outset of his general remarks, Cavigneaux (2014, 36) reiterates that the Adapa plotline itself "... était clairement constituée et déjà presque figée dans sa structure rédactionnelle dès l'époque paléo-babylonienne ...." It is indeed the case that a number of parallels between TH and the Amarna Tablet in particular are close enough to warrant the label of "translation."[3] Fans of the Amarna

* I greatly appreciate the constructive feedback that I received on this article from Jerrold Cooper, Paul Delnero, Daniel Fleming, and Thomas Schneider. I take full responsibility for the ideas in and final shape of this article, however, including points at which I depart from their suggestions. I also wish to thank Antoine Cavigneaux for his tremendous generosity in allowing me advance access to his much-coveted edition of the Tell Haddad version of Adapa.

**1** Both OB Akkadian and Sumerian tablets were found at the site, the latter of which were largely concentrated in what is known as "Area II" (Cavigneaux/Al-Rawi 1993, 91 f.). Due to the widespread familiarity with the Akkadian versions, I have chosen to utilize the Akkadian referents as default, rather than the Sumerian (e.g., Anu vs. An; Ea vs. Enki, etc.). When referring to details that are singular to the Tell Haddad version, however, I use the Sumerian terms so as to emphasize the distinction, though the term "Adapa" (versus "Adaba") is retained throughout for the sake of consistency. See also Cavigneaux's (2014, 36 f.) note on the name.

**2** I utilize the term "B" to reference specific lines from the Amarna Tablet, but in general I refer to this version as the Amarna Tablet, so as to differentiate it from the more fragmentary NA evidence.

**Sara J. Milstein:** University of British Columbia;
Email: sara.milstein@ubc.ca

**3** Cavigneaux (2014) leaves open the question as to the direction of translation and acknowledges that this may not even be the right question to ask. Instead he surmises that different versions of the tradition in both Sumerian and Akkadian must have existed contemporaneously. Cavigneaux (2014, 36) notes further that the Sumerian of TH is corrupt, with enough grammatical errors to suggest that the work derives from an Akkadophone who wished to give the myth

Tablet will be delighted to observe that the famous "joke" that Adapa tells to Dumuzi and Gizzida is almost identical in TH, down to the gods' smile in response. In both, Ea provides Adapa with a set of instructions regarding what he should and should not do in heaven. Indeed, up until B: 45′, just after the gatekeepers' interaction with Adapa, the two accounts of "the Adapa plotline" are remarkably alike, notwithstanding some subtle differences in detail.

Such substantial overlap, however, only throws into starker relief the differences between TH and the Amarna Tablet: differences that both include and supersede the absence or presence of the lengthy prologue and concluding incantation. Outside of five lines, B: 45′–70′ (the last visible section of the Amarna Tablet) and lines 163–190 of TH (the end of TH) appear to manifest different sets of logic and foci. Most strikingly, only the Akkadian evidence exhibits a sustained interest in the figure of Adapa, both with regard to what precipitates his curse and his subsequent fate. This is evident both in the Amarna Tablet and in the NA evidence, where the interest in Adapa as sage apparently takes on increased importance.[4] In contrast, TH is more overtly concerned with the restoration of the South Wind than with the fate of Adapa. This radical distinction in focus cannot be explained merely by way of fluidity in copying, especially given the quantity of parallels that TH and the Amarna Tablet do share. Rather, in examining TH and the Amarna Tablet in tandem, it appears that we are dealing with revision in the course of transmission, and I shall argue that the data point toward the priority of TH. This revision – evident especially in the Amarna Tablet – was apparently accomplished in part by the omission of "extraneous" material and in part by the strategic replacement of content.[5]

It should be emphasized that I do not argue for a direct relationship between the precise *text* of TH and the Amarna Tablet. It is surely the case that the scribe responsible for the Amarna Tablet had access to a different version of the narrative as it stands in TH, and the extent to which such a version may have differed from TH is impossible to assess. It is also important to note that the Amarna Tablet is a school-text, and that this may explain its omission of the incantation in particular. Nonetheless, with Cavigneaux's edition newly available, I venture that it is now possible both to examine TH on its own terms and to understand the Amarna Tablet freshly as a text that represents both preservation and radical innovation of a longstanding tradition.

## I The Tell Haddad Version of Adapa

Among the OB finds at Tell Haddad was a concentration of tablets in "Area II," a small unit that may have belonged to a destroyed private residence. The cache included administrative documents, contracts, letters, mathematical tablets, educational tablets, and a substantial group of Sumerian literary, liturgical, and magical tablets.[6] Area II was the only location that yielded magical tablets, including three versions of what appears to have been a "classic" collection in its time. The literary tablets were largely clustered in Room 30, a room that also included about half of the magical tablets that were found at the site. The other half, which were almost identical to those found in Room 30, were found in Room 10, prompting Cavigneaux to treat the two groups as a unit.[7] For Cavigneaux, the owner of the house was perhaps an exorcist, and more probably an intellectual who was "sensitive in the realms of religion and literature" and who was preoccupied by matters of life and death, given some of the other material found there.[8] Regarding the presence of Adapa in the collection,

"plus de beauté, d'autorité, et – dans la mesure où il s'agit d'une incantation – plus d'efficacité."

**4** The NA emphasis on Adapa's wisdom suits the abundant references to Adapa and his wisdom in first-millennium literature. Although Adapa is called an *apkallu* in TH and was evidently associated with magic in this early text, it is impossible to say more definitively the role that he played in the wider second-millennium culture.

**5** It is with this statement that I push further on Cavigneaux's (2014, 39) observation that the elimination of the incantation and (possible) omission of the prologue in the Amarna Tablet may have been used "au profit de la figure et de l'histoire d'Adapa, en un mot à mettre l'accent juste sur le thème littéraire du héros et son aventure." On the phenomenon of omissions in the process of revision, with particular attention to omissions in the transmission of biblical texts, see Pakkala (2013). Because the Amarna Tablet is closest chronologically to TH and it is largely complete, this will serve as my main point of reference with regard to the Akkadian material.

**6** Cavigneaux (1999, 251 f.).

**7** The collection (H 97, H 179, and H 84) includes formulations against human aggression, a piece of "magic poetry," and texts with "academic overtones" that appear to have included literary quotations or resonances. The longer versions of the collection include additional apotropaic texts. Other tablets outside of the collection then yield content of various types, such as rites against vermin (H 103 and 74), praise of the tamarisk, which was used by the exorcist (H 62 + 94), execution of a special goat used in magical house-cleaning (H 66), formulae against ghosts (H 144 B), and formulae against scorpions (H 60 and H 146). With the exceptions of H 72 and the medical prescriptions H 170, the magical texts were all in Sumerian (Cavigneaux, 1999, 253 f.).

**8** Regarding the interest in matters of life and death, Cavigneaux (1999, 256 f.) attributes this more broadly to the people who lived in Meturan. The house contained only a handful of Sumerian myths and legends: Adapa, Inanna and Ebih, and four Gilgamesh stories:

he notes that Adapa is "the paragon of the exorcist, the model of the sage, who … had a choice between life and death, and came back with some experience useful for his fellow humans."[9]

The two copies of TH are each four columns long and about 190 lines. Although the two were apparently copied by different hands, they largely converge where comparison is possible.[10] Approximately half of TH is taken up by a 100-line introduction that precedes Adapa's voyage. This introduction is set in the period after the Flood, when humanity has been reduced (?) to dust. The people that remain are said to multiply. These lines include verbatim references to content that appears in the Sumerian Flood story and in the Rulers of Lagash. Much of lines 17–100 is broken, but it is possible to identify references to the Tigris and Euphrates, to An and Enlil, to Kish, to the minor weather deities Shullat and Hanish, and to the goddess Ashnan. There are also a number of references to food: the lack of "meal or dining" for the Anunna gods is noted in lines 8–9; "food and drink" in line 22; the piling up of the silos in line 49; "fresh barley" in line 56; "fish" in line 78; and "barley" in an isolated fragment that Cavigneaux inserts after line 78. There are finally several fragmentary references to winds and blowing, suggesting that the South Wind was introduced early on.[11] These references indicate a general preoccupation with humanity and its role in feeding the gods. Although Adapa must have been introduced at some point in TH: 61–100, his name is not visible. It is thus unclear to what extent he has been described prior to this point. There are references to "intelligence" in line 65 and to "a fisherman" in line 78; the isolated fragment again makes reference to intelligence; and line 100 mentions "my god," a phrase that Adapa could have uttered with reference to Enki. It is impossible to say more about the role of Adapa up to this point, however. At the very least, it is evident that the "Adapa plotline" has been put in the context of this wider cosmological introduction. The prefacing of the Adapa plotline with such a lengthy mythological backdrop is itself singular in Sumerian literature. While Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld manifests a lengthy opening that pertains to the planting and uprooting of the *ḫuluppu*-tree, even this opening unit establishes a connection between Gilgamesh's ball and mallet, which are made from the tree, and the netherworld, into which the roots of the tree grow.[12] It may well be that the TH prologue likewise once set up the plotline of Adapa more directly, but the broken content of this material prevents us from determining what such a connection might have been.

Lines 101–162 then share a number of parallels with B: 1′–46′. Adapa is fishing for Enki at sea when the South Wind raises (?) its storms. In response, Adapa curses and breaks its "wings." An summons Adapa to heaven, and Enki prepares him for the exchange. Enki warns Adapa not to partake of the deadly food and water that An offers

Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld, Gilgamesh and Huwawa, the Death of Gilgamesh, and Gilgamesh and the Bull. With the exception of Gilgamesh and Huwawa, the other Gilgamesh tales were represented in two copies each (ib. 253 n. 12). Notably, there was found at Meturan an early effort to join Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld with Gilgamesh and Huwawa; at least, an appendix at the end of the former suggests that the latter was meant to be read afterwards (ib. 256 f.).

**9** The figure of Adapa appears in a wide range of sources outside mythic literature (e.g., letters, royal monuments, incantations, and catalogues), where he is commonly portrayed as an exorcist and/or sage. With several exceptions, most date to the first millennium B. C.E. For a useful survey, see Picchioni (1981, 82–101) and Sanders (forthc.), who identifies Adapa as "the most famous sage in the first millennium". According to Picchioni (1991, 87), one reference in a catalogue of literary texts may preserve a title for Adapa: "Adapa, in the midst of heaven ...." For the OB period, see the Sumerian forerunner to Udug-hul ("Evil Demons") from Nippur ("I am Adapa [sage of Eridu] / I am [the man of (?)] Asalluhi" [FAOS 12, 22: 60–61]), following Geller's (1985, 22 f.) reconstruction and translation. I thank Sanders for providing me with a draft of his manuscript.

**10** Cavigneaux (1999, 253 n. 13). Unless otherwise noted, all references to TH reflect Cavigneaux's translation.

**11** For Cavigneaux, this may have been at line 37. Cavigneaux (2014, 29) considers that the South Wind may have been contrasted with the North Wind, which plays a destructive role: "Le vent du nord joue un rôle destructeur. Sa présence ici doit contraster avec le vent du sud et confirme indirectement l'importance essentielle du vent du sud dans l'histoire." It is important to note, however, that there is no preserved reference to the South Wind, and any assumption of what such a reference must have contained is hypothetical.

**12** Moreover, just as we see the elimination of lines 1–171 in the inclusion of a translation of Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld (GEN) in Tablet XII of the Standard Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, so too the later Akkadian versions of Adapa appear to have eliminated the lengthy prologue in the process of transmission, as will be discussed below. It appears that the scribe responsible for Tablet XII knew the entire tale of GEN, either in oral or written form, but opted only to include the content pertaining to Gilgamesh and Enkidu (lines 172-end). Given that the SB Epic is concerned with Gilgamesh's love for Enkidu, his grief over losing Enkidu, and his subsequent struggle against the inevitability of mortality, it is fitting that the only GEN material represented in Tablet XII would pertain to Enkidu's loyalty to Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh's sorrow at losing Enkidu, his efforts to bring Enkidu back from the netherworld, and Enkidu's reports to Gilgamesh on the inhabitants of the netherworld. While this thematic overlap may be coincidental, it seems more likely that lines 1–171 were deemed extraneous in this context. For more on the relationship between Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld and its relation to the SB Version of the Gilgamesh Epic, see esp. Gadotti (2014); see also Milstein (forthc. a). I thank Paul Delnero for bringing this line of thought to my attention (email communication).

him. He also should refuse clothing, but he may accept oil. Enki then sends Adapa on his way by disheveling his hair, infesting it with lice, and providing him with a joke to amuse Dumuzi and Ningishzida. Once in heaven, Adapa delivers the joke successfully, and the gatekeepers realize that Adapa "paid attention to Enki's orders" (line 162).[13] They then deliver Adapa to An. An subsequently brings Adapa "bread to eat" and "water to drink", both of which he refuses (lines 167–168). He then offers clothing and oil. Adapa rejects the former but accepts the latter. An urges him to eat and drink, smiles, and then states that Enki "... prevented me from giving Adapa my life", apparently by causing the food and water to appear sickly yellow (line 172). He then turns to the gods and asks a question, but the query appears to be directed at Adapa: "Adapa, why did you break the wing of the South Wind?" (a-da-ba tumu-ùlu pa na-aš me-haš). Whether this is a grammatical error or An is addressing Adapa in the presence of the divine assembly is difficult to say. Even if Adapa is being addressed, however, he does not register an answer. Nothing more is said of Adapa's fate. Enki "fixes the destiny" of the South Wind (line 180), and the text concludes with an incantation that is to be said by a (sick?) man, with the plea that the South Wind not "touch(?) the skin" (line 185).[14] The final line before the doxology, uttered by the sick person, reads: "He will remove the South Wind, so that it (the sickness?) will depart from my flesh." The incantation suggests that the South Wind is responsible for the onset of disease but that its departure also catalyzes the healing process. The concluding incantation reflects the wider interest in this text on the restoration of the South Wind in the context of humanity at large.

## II The Middle Babylonian Version of Adapa

In Akkadian, the tradition of Adapa is attested in a handful of first-millennium NA fragments (Fragments A, $A_1$, C, D, and E) that were discovered in the libraries of Assurbanipal, and in the Amarna Tablet, a large and fairly well-preserved tablet from the mid-second millennium that was discovered at Tell el-Amarna, Egypt (= ancient Akhetaten).[15] In addition to the sizeable collection of letters written to the Egyptian court that was preserved in the "Records Office," there was also found a smaller group of scholarly tablets, including Adapa. The combination of letters and scholarly tablets at the Records Office suggests that this was the locus at Amarna both for letter-writing and interpretation and for the education of Egyptian scribes in cuneiform.[16] Given that Akkadian was the *lingua franca* of the region in the second millennium B. C.E., training in cuneiform would have been crucial for diplomatic correspondence. Although the scholarly tablets may be only a fraction of the tablets used at Akhetaten, they may indeed provide some sense of the scribal curriculum that was used toward this end, as Izre'el (1997, 9) notes.

A number of the scholarly tablets exhibit parallels with material either from Hatti or Ugarit, which itself was influenced by the Hittito-Akkadian school. Such suggests that this content was imported from these regions.[17] At the same time, a small subset of the tablets, including EA 356 (Adapa), EA 357 (Nergal and Ereshkigal), EA 358 (an

**13** It remains a question as to whether the gatekeepers say this aloud or it represents an aside from the narrator (Cavigneaux 2014, 27 n. 17).

**14** While the action is clearly negative, no verb is visible in the line. Surely some sort of contact is implied, given that the speaker then pleads for its removal. If "touching" is indeed implied, it is possible that this is meant to contrast with the potential reference to the South Wind in lines 34–35. According to Cavigneaux's (2014) reconstruction and translation, these lines read: "[Le ...] l'humanité ne 'touchait' pas ... Le vent du [sud (?)] durant son règne (à Etana?) une main (un effet) bénéfique ...." While such may imply a shift in the role of the South Wind from beneficent to harmful, the broken context of lines 34–35 prevents us from drawing any solid conclusions.

**15** Unless otherwise noted, translations of the Akkadian material are my own. The standard edition is that of Izre'el (2001), and my reliance on his careful work and nomenclature is evident throughout. Izre'el (1997) also edited the full collection of 29 numbered scholarly tablets and fragments that were found at Amarna.

**16** On the training of scribes in cuneiform at Amarna, see Kemp (2012, 126) and Izre'el (1997, 8 f.). Artzi (1990, 152) refers to a small edubba that was transferred to Akhetaten from elsewhere, most likely from Thebes.

**17** Izre'el (1999, 11). For support concerning the hypothesis that it was the Hittites who originally taught the Egyptians cuneiform, see Beckman (1983, 112–114). Two literary tablets (the *šar tamḫāri* epic and the story of Kešši) have direct parallels with literature from Hatti. The linguistic peculiarities of these texts are linked to Boghazköy Akkadian and thus prompt Izre'el to conclude that they may be copies of original Boghazköy tablets (ibid. 10). The syllabaries and lexical lists then show more parallels with material from Ugarit. Artzi (1990, 143–145) charts the parallels between the pedagogical texts of Akhetaten and those found in Canaan, Ugarit, Boghazköy, and Alalakh. More recently, see also Rutz (2013, 158–276), who adduces evidence for Emar as another western site with scholarly texts that overlapped with those found at Hattusha, Ugarit, and Amarna.

unparalleled narrative), and EA 372 (another small fragment), differs from the other scholarly tablets with regard to their form, script, and language. Shlomo Izre'el notes that these tablets feature a ductus that is similar to that of Babylonian letters that were sent to Amarna. This suggests that these texts were imported from a region with access to Babylonia proper.[18] It is worth adding that all but one display the Egyptian practice of applying red points to the tablet at intervals.[19] The question remains, however, as to why this particular group of literary tablets was present at Akhetaten. Any attempt to answer the question is limited by the possibility that these Babylonian tablets may be only a fraction of what was used at the site. While it is intriguing that both Adapa and Nergal and Ereshkigal involve the movement of an individual from one realm to another – a phenomenon that may have resonated with notions of border-crossing and diplomacy – there is simply not enough information to produce a definitive answer.[20]

With only a few lines missing at the beginning of the obverse and at the end of the reverse, it appears that the Amarna Tablet once covered the tale in about 75–80 lines.[21] It does not appear that the Amarna Tablet once belonged to a series of tablets, including, for example, a lengthy prologue akin to that of TH.[22] The tablet opens with the key conflict – Adapa cursing the South Wind and breaking its wing – and closes with its resolution, opaque and broken though it may be. Moreover, the Amarna Tablet has only one column per side. If the narrative were twice or three times as long, we would expect the scribe to have copied it onto a multicolumn tablet. Third, both TH and the NA evidence (in particular, Fragment D) speak against the likelihood that the Amarna Tablet could have been followed by another 80-line tablet, if we assume a roughly equal distribution of lines across a hypothetical series of tablets.[23] It thus appears probable that the Amarna Tablet was intended to function as a complete copy of the narrative, whether or not it was consonant with contemporaneous versions within or outside Babylonia.

In terms of the "Adapa plotline," the Amarna Tablet and TH run on largely similar tracks until the point at which Dumuzi and Gizzida bring Adapa to Anu. Anu interrogates Adapa with a similar question to that which appears in TH: "Come, Adapa, why did you break the wing of the South Wind?" (48′–49′). Unlike TH, however, Adapa provides an explanation in the Amarna Tablet, here alluding to an unknown series of events that precipitated his curse. He explains that while he was fishing at sea for Ea, "he" performed some sort of act upon the sea, the South Wind blew, and it submerged him. Anu then demands that Adapa be brought the food of life and the water of life. But Adapa, assuming their toxicity, refuses (60′–63′). Anu responds by laughing, asking why Adapa did not eat or drink, and exclaiming, "Alas, poor people!" (line 68′). Adapa reports that Ea told him not to eat or drink, but at this point it is apparently too late. In the last visible line, Anu seems to return Adapa to the *qaqqaru*, a term that

**18** Izre'el (1997, 11) posits the Syrian periphery of Mesopotamia. With regard to form, the obverse of these tablets is the convex, rather than the flat side; they also display both MB and Peripheral Akkadian features. This need not mean that the *tablets* themselves were imported into Egypt, as Izre'el (1992, 184) concluded early on. For further discussion, see Izre'el (2001, 49–54).

**19** Izre'el (2001, 81–91; also 1992, 181) takes the view that these points were used to divide a text into meaningful units, and that for Adapa, they mark metreme boundaries. Yet see also Goelet (2008, 109), who considers that the general system may denote "check marks" that were applied by the student or the teacher when the document was checked against a master copy. These points appear most frequently in two types of literature – didactic texts and late copies of Middle Kingdom literature – but with irregular usage. Goelet (ibid.) notes further that the points do not always appear where one might expect (e.g., hymnic material) and instead are present in some "mundane, un-poetic letters and similar documents". Although he allows for the possibility that the red points in Adapa signify metric units, ultimately he contends that the "didactic/scribal" usage is more likely (ibid. 109 n. 37). I thank Thomas Schneider for pointing out this piece.

**20** It is worth adding that both Adapa and Nergal are summoned to their respective realms after questionable behavior, and moreover, that Ea prepares the individual for his ascent/descent in both myths. As Jerrold Cooper reminds me, however, most myths have boundary-crossing at the fore (email communication). Izre'el (1997, 12) prefers to say only that this particular subset was likely used not only to teach scribes Akkadian, but to acquaint the local scribes with "Mesopotamian cultural lore".

**21** Izre'el (1997, 47).

**22** Cavigneaux (2014, 38) considers the possibility, noting that the Amarna Tablet could be the second of two tablets, the first of which would have corresponded to the long introduction of TH. Later, however, he leans toward the reverse scenario, noting that just as the incantation was omitted from the Amarna Tablet, perhaps the prelude was also omitted (ibid. 39).

**23** The comparison with Fragment D must admittedly be rough, for the tablet is broken at the end. Fragment D also manifests a different conclusion from that which appears to be the case in the Amarna Tablet. In Fragment D, Anu frees Adapa from Ea's service and appears to offer extended protection of Adapa. This resolution is followed by what appears to be a short incantation concerning the South Wind. Although the content is different from TH, what is preserved of this incantation is roughly equivalent to the length of the incantation in TH. Even if we envision that the tablet to which Fragment D once belonged originally featured a longer incantation, it is unlikely that such a conclusion would have been in the vicinity of 80 lines.

signifies either earth or the underworld.[24] The tablet then breaks off, leaving Adapa's fate in this version unknown. Outside of Adapa's refusal of the food and water, this dialogue between Anu and Adapa and its aftermath is unique to the Amarna Tablet.

This succinct version has occasioned much debate, of which various summaries have been published.[25] Much centers on the discrepancy between what Ea says will happen (Adapa will be offered the food of *death*) and what actually happens (Adapa is offered the food of *life*).[26] This is considered to be especially perplexing because Ea is portrayed elsewhere as both the god of wisdom (and thus should anticipate what Anu will offer) and the god who helps individuals in a bind (and thus should assist Adapa). Considerably less attention, however, has been paid to the nature of Ea's actions at sea. This is particularly important in the context of TH, given that the description of this event, as told through the improvising (and perhaps enterprising?) mouth of Adapa in the Amarna Tablet, is altogether absent from the Sumerian version. In the Amarna Tablet, again in contrast to TH, Adapa's speech then becomes the catalyst for Anu's offer to Adapa of food and water.

The action that Ea performs upon the sea in l. 51′ (*ta-am-ta i-na mé-še-li in-ši-il-ma*) is difficult to translate. As Izre'el (2001, 56) notes, the standard translation, "The sea was (smooth) like a mirror," is unconvincing for several reasons: the term for "mirror" is *mušālu*, not *mešēlu*; the preposition *ina* is used instead of *ana*; and it does not account for the accusative form of the noun *tâmtu*. Izre'el proposes that the term is a verb deriving from *mešēlu*, "to be similar, equal, half" (the same root, logically, as "mirror") and translates, "He (i.e., Ea) cut the sea in half," with *mešēli* serving as an infinitive absolute. Although the expected conjugation of the verb would be *imšul* as opposed to *inšil*, the shift from /*m*/ to /*n*/ before the *š* is not uncommon.[27] The accusative in *ta-am-ta* then requires explanation, and several possibilities emerge. It could be explained as an unusual use of the accusative (i.e., "As for the sea, it divided in half"); it could be an error for the nominative ("The sea divided in half"); or it could reflect a mistaken use of the verb as transitive ("He [i.e., Ea, the last referent in line 50′] divided the sea in half"). This last option indeed may be most likely, given that this act sets the stage for the blowing of the South Wind, and elsewhere, Ea is associated with the South Wind. In an incantation, the South Wind is identified as the "beloved of Ea". A Middle Assyrian text refers to the South Wind as "serving" Ea; and in a third text, the South Wind is assigned to "Ea, father of the gods".[28] Anu also responds to Adapa's speech by observing that "*He* (Ea) has done this, and *we*, what should we do?" (59′–60′), indicating that he recognizes that Ea has done something to Adapa. Given that the first action sets the stage for the second, it appears likely that the former is also of Ea's doing. Ea might have created something akin to a "blue hole," such that the blowing of the South Wind caused Adapa to be plunged into it.[29]

Yet the question as to *why* Ea would put Adapa, his own "son," in this situation remains perplexing. In plain terms, it appears that Ea has attempted to drown Adapa, and that Adapa is in some sort of limbo state between life and death. This, however, is not how the scenario has been traditionally interpreted. Most ignore Ea's actions at sea altogether – perhaps due to the opacity of l. 51′ – and focus instead on Ea's instructions to Adapa. One of the

**24** Adapa is said to go to *qaqqarišu*, a term that Izre'el (2001, 33) suggests may be a misinterpretation of *qaqqaršu*(*m*), "to the earth/underworld". There may be some external evidence for the latter possibility. In "Adapa and Enmerkar", Adapa descends with Enmerkar nine cubits into the *qaqqaru* and enters a tomb. Given that the Amarna Tablet elsewhere features the terms *mātu* ("land") and *erṣetu* ("earth"), it may well be that the use of *qaqqaru* in l. 70′ is meant to imply different terrain, namely, the underworld, as Izre'el (2001, 141) argues. The reference in Fragment A: 8′ to Adapa "among the Anunnaki", gods typically associated with the underworld, may support this interpretation, though Adapa's subsequent voyage at sea complicates matters. On the term *qaqqaru*, see also Horowitz (1998, 291f.).

**25** For an excellent survey, with additional bibliography, see Liverani (2004).

**26** Some insist that there is no discrepancy, and that Ea's warning can be explained by the fact that the food of heaven would have been deadly for the uninitiated. In this sense, Ea helps Adapa avoid Anu's effort to punish him. On this point, see De Liagre Böhl (1959, 429), Buccellati (1973, 63f.), and Xella (1973). As Liverani (2004, 5) points out, however, this approach is at odds with what the narrative actually says. Other explanations make use of puns on "the food of death"; see, e.g., Sasson (2008, 4), and Kilmer (1996, 111). It is worth adding in the light of Cavigneaux's (2014) new edition that any such pun would have to be restricted to the Akkadian.

**27** I thank Jerrold Cooper for pointing this out to me and for providing me with insight into this line; see also Izre'el (2001, 48). Cooper notes additionally that the shift from *u*-class to *i*-class verbs could be explained by the tendency of non-fientic verbs to be *i*-class (email communication).

**28** For the first, see AfO 12, pl. 10 rev. col. ii 24–27 (= K 9875); see JCS 29, 53; for the second, see RA 60, 73 rev. 3–6. For the third, see STT 2, 400 rev. 37–40 // TIM 9, 60 iii 2–5 // K 8397 1–4 (Livingstone 1986, 75). Clearly, then, as Izre'el (2001, 145) notes, the South Wind is a "tool" in the hands of Ea.

**29** For more on blue holes, or vertical caves, see http://www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/projects/blue-holes (accessed October 20, 2014). I do not imply that the Babylonians knew of the phenomenon, but I only wish to offer a heuristic comparison from the natural world.

few to confront the issue is Izre'el. For him, Ea intended to bring about "death-and-life consciousness," or wisdom, in Adapa. This wisdom is represented by Adapa's ability to break the wing of the South Wind through speech. Given that wisdom and immortality are the required combination for divinity, Anu then offered Adapa the one thing that he was missing: (eternal) life. Ea wished to prevent this; as such, he instructed Adapa to refuse the food.[30] This reading is consonant with many others that interpret the Amarna Tablet through the lens of wisdom and immortality, despite the fact that neither term appears in the tablet.[31] The particular combination does appear in the NA prologue Fragment A, however, where Ea is said to provide Adapa with "wisdom but not eternal life" (4′). This suits the frequent representation of Adapa in first-millennium literature as a sage. There is every indication, however, that Fragment A represents a secondary introduction, one that is designed to recast the Adapa tradition at a later point.[32] In the Amarna Tablet itself, although the phrases *lā banītu* and *libbu kabru* have been interpreted as implying "wisdom," these extensions are far from certain.[33] By the same token, the popular notion that Anu's "food of life" (*akal balāṭi*) should be taken as "eternal life" is neither necessary nor persuasive.[34]

**30** Izre'el (2001, 126). This line of thought is influenced by Michalowski (1980, 80 f.), who proposed that the Adapa story operates much like a rite of passage. For Michalowski, Adapa stumbled upon the power of magic by chance when he cursed the South Wind. This prompted a sequence of separation (Adapa travels to heaven), existence in a marginal state (in heaven), and reaggregation into society. He contends that Ea tricked Adapa into not accepting immortality so that Anu would have to provide an institutionalized form for the magical power of words: *ašipūtu*. In the end, Adapa's chance discovery was institutionalized and granted approval by the gods.

**31** Jacobsen (1930, 202) was the first to surmise that Ea, who did not want Adapa to become immortal, prevented him from eating by lying about the food; see also, e.g., Kramer/Maier (1989, 115 f.), who assert that Adapa would have gained immortality not only for himself but "for humankind generally".

**32** For discussion, see Milstein (forthc. b). Fragment A was a multicolumn tablet, though only a fraction of the second column on the obverse is visible, and the reverse is broken. The first column on the obverse features twenty-two visible lines. The introductory language of Fragment A (e.g., "In those days, in those years …", 5′) suggests that what is preserved must have been fairly close to the beginning of the tablet. The fragment includes a preface to the nautical excursion that is focused on Adapa, Ea, and Eridu, the ancient cultic center associated with Ea/Enki. The association of Adapa with Eridu recurs six times. This is a noticeable difference from the Amarna Tablet, which has no visible reference to the city. Eridu was said to be the oldest city in the world, and there is indeed literary and archaeological evidence that indicates an early date for the city's manifestation of political and religious authority. When the religious center shifted to Nippur in the OB period, the influence of Eridu waned, though its priesthood continued to be under royal authority through the Neo-Babylonian period (Green 1975, 379). How, then, do we account for the quantity of references in Fragment A to Eridu? Are they merely a late effort to imbue the tale with antiquity? Are they embellishments on a received tradition that indeed mentioned Eridu? Or do they date back to an "old" prologue that put special emphasis on Adapa and his role at Eridu? The problem cannot be solved simply with recourse to TH. There are two visible references to Eridu in TH, but both are merely part of epithets used to define Adapa ("son of Eridu" [line 110] and "citizen of Eridu" [line 119]). While we do see a parallel epithet in use for Adapa in Fragment A ("a son of Eridu", in 5′ and 16′), this is in conjunction with a greater focus on Adapa's cultic role at Eridu. In any case, the reference to Eridu would be entirely reasonable in this late context: it is not only the place where wisdom was thought to have originated, but it also was where the seven sages (including Adapa) were thought to reside. I thank Delnero for his help on this matter (email communication).

**33** Both derive from Anu's response to Adapa's speech: "Why did Ea show a man what is not good (*lā banīta*) in heaven and earth (when) he is the one who established in him a fat heart (*libba kabra*)? He is the one who has done this, and we, what can we do for him?" (lines 57′–60′). Foster (2002, 866) also questions Izre'el's application of "wisdom" to the first phrase. In the Amarna period, however, *banītu* and *lā banītu* are used to indicate good and bad treatment, always toward people (see CAD B s.v. *banītu*/*la banītu*). In combination with a negative abstract noun, the verb *kullumu* then means "to make someone experience something, with words of hardship." Rather than read this as a veiled reference to "wisdom," it appears more likely that Anu refers to Ea's malicious treatment of Adapa. It is furthermore not clear that the term "fat heart" (*lib-ba ka-ab-ra*) should be taken as a veiled reference to wisdom. Such an interpretation requires reading *gamru* ("full, complete") for *kabru*, a move that involves both a change in signs and a shift in meaning from the idiom "devoted heart" to "wisdom." To accommodate the reading *ga-am-ra*, KA would have to be read $ga_{14}$, a value not attested in the Amarna Tablet; the /ga/ pronunciation occurs in l. 53′, with the term *ug-ga-at* (*agāgu*, "to be furious"). The AB/AM contrast then involves separate signs altogether. Regarding the notion that the phrase indicates "arrogance," although Izre'el (2001, 30) notes that Akkadian supplies no proof for such a shift in semantic meaning, he does not dismiss the possibility. If we read the phrase *libbu kabru*, however, it appears to indicate strength or courage, as we see in Šubši-mešrê-Šakkan's speech in Ludlul bēl nēmeqi I 73–75 ("My high head bent down to the ground, fear has weakened my fat heart; broad-chested, [now even] a youngster could push me back"). Given that a) Adapa's defining act is his ability to break the wing of the South Wind, and b) Ea is associated with the South Wind, it thus appears that Adapa's "fat heart" refers to his power to stop the wind from blowing. Anu's question in lines 57′–59′ in turn may reflect disbelief: "Why would Ea drown Adapa with the South Wind, when he is the one who provided Adapa with this strength in the first place?" Anu then makes Ea's culpability explicit: "*He* is the one who has done this, [and] *we*, what can we do for him?" (l. 59′). His logical counteraction is to offer the drowned man what he presently lacks: not eternal life, as many presume, but simply, life (*balāṭu*).

**34** The exception to the rule is Sasson (2008, 7) in his playful but provocative article.

If we take the Amarna Tablet on its own terms, separate from both TH and the NA evidence, a different picture emerges. Ea – for some reason – appears to drown Adapa at sea, prompting Adapa to curse the wind. Adapa ascends to heaven in a limbo state between life and death. Ea attempts to finish the job by providing Adapa with misleading instructions. Anu then offers Adapa the food and water of life. These do not indicate "eternal life" but rather are intended to revive Adapa. Adapa's refusal, however, prompts him to be sent to the underworld. This version provokes a complete reversal of expectations, whereby Ea, the god who typically provides individuals with helpful instructions regarding visits to the underworld, here provokes Adapa's situation and provides misleading instructions regarding his journey to *heaven*. While Ea's motivations are never revealed, we must reckon both with what Ea has done, and with the fact that this time, Adapa may have had to suffer the consequences. With all of this focus on Adapa – what he has done, what he is doing, and what will happen to him – the issue of repairing the South Wind's wing is completely forgotten. In this sense, it is only the Amarna Tablet that can properly be called – in modern terms, of course – a myth of "Adapa."

## III The Priority of the Tell Haddad Version

Now that the major distinctions between TH and the Amarna Tablet have been outlined, it is possible to consider an explanation for their different sets of foci. Because the absence of the incantation may be more a reflection of the function and context of the Amarna Tablet, I will treat it separately from the issue of the focus on the South Wind in TH versus Adapa in the Amarna Tablet. Although the presence/absence of the South Wind incantation suits these distinct foci, it appears to reflect a phenomenon distinct from the general category of "revision."

### Which Way the Wind Blows: The Emergence of the "Myth of Adapa"

Two differences between TH and the Amarna Tablet exemplify these distinct foci: the presence of the lengthy "humanity-centered" introduction in TH (and its absence in the Amarna Tablet), and the interest in Adapa's motivations for his actions and his subsequent fate (and the absence of these in TH). These differences may be explained broadly by two scenarios: either the Amarna Tablet derived from a different OB source, one that lacked the long introduction and included this focus on Adapa, or the plotline of the Amarna Tablet represents a transformation of TH, whereby the long introduction was eliminated and the focus was redirected from the South Wind to Adapa. They cannot be explained, however, simply with reference to the broken nature of TH, for while the mythological prologue is fragmentary, the "Adapa plotline" is relatively well-preserved in both copies.[35]

According to the first scenario, at least two substantially different versions of Adapa would have circulated in the OB period, one with the humanity/world introduction and the focus on the South Wind as opposed to Adapa (i.e., TH), and the other without the introduction and a focus on Adapa: essentially, an OB/Sumerian version of the Amarna Tablet.[36] The latter version would have spawned the Amarna Tablet and eventually the NA fragments. As a related alternative, we might consider that the introduction in TH and the focus on the South Wind could represent additions/revisions to this hypothetical OB source. If so, *TH* would represent the innovation, not the Amarna Tablet. In the second scenario, the Amarna Tablet would represent a revision, broadly speaking, of the plotline attested in TH. The Amarna Tablet may not have been the first expression of this revision; rather, a large-scale revision such as this likely would have taken place earlier, perhaps when the tale was first rendered in Akkadian. In the effort to enhance the focus on and the agency of Adapa, the long introduction was eliminated and the latter half of the tale was revised, including a new catalyst for Adapa's curse. This led to a more explicit depiction of competition between Ea and Anu, with Adapa the pawn in between. The events preceding Adapa's exchange with Anu, however, could remain largely the same.

In order to determine which of the two is more likely, it may help to reexamine the role of Adapa in each version. The lengthy introduction in TH sets the Adapa plotline within the greater context of the organization of humanity. An and Enki, who oversaw the postdiluvian revival of humanity, become agents in an account that involves only a single man: Adapa. While before there was a broad

**35** It does not appear that such can be explained in terms of assuming that something else once followed An's question regarding why Adapa broke the wing of the South Wind, for in both TH copies, the gods' response regarding Enki's fixing of the South Wind immediately follows An's question.

**36** The notion that there would have been different Sumerian versions circulating in the OB period is certainly possible, given that the Nippur fragment does not appear to overlap with TH (Cavigneaux 2014, 34 f.). At the same time, the Nippur fragment is incredibly small and cannot be of substantial use in addressing this question.

concern regarding humanity's role in providing food for the gods, the Adapa plotline is concerned with just one man providing food for one god (and his temple, presumably): Enki. Despite his role as an *apkallu* and "son of Eridu", Adapa's most important act is that he breaks the wings of the South Wind. Other than this, Adapa exhibits no agency whatsoever. He is told exactly what to do and what to say by Enki. There is no exchange between Adapa and An. In the end, Enki fixes the destiny of the South Wind, which perhaps was still in flux in the long introduction. The concluding incantation then pertains to diseases that afflict humans in general.[37] These diseases appear to be brought by the South Wind, but the lifting of the South Wind removes them. Reading backwards from the incantation, it thus appears that when Adapa breaks the wings of the South Wind, he inadvertently causes humans (and/or himself?) to be afflicted by disease. This requires an urgent solution, which Enki provides. Whether this plotline is meant to represent an etiology for Enki's association with the South Wind or whether this relationship is already assumed is difficult to say. What we can say is that the focus has shifted from Adapa's actions to the South Wind, with the incantation following directly from Enki's effort to fix its destiny.[38]

Such appears to differ from Adapa's role in the Amarna Tablet. If this version indeed had no long introduction, it appears to launch with Adapa and his nautical adventure. Here, although Ea tells Adapa what to say in heaven, Adapa is forced to improvise when Anu asks a pair of unexpected questions. In contrast to TH, Adapa delivers a substantial speech to Anu in the Amarna Tablet, explaining what prompted him to curse the South Wind. Anu's response sets up an opposition between Ea, "who has done this" (line 59′), and himself, and he brings Adapa food, water, oil, and a garment. In this version, as noted above, lines 56′–71′ (the last visible lines of the Amarna Tablet) make no reference to the South Wind. The focus is entirely on the triangular dynamics of Adapa, Ea, and Anu. Anu's effort to remedy the situation seems to fail, and Adapa returns (possibly) to the underworld at the end of the text. This focus on Adapa and his fate is further extended in Fragment A, which details Adapa's wisdom and his duties at Eridu, both of which are tied to Ea.

The question remains: which logic precedes the other? Although TH is chronologically prior, we cannot assume that its logic predates that of the Amarna Tablet. It appears, however, that this is indeed the case, and that the Amarna Tablet represents the innovation. First of all, while the Amarna Tablet addresses visible gaps in TH, the reverse does not appear to be true. While TH says nothing of Adapa's fate, the Amarna Tablet addresses this matter directly, even if the broken ending prevents us from full comprehension. This also applies to the portrayal of Enki. In TH, it is nowhere clear why Enki prevents Adapa from accepting the food and drink offered to him in heaven. While the Amarna Tablet does not resolve all questions in this regard, it arguably adds a new plot element by making Ea the culprit for Adapa's misfortune at sea. Although this possible plot twist itself engendered new questions, it does account for the discrepancy between what Ea says will happen and what actually happens. This proposed development is further suggested by the fact that the lengthy cosmological introduction is not only absent in the Amarna Tablet, but also in the NA evidence, where we find another, shorter prologue that is focused not on humanity but on Adapa specifically. If the Amarna Tablet is indeed secondary to TH, we thus may observe a general trend of increased interest in Adapa and his fate over the course of transmission, as suggested by the attention to Adapa in NA Fragments A and D. A similar pattern is evident in both the SB prologue to the Gilgamesh Epic and the MB prologue found at Ugarit, where the wisdom of Gilgamesh is emphasized. Regarding Adapa, this would appear to suit the considerable role that he apparently played in first-millennium Mesopotamian culture, as exemplified by the plethora of references to him in first-millennium texts. It remains possible, however, that the absence of a comparable body of second-millennium references to Adapa only constitutes the absence of evidence.

## The Presence and Absence of the Incantation in the Adapa Tradition

Now that we have established the general priority of TH in relation to the Amarna Tablet, it is necessary to assess the absence of the incantation in the Amarna Tablet. It seems that the appeal of Adapa at Amarna was the storyline itself, and the elimination of the magical application/association may have been more a function of its use in a school setting than any kind of general development in the tradition or limitations of space. Indeed, the preservation of the incantation in Fragment D suggests that its elimina-

**37** Nonetheless, there is reference in the incantation to the "vast lagoon" (line 183), which appears twice in the Adapa plotline (lines 105 and 123).

**38** Cooper alerts me to another possibility: it is possible that Adapa broke the wings of the wind to counter its ill effects. This action then disturbed the cosmic order, which had to be repaired by restoring the South Wind, but subsequently, the incantation could be used to counter the wind's unfavorable effects (email communication).

tion in the Amarna Tablet may have been a special case.[39] While the incantation takes different form in Fragment D, with no involvement of Ea in fixing the "destiny" of the South Wind and no speaker of the incantation, certain elements do resonate with the incantation as it appears in TH. In both TH and Fragment D, the South Wind's blowing (*zâqša*) appears to bring and take away disease.[40] The verb is the same that Adapa uses in B: 52′ when he reports that the South Wind blew (*šūtu izīqam-ma*), and while the use of this term is not said to be linked in this version to disease, winds are responsible in various contexts for afflicting eyesight or for bringing disease. To be sure, not all gusts of wind are deemed detrimental, and in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon, the blowing of the South Wind indicates a favorable omen for kingship.[41] In the context of Fragment D, however, the negative association is made apparent by the adverb *lemniš* ("maliciously"), and in TH, the speaker's plea that the South Wind not touch the body suggests a similar sentiment.

With this reading I depart from the attractive hypothesis advanced by Georges Roux (1961), namely that Adapa's curse would have halted the growth of vegetation. After examining Iraqi meteorological reports from 1956–1958, Roux (1961, 19) concluded that the southern wind, more than the others, played an essential role with regard to vegetation in the region: "Sans lui, non seulement les dattes mûrissent mal, mais la sécheresse s'abat sur le pays et les récoltes sont compromises." Roux used this to explain why the myth refers to Dumuzi and Gizzida as absent from the land, for these two gods are associated with fertility. Despite the ingenuity of this reading, it seems to work potentially only in the context of the Amarna Tablet. In TH, and perhaps also in Fragment D, the only overt association of the South Wind is with disease. While one could make the case that the incantation was secondary in its Sumerian context, this does not mean that the association of the South Wind with sickness was purely a late development, disconnected from the "Adapa" plotline. It is plausible that Adapa's curse in TH was thought to have caused disease to linger – precisely the type of situation that the gods would not have wanted in the postdiluvian period, just after they had rejuvenated humanity from "dust" (TH, line 5).

The combination of the concluding incantation in TH and the fact that the two copies were found in the context of magical tablets in Area II suggests that TH – and possibly other Sumerian versions of the Adapa tradition that circulated – were utilized in magical contexts. This is further supported by the fact that Adapa enjoyed a widespread reputation in non-mythic literature as an exorcist. Whether the concluding incantation indicates that TH was actually put to use in a ritual context, or that it was employed as some sort of foundational myth for exorcists, as Cavigneaux (2014, 39) considers, it appears that the mythic tradition played a role beyond the limited realm of scribal education, at least at Tell Haddad. This magical application was then perceived as irrelevant and therefore extraneous at Amarna. Whoever elected to remove it – whether Babylonian exporters or Egyptian importers – it seems that the Adapa plotline was deemed worthy of learning for its own sake, with no magical association required.

## IV Conclusion

The absence of the incantation at the end of the Amarna Tablet, however unique to this text and its context, exemplifies the increased attention to Adapa's speech, actions, and fate in the Akkadian material. If it is not going too far to say that in TH, Adapa functions as a prop in a myth that is especially concerned with the South Wind, it may be possible to say that in the Amarna Tablet, the South Wind is a prop in a tale that is ultimately about Adapa. While this may have been especially true for the Amarna Tablet, this shift is represented in the NA evidence as well, despite the fact that the incantation was retained. It is in the NA material, after all, that we find a prologue that is focused not on postdiluvian humanity but rather on Adapa alone.

**39** Cavigneaux (2014, 39) notes that the scholars may have replaced the traditional formula with a conclusion "conforme à leur goût littéraire". In this vein it is worth noting a telling feature of EA 357 (Nergal and Ereshkigal), another tablet in the "subset" of Babylonian literary tablets found at Amarna. Like the Amarna Tablet, EA 357 has one column per side and does not appear to have belonged to a series of tablets. It is possible, however, that EA 357 does not contain a complete version of the myth. In line 87, Nergal kisses Ereshkigal and responds to her request that he marry her. In line 88, however, the phrase "till here" appears. While Dalley (2000, 181) reads the phrase as an emphatic close to Nergal's statement: "It shall certainly be so", others suggest that the words may represent the erroneous copying of oral instructions by the teacher to the student to stop inscribing the tablet due to space constraints (Izre'el 1997, 60 f.). What this might mean for the Amarna Tablet is difficult to say. Was this tablet also not long enough to contain the entire composition, or did the resolve of the student falter? Is it possible that the incantation against the South Wind, which is present in both the OB and NA evidence, was simply eliminated due to space constraints?

**40** With this discussion I question the notion that the incantation is meant "to protect against maladies caused by the striking of the South Wind", as suggested by Bottéro (1969–70, 110), Labat et al. (1970, 294), and Izre'el (2001, 43). The quotation is Izre'el's.

**41** See s.v. *zâqu* in CAD Z.

Fragment A details Adapa as one with "great intelligence" and one who has "wisdom but not eternal life" (3′–4′). Adapa is introduced as a sage, a native of Eridu, who functions as Ea's "son" among the people (lines 5′–6′). The sage is skilled and exceedingly wise among the Anunnaki (8′). He carries out the rites of the Eridu temple, preparing the food and drink, arranging the cultic table, and fishing for the precincts. If Fragments A and D indeed represent a single version, as appears to be the case, it seems that in this version, Adapa enjoyed a better fate.[42] Here Anu appears to set a guard over Adapa and free him from Ea's service.[43] Although this Adapa-centered version preserved the incantation, the original ties of this incantation to a myth that was solely concerned with the South Wind were all but eclipsed.

Cavigneaux's essential edition enables us to see in full view both the stability and fluidity of the so-called "Adapa" tradition. Although the NA evidence is incomplete, enough is present to observe that the tale of a man who was summoned to heaven for cursing the South Wind was compelling enough to retain certain features for centuries. At the same time, the tradition retained its lure precisely because it was adapted over time. Perhaps at the point at which the Sumerian tale was rendered in Akkadian, the tension between Enki's instructions and An's offer of "life" took on fresh importance. A new set of events preceding Adapa's actions was invented, events that would thrust Adapa from the background to the foreground, so much so that at least in the Amarna Tablet, the tale could conclude without even a parting reference to the South Wind. If not for TH, we might assume that the preoccupation with Adapa in the Akkadian evidence – his inimitable wisdom and his role at Eridu in Fragment A, the particulars of his relationship with Ea, his exchange with Anu, his eventual fate in each of its renderings – was always part of the "Adapa" tradition. It appears, however, that some of the most profound literary works can emerge out of engagement with and deliberate transformation of extant material. We can thus celebrate this newly published edition of an old and beloved myth, not merely for what it has and what it lacks, but also for the insight it provides into the complex interplay of preservation and innovation that exemplifies ancient Near Eastern literature.

**42** The likelihood that Fragments A and D once belonged to the same basic version is developed in Izre'el (2001, 59); see also Milstein, (forthc. b). While in A: 7′ the narrator notes that no one disdains "the speech of the sage" (*apkallu qibīssu*), in D: 6′, the emphasis is on who has made his speech "like the speech of Anu" (*qibīssu ša kīma qibīt Anu*). Though the end of the line is broken, A: 2′ anticipates the phrase in Fragment D more directly: here we find reference to "his (Adapa's?) speech like the speech of [DN]" ([*q*]*ibīssu ša kīma qibīt* AN[x x x]). Finally, in possible contrast to Ea's provision of "wisdom but not eternal life" (A: 4′), Anu establishes Adapa's lordship for ages (*ana arkat ūmē*).

**43** After Adapa rejects the food and water, the narrator remarks: $^{d}$*a-nu šá a-da-pa e-li-šú ma-ṣar-ta iš-k*[*un*] / [x (x)] *ki šá* $^{d}$*é-a šu-ba-ra-šú iš-kun* (lines 9′–10′). The first line is slightly opaque. Izre'el (2001) translates "Anu set Adapa at his service." Izreel (2001, 39–41) notes that *ša Adapa elīšu*, literally, "of Adapa on him," is an inverse genitive construction with a preposition that essentially means "on Adapa". Given the fact that the *maṣṣartu* ("watchman, guard") is set "over" Adapa (*elīšu*), however, it seems more likely that Anu promises to provide Adapa with a protective guard. Indeed, Izre'el (2001, 41) also considers the possibility that Anu offers Adapa protection "against Adapa's again misusing his powers against the South Wind." This sense accords better with line 10′, where Anu establishes Adapa's "freedom from Ea".

## Bibliography


Artzi, P. (1990): Studies in the library of the Amarna archive, in P. Artzi/J. Klein/A. Skaist (ed.), Bar-Ilan studies in Assyriology: Dedicated to Pinḥas Artzi. Bar-Ilan Studies in Near Eastern Languages and Culture. Ramat Gan, 139–156

Beckman, G. (1983): Mesopotamians and Mesopotamian learning at Hattusha, JCS 35, 97–114

Bottéro, J. (1969–70): Antiquités assyro-babyloniennes, Annuaire de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études, Sciences historiques et philologiques 102, 95–124

Buccellati, G. (1973): Adapa, Genesis, and the notion of faith, UF 5, 61–66

Cavigneaux, A. (1999): A scholars' library in Meturan? With an edition of the tablet H72 (Textes de Tell Haddad VII), in: T. Abusch/K. van der Toorn (eds.), Mesopotamian magic: Textual, historical, and interpretive perspectives. Ancient magic and divination 1. Groningen, 251–273

Cavigneaux, A. (2014): Une version sumérienne de la légende d'Adapa. Textes de Tell Haddad X, ZA 104, 1–41

Cavigneaux, A./F. al-Rawi (1993): New Sumerian literary texts from Tell Haddad (ancient Meturan). A first survey, Iraq 55, 91–105

Dalley, S. (2000): Myths from Mesopotamia. Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and others. Rev. ed. Oxford

De Liagre Böhl, F. M. Th. (1959): Die Mythen vom weisen Adapa, WO 2, 416–431

Foster, B. R. (2002): [Review of Izre'el 2001], JAOS 122, 865–866

Gadotti, A. (2014): 'Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Netherworld' and the Sumerian Gilgamesh cycle. UAVA 10. Boston/Berlin

Geller, M. (1985): Forerunners to Udug-hul. Sumerian exorcistic incantations. FAOS 12. Stuttgart

Goelet, O. (2008): Writing Ramesside Hieratic: What the Late Egyptian miscellanies tell us about scribal education, in: S. H. D'Auria (ed.), Servant of Mut: Studies in honor of Richard A. Fazzini. Probleme der Ägyptologie 28. Leiden/Boston, 102–110

Green, M. (1975): Eridu in Sumerian literature. Ph.D. diss. University of Chicago

Horowitz, W. (1998): Mesopotamian cosmic geography. MC 8. Winona Lake, Ind.

Izre'el, S. (1992): The study of oral poetry: Reflections of a neophyte. Can we learn anything on orality from the study of Akkadian poetry, especially in Akhetaton?, in: M. E. Vogelzang/H. L. J. Vanstiphout (eds.), Mesopotamian epic literature: Oral or aural?. Lewiston, 155–225
Izre'el, S. (1997): The Amarna scholarly tablets. CM 9. Groningen
Izre'el, S. (2001): Adapa and the south wind. Language has the power of life and death. MC 10. Winona Lake, Ind.
Jacobsen, T. (1930): The investiture and anointing of Adapa in heaven, AJSL 46, 201–203
Kemp, B. (2012): The city of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Amarna and its people. New aspects of antiquity. London
Kilmer, A. D. (1996): Verse translation of Adapa [Amarna Version], in: M. E. Vogelzang/H. L. J. Vanstiphout (eds.), Mesopotamian poetic language: Sumerian and Akkadian. CM 6. Leiden, 111–114
Kramer, S. N./J. Maier (1989): Myths of Enki. New York
Labat, R. et al. (1970): Les religions du Proche-Orient asiatique. Textes babyloniens, ougaritiques, hittites. Paris
Liverani, M. (2004): Adapa: Guest of the gods, in: Z. Bahrani/M. Van De Mieroop (eds.), Myth and politics in ancient Near Eastern historiography. Ithaca, 3–23
Livingstone, A. (1986): Mystical and mythological explanatory works of Assyrian and Babylonian scholars. Oxford
Michalowski, P. (1980): Adapa and the ritual process, Rocznik Orientalistyczny 41, 77–82
Milstein, S. J. (forthc. a): Outsourcing Gilgamesh, in R. Rezetko/R. Person (eds.), Empirical models challenging biblical criticism. Ancient Israel and its literature. Atlanta
Milstein, S. J. (forthc. b): Insights into editing from Mesopotamian literature: Mirror or mirage?, in R. Müller et al. (eds.), Insights into editing in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology. Leuven
Pakkala, J. (2013): God's word omitted. Omissions in the transmission of the Hebrew Bible. Göttingen
Picchioni, S. A. (1981): Il poemetto di Adapa. Budapest
Roux, G. (1961): Adapa, le vent et l'eau, RA 55, 13–33
Rutz, M. (2013): Bodies of knowledge in ancient Mesopotamia. AMD 9. Leiden
Sanders, S. (forthc.): Heavenly journeys and scholarly knowledge. The transformations of scribal cultures in Judea and Babylonia. Leiden
Sasson, J. (2008): Another wrinkle on old Adapa, in: R. J. van der Spek/G. Haayer (eds.), Studies in ancient Near Eastern world view and society. Bethesda, Md., 1–9
Xella, P. (1973): L'inganno di Ea nel mito di Adapa, OrAnt. 12, 257–266

Copyright of Zeitschrift für Assyriologie & Vorderasiatische Archäologie is the property of De Gruyter and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.