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The epithet Τιαμου of the Moon-god in Lydia

<https://doi.org/10.1515/kadmos-2021-0009>

Abstract: This article discusses the origin of the epithet Τιαμου, which modifies the name of the Moon-god in a number of Greek inscriptions from Lydia dated to the 2nd–3rd century AD. All the etymological explanations provided so far will be taken into account, especially the Anatolian one, which, based on the existence of a Moon-god (κατα)χθόνιος, tries to establish a connection between Τιαμου and an Anatolian outcome of the PIE root for ‘earth’ (cf. Hitt. *tēkan*, Luw. *tiyamm(i)-*). After having discussed the arguments in favour and against both a Lydian and a Luwian origin, it will be argued that the latter seems to be most likely, although the possibility of a Lydian mediation remains.

Keywords: Moon-god Τιαμου, Ancient Greek, Lydian, Luwian, language contact.

1 An unclear hypostasis of the Moon-god and some earlier explanations

In a number of Greek inscriptions dated to the Roman Empire period found in Lydia, particularly in the district of Katakekaumene (located East of Sardis),¹ the Moon-god Men² bears the exclusive, unclear epithet Τιαμου, always occurring in this form, for which different explanations have been provided.

1 According to Ramsay 1895: 342, “it seems highly probable that Men-Tiamou is a god of the oriental colonists in the Katakekaumene”.

2 On the etymology of Μήν, see Heubeck 1959: 31–32.

Article note: This paper is a result of the project PALaC, that has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement n° 757299). The work profited from the data and research of the project TeAI, funded by the Italian Ministry of University, F.A.R.E. programme, and carried out at the University of Verona. I am very grateful to the reviewers, whose valuable suggestions have greatly improved the text. Of course, any shortcomings and mistakes are my responsibility. Assyriological and Hittitological abbreviations follow the conventions of the *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, while abbreviations of Greek inscriptions are those of the online Packard Humanities Institute’s *Searchable Greek Inscriptions*.

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Attested forms of this local hypostasis of the Moon-god, frequently associated with Artemis Anaitis,³ include:⁴

- nom. sg. Μῖς Τιαμου,⁵ Μεῖς Τιαμου;⁶
 gen. sg. Μηνὸς Τιαμου,⁷ τοῦ κυρίου τοῦ Τιαμου;⁸
 dat. sg. Μηνὶ Τιαμου;⁹
 acc. sg. τὸν θεὸν Μῆνα Τιαμο[υ].¹⁰

Wagener (1859: 5 fn. 3) connected this epithet to the Greek verb τίω ‘value, honour’, with the ending -αμος that is commonly found in Asia Minor (cf. Πέργαμος, Πρίαμος, etc.); thus, τίαμος would be equivalent to σεμνός ‘holy, revered’. Waddington (in Le Bas and Waddington 1870: 215, no. 668) simply stated that “Τιάμου est un mot lydien, qui ne doit pas être décliné”, also mentioning that the ending -αμος frequently occurs in names from Asia Minor. No further observations are added.¹¹ Roscher 1891: 125 fn. 55 also recognised in Τιαμου the suffix found in Πέργαμος, Πρίαμος, etc., but he regarded the Bithynian city Τίον (Τίειον, Τίος, Τήιον) as its base, which was rejected by Smirnov 1895: 98, but without an alternative explanation, which, in his view, could only rely on a better knowledge of the Lydian and Phrygian language.

3 On the association between this Moon-god and other deities, see Keil 1923: 256.

4 Occurrences are mostly taken from the Packard Humanities Institute’s *Searchable Greek Inscriptions* online (<https://inscriptions.packhum.org/>). Occurrences in which this divine name is entirely restored due to a break in the text have been omitted. See also Petzl 1994 (nos. 54, 67–71, 84).

5 SEG 57:1159 (Hamidiye, late Rom. Imp. period).

6 SEG 57:1187 (Kollyda, Rom. Imp. period); TAM V,1 317 (Koloe, 114/115 AD); TAM V,1 318 (Koloe, 156/157 AD).

7 SEG 35:1269 (118/119 AD); TAM V,1 351 (Kollyda, 161/162 AD).

8 TAM V,1 317 (Koloe, 114/115 AD).

9 Malay, Manisa Mus. 160 (Katakekaumene?, 2nd c. AD?); Malay, Manisa Mus. 556 (Nisyra, Rom. Imp. period); SEG 15:739 (Rom. Imp. period); SEG 32:1221 (Philadelphia); SEG 33:1007 (Maionia, 197/198 AD); SEG 48:1450 (Maionia, 252/253 AD); SEG 57:1201 (Maionia, 183/184 AD); TAM V,1 319 (Kula, 196/197 AD); TAM V,1 320 (211/212 AD); TAM V,1 321 (Koloe, 215/216 AD); TAM V,1 322 (Koloe, 236/237 AD); TAM V,1 323 (Koloe); TAM V,1 324 (Koloe); TAM V,1 424 (Kollyda); TAM V,1 440 (Kollyda, 118/119 AD); TAM V,1 458 (Kollyda); TAM V,1 536 (Maionia, 171/172 AD); TAM V,1 537 (Maionia, 171/172 AD); TAM V,1 576 (Maionia); TAM V,1 597 (Maionia, 254/255 AD); TAM V,3 1565 (= SEG 35:1182; Philadelphia, 2nd–4th c. AD); TAM V,3 1630 (Philadelphia, ca. 1st c. AD).

10 SEG 35:1164 (Koloe, 159/160 AD).

11 Waddington is followed by Drexler 1894–1897: 2752–2753, who also gave up finding a meaning to the base.

Ramsay 1895: 341–342 n. 3 suggested a possible connection with Akkadian *Tuamu* (i.e. *tū'amu*), the constellation Gemini, wondering whether Men Τιαμου could be ‘the Sun in the sign Gemini’, while a more elaborate attempt to elucidate the origin of this epithet was made by Wright 1895c: 68–71, who suggested a connection between Τιαμου and the Semitic goddess *Tiāmat*,¹² deity of the underground waters, so that Τιαμου would only be a variant of καταχθόνιος, which is actually attested as epithet of the Moon-god.¹³ As he states, Semitic epithets are sometimes found applied to deities worshipped in Western Asia Minor, quoting the example of Μῆν Καμαρείτης on coins from Nysa (Lydia), which he connected to Arab. *qamar* ‘moon’. The female character of *Tiāmat* would not be an obstacle to such identification, because, according to Wright 1895c: 69, “As the personification and presiding genius of as yet unorganized nature, ruling over beings with bisexual characters, this divinity might originally have been conceived as without sex. In fact, on the monuments Tiamat is often represented with the attributes of a male being.”¹⁴ But the strongest argument Wright presents for the identification of Τιαμου with *Tiāmat* comes perhaps from a passage of Berossus (4th–3rd c. BC) reported by Alexander Polyhistor (1st c. BC), which, in turn, is quoted in Eusebius’ *Chronicon* (3rd–4th c. AD), transmitted both in Greek by George Syncellus (8th–9th c. AD) and in the Armenian version.

2 *Tiāmat* and the moon: A digression on a fragment of Berossus

A famous fragment of Berossus (BNJ 680 F 1b), indirectly transmitted by Syncellus and the Armenian version of Eusebius, deals with the battle between Bel/Marduk and *Tiāmat* and the creation of the universe. Here follows the text by Syncellus as edited by Dindorf (1829: 52, lines 15–19), with the Armenian version and two Latin translations, the one by Y. Zohrab (in the edition of Eusebius’ *Chronicon* by Mai and Zohrab 1818: 11)¹⁵ and the one by H. Petermann (in the edition of Eusebius’ *Chronicon* by Schöne 1875: 15–16):¹⁶

¹² Note that Ramsay 1895: 341–342 n. 3 also quoted a personal comment by Wright, who initially suggested a connection with an alleged Babylonian god Tiammu. Ramsay stated that he was not able to find this god, but he only found *Tiāmat*.

¹³ Cf. Μῆνα καταχθόνιον (BCH 10 (1886) 503,6; Sterrett, EJ 200,211; JHS 22 (1902) 356,112; RPh 36 (1912) 65,30) Μῆνα χθόνιον (CIG 4008), all from Lycaonia.

¹⁴ See also Wright 1895b: xlv.

¹⁵ The same Latin translation is also included in the edition of Berossus by Lenormant 1871.

¹⁶ See also the first Latin version of the Armenian text, made by Aucher 1818: 23–24: “... quorum imagines in Beli templo singulatim pictas servabant. Illis autem omnibus mulierem quamdam,

Syncellus (Dindorf 1829)	Armenian version of Eusebius' <i>Chronicon</i>	Armen. <i>Chron.</i> – Latin version (Mai and Zohrab 1818)	Armen. <i>Chron.</i> – Latin version (Petermann <i>apud</i> Schöne 1875)
<p>... ὧν καὶ τὰς εἰκόνας ἐν τῷ τοῦ Βήλου ναῶ ἀνακεῖσθαι. ἄρχειν δὲ τούτων πάντων γυναικα ἧ ὄνομα Ὁμόρωκα· εἶναι δὲ τοῦτο Χαλδαῖστί μὲν Θαλάτθ, Ἑλληνιστί δὲ μεθερμηνεύεσθαι θάλασσα, κατὰ δὲ ἰσόψηφον σελήνη.</p>	<p>... voroc' zpatkers 'i mehenin bêğay mi êst miojê nkareal pahêin: Yew išxel amenec'un noc'a knoĵ mium, vorum anun kočic'i markayé', vor k'agđêec'erên t'agatt'ây anuani. yew yunarên t'argmani t'aladday, vor ê çov.¹⁷</p>	<p>... quarum imagines accurate depictae in Beli fano adservabantur. Porro iis omnibus dominatam esse mulierem quandam, cui nomen Marghaiae: eamque Chaldaeorum lingua dici thagattham, graece vero converti θάλατταν (nempe mare).</p>	<p>... quarum imagines in Beli templo singulatim pictas servabant. Illis autem omnibus mulierem quandam, cuius nomen vocetur Marcaje, dominatam esse, quae chaldaice Thalaththa nominator, et graece vertitur Thalaththa, quod est mare.</p>

The English translation, based on the Greek text, reads: ‘... representations of which [*scil.* various beasts mentioned before in the text] are dedicated in the temple of Bel. A woman named Homoroka rules over all these ones: this is Thalath in Chaldean, and it is translated as ‘sea’ in Greek, while, according to the numerical value, it is “moon”.’

This passage includes several textual difficulties, the one relevant here being the Chaldean gloss Θαλάτθ, which is almost unanimously – with some exceptions¹⁸ – believed to correspond to the name of the Babylonian goddess Tiāmat. Because the name of this goddess appears as Ταυθε in Damascius (*De Princ.* III,

cui nomen Marcaja, imperitavisse; quae Chaldaice Thaladtha vocatur, Graece autem dicitur Thalatta, quae vox mare significat”.

¹⁷ The original Armenian text, based on the edition by Aucher 1818, can be found on the online Bibliotheca Polyglotta Graeca et Latina of the University of Oslo, Norwegian Institute of Palaeography and Historical Philology. See also the translation of the Armenian version by A. Ouzounian (*apud* Cohen-Skalli et al. 2020: 83): “Et sur toutes ces bêtes dominait une femme appelée Markayé, nommée en chaldéen Thalaththa, qui se traduit en grec par thalatta, c’est-à-dire la mer”.

¹⁸ Note that, according to Scaliger 1606: 247, the information cannot come from Berossus, because in his language the word for ‘sea’ was *iamma* or *iammo* (*scil.* 𐤎), while *thalath* (*scil.* 𐤕𐤌) would mean ‘three’. According to Sale et al. (1747: 29), Θαλάτθ may perhaps represent Chaldean or Syriac *thalilûtho* ‘moisture’, because the sea and the moon would be sources of moisture. H. Rawlinson (*apud* G. Rawlinson 1858: 617) suggested a connection with Telita, the Babylonian goddess of lakes and marshes, also appearing in the Assyrian city name Dur-Telita on the lower Tigris, to be identified with Θαλάθα in Ptolemy 5, 20, 4.

125.1, quoting Eudemus of Rhodes),¹⁹ Lenormant 1871: 86 suggested emending Θαλάτθ to Θαυάτθ, while the Armenian version has *t'agatt'ay*, which seems to presuppose *Θαγάτθ (*vel sim.*) in the model.²⁰ Conversely, Robertson Smith 1891 noted that, considering the name as written in uncial script, ΘΑΛΑΤΘ is more likely to result from the corruption of an original ΘΑΜΤΕ, representing Assyrian *Tāmtu*.²¹ However, Haupt 1918: 307 partly retrieved Lenormant's hypothesis, suggesting that ΘΑΛΑΤΘ resulted from an original *ΤΑΥΑΘΕ, with the exchange between Θ and Τ, matching the form given by Damascius. Accordingly, he also emended Damascius' Ταυθε to Ταυ[α]θε, explained as reflecting the Assyrian plural *tāwāti* (*tāmāti*) 'seas' (the presence of a vowel would be needed to explain the Assyrian fricative represented by Greek θ).²² In any case, there seemed to be no doubt that the passage refers to Tiāmat, which is translated with Gr. θάλασσα 'sea'.²³ It was probably the Greek translation that was responsible for the corruption of the original lectio to Θαλάτθ.²⁴

For the purposes of our discussion, the relevant point is the last remark of the Greek passage, κατὰ δὲ ἰσόψηφον σελήνη, which does not appear in the Armenian version, perhaps – according to A. von Gutschmid (*apud* Schöne 1875: 16 fn. 7) – because the Armenian translator did not understand it, although it is regarded by other scholars as an interpolation by Syncellus.²⁵

The most credited explanation is that Berossus is giving here the numerological explanation of the woman's name: 'according to the numerical equivalent, σελήνη ('moon')'.²⁶ The numerical values of the Greek letters forming the noun σελήνη add up to 301 (200+5+30+8+50+8), which perfectly corresponds to the sum that the letters of the woman's name yield, if one accepts the emendation of

¹⁹ Edition: Westerink and Combès 1991: 165.

²⁰ As an alternative, of course, one may suggest, with Karst 1911: 241, that the Armenian lectio may be a corruption of an original *t'alatt'*, matching the Greek text (see also the Latin translation by Petermann). The Greek form given in the Armenian version, clearly representing Gr. θάλαττα, is read as *t'alatt'ay* by Cohen-Skalli et al. 2020: 245 n. 61, who restore the original lectio of the manuscript, changed to *t'aladday* by Aucher 1818: 23.

²¹ This correction is also accepted by Schrader 1903: 492 fn. 2.

²² See also Barton 1893: 2.

²³ Obviously, the final note in the Armenian version – *vor ê çov* 'that is the sea' – was added by the translator.

²⁴ See Sale et al. 1747: 29, Karst 1911: 241–242, Komoróczy 1973: 132, Talon 2001: 271, de Breucker 2010.

²⁵ See e.g. Aucher 1818: 24 fn. 1, Richter 1825: 19, 50 fn. f ("a Syncello aut a quopiam alio"), Müller 1878: 497, Jacoby 1958: 372.

²⁶ See Haupt 1918: 306, Komoróczy 1973: 132, Burstein 1978: 14 fn. 14, Adler and Tuffin 2002: 39 fn. 1.

Ἰομόρωκα to Ἰομόρκα (70+40+70+100+20+1),²⁷ first suggested by Scaliger 1606: 6, although, seemingly, for a different, unknown reason (despite him clearly being aware of the meaning of ἰσόψηφον in this context).²⁸

According to Wright 1895b, κατὰ δὲ <τὸ> ἰσόψηφον σελήνη (τὸ is supplied by him) was an interpolation by Alexander Polyhistor, and the gematric interpretation is not mandatory, because ἰσόψηφον could generally mean ‘equivalent to’: “This woman, in Chaldean, was called Thamte, which translated into Greek is Sea, and is equivalent to Moon.” The reason why he could not accept the gematric explanation is that, as mentioned, it would require emending Ἰομόρωκα to Ἰομόρκα, while, in his view, Ἰομόρωκα resulted from an original ὁ Μορδόκα, i.e. Marduk, which also involves a different reconstruction of the text (see below).²⁹ Furthermore, he also suggested the possibility that the original text was different, because, palaeographically, κατὰ δὲ <τὸ> ἰσόψηφον may result from an original κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Φρύγας, ‘according to the Phrygians’, written in uncial script. Therefore, Alexander Polyhistor would have added a personal remark to the text of Berossus, either noting that Tiāmat was ‘equivalent to the Moon’, having in mind

27 In the different works on this passage, the forms Ἰομόρκα and Ἰομόρωκα appear either with initial O, Ό, or Ό. Since this feature is not relevant in our discussion, the issue will be not addressed here, and the forms will be mostly quoted as they appear in the sources mentioned.

28 Although Gunkel 1895: 18 fn. 1 says that Scaliger emended “nach dem ‘Zahlenwert’” (thus also de Breucker 2010), Scaliger 1606: 247, while not providing any reason for his emendation to Ἰομόρκα, states: “ἰσόψηφα sunt, quorum literae secundum potestatem numerorum eandem summam conficiunt tam in Graecis, quam in Hebraicis, Syriacis, et Arabicis, ubi literae habent potestatem numerorum. At θάλασσα sunt 441, σελήνη autem 291, quomodo igitur ἰσόψηφα esse ait? Sed fortasse Chaldaice sunt ἰσόψηφα. Ne sic quidem: et quo longius a vero recedetur, eo propius ad nugas accedetur.” Thus, because he miscalculates by 10 the numerical value of σελήνη (and θάλασσα as well, which is 442), the emendation to Ἰομόρκα loses its numerical motivation and remains unexplained to me (Scaliger did not know the Armenian version, which has *markayê*). Goar (1652, emendationes et annotationes p. 11), quoting Scaliger’s text, corrected the numerical values, but he polemically stated that “Nugarum ergo metam Scaliger attigit, qui ἰσόψηφα in numeris, et non in sensus paritate querit”, thus suggesting that ἰσόψηφα should refer to the meanings. The correct numerical values are also given by Fabricius 1728: 188–189, who otherwise quotes Scaliger’s remark almost literally, adding however, as an example, the numerical correspondence between π ‘sea’ (10+40 = 50) and θαλαθ (9+1+30+1+9 = 50). However, he also does not solve the problem, probably because Ἰομορῶκα is printed in his text, whose numerical value is 1101. Consequently, he suggests that ἰσόψηφα, in this passage, could mean ἰσόστοιχα, ἀντίστοιχα, σύστοιχα, ὁμόστοιχα, i.e. ‘in the same line, correspondent, congruous, concomitant, etc.’, “notum enim reciprocaiones aestuum maris, lunae tanquam causae tribui a Philosophis”, quoting Gellius: *Oceanus quasi lunae comes, cum ea simul adolescens, senescensque* (sic! Cf. Gellius XIV, 1: *oceanus quasi lunae comes cum ea simul senescit adolescitque*).

29 See Wright 1895a, 1895b: xliv, 1895c: 71.

the Moon-god Τιᾶμου, or, accepting the emendation κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Φρύγας, that the Phrygians identified Tiāmat, i.e. Τιᾶμου, with the Moon.³⁰

However, Wright's explanation involves heavy modifications to the text transmitted by Syncellus. Indeed, in order to accommodate the name Ὀμόρωκα, referred to the woman of the narrative, with his conjectural ὁ Μορδόκα, he is forced to reconstruct the text as follows: ἄρχειν δὲ τούτων πάντων γυναῖκα ἦν <Βῆλος ἔσχισεν ῶ̃> ὄνομα ὁ Μορδόκα, 'a woman, whom Bel – whose name was Marduk – cut in twain, rules over all these ones', where ῶ̃ ὄνομα is regarded as an interpolation by Alexander Polyhistor. The occurrence of ὄνομα before ὁ Μορδόκα, which is an ungrammatical sequence, would depend on the fact that Alexander Polyhistor took ΟΜΟΡΔΟΚΑ as a single word (Wright 1895a: 73).

All this reconstruction is, of course, totally unnecessary: from a philological point of view, dismissing an unproblematic explanation (the gematric one), which only requires a slight correction (Ὀμόρωκα > Ὀμόρκα, perhaps also corroborated by Armen. *markayē*), just to defend a conjectural reading (ὁ Μορδόκα), which implies such heavy intervention on the text and the necessary assumption of interpolations, is not to be recommended.³¹

Indeed, a number of solutions have been suggested in order to explain Ὀμόρκα, which make Wright's ὁ Μορδόκα totally dispensable.

Ὀμόρωκα would represent מלח ים 'salty sea' (where ים would be the Chaldean variant of ים 'sea') according to Vossius 1661: 409–410, followed by Richter 1825: 18, who however suggested that only מלח 'salt' could be reflected in the Greek form, the initial O perhaps being the Greek article. Aucher 1818: 23–24 fn. 4 claimed that Armen. *Markaja* "aliquo modo pertinet ad vocem Lat. *Mare*". H. Rawlinson (*apud* G. Rawlinson 1858: 618) regarded Ὀμόρωκα as reflecting *Um-Urka* (or *Warka*) 'Mother of Uruk', epithet of the goddess Beltu, followed by Lenormant 1871: 85–86, who also rejected Scaliger's emendation to Ομόρκα (because Ὀμόρωκα = *Um-Uruk*). Schrader (1883: 13 with fn.) rejected this explanation and regarded Ομόρκα as reflecting mum(-mu)-Uruk, i.e. 'Mummu-Tiāmat of Uruk', while Delitzsch 1887: 100 traced Ὀμόρκα back to *ummu hubur*, 'Mother Hubur', an epithet of Tiāmat in the *Enūma eliš*,³² challenged by Smith 1887: 1, who did not suggest an alternative analysis. Zimmern (*apud* Gunkel 1895: 403 fn. 2) briefly states the same (with a more extended explanation following Gun-

³⁰ See also Wright 1895a: 73–74.

³¹ Of course, κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Φρύγας is also entirely gratuitous.

³² The remark only consists of a small interlinear note, "vgl. Homoroka, Omorka?", written over *um-mu hu-bur* in the transliteration of the tablet.

kel's remarks in Gunkel 1895: 18–19 fn. 1, see below).³³ Jensen (1890: 301–302) rejected the connection with *Um-Uruk* and suggested that Ὀμόρ(ω)κα may reflect Sum. *murū-ku* < *murub* 'middle' + an alleged suffix *-ku*, which should correspond to Akk. *qerbiš* 'in the middle' (< *qerbu* 'inside'), occurring in the phrase *qerbiš Tiāmat*, 'in the middle of the sea', in the *Enūma eliš*. He later changed opinion and suggested a connection to **amaruka*, allegedly 'flood' (Jensen 1900: 564), followed by Schrader 1903: 492, who added the possibility that this word was actually found as *e-ma-ru-uk-ka* in the *Enūma eliš*. Conversely, Gunkel 1895: 18 fn. 1 explained Ὀμόρκα as אַם אַרְקָא 'Mother of the depth' or, based on Armen. [O]markayê, as אַם אַרְקָא (אַרְקָיא) 'Mother of the underground', while, according to Haupt 1918: 308–309, Ὀμορ(ω)κα may reflect Sum. *um-engur* 'mother of the deep'. Komoróczy 1973: 132–133, based on von Soden (AHw: 211), suggested that Ὀμόρκα matched Akk. *e-ma-ru-uk-ka* in the *Enūma eliš*, allegedly 'flood' (thus, as per Jensen 1900 and Schrader 1903), < Sum. *a-ma-ru-kam*, which is rejected by Talon 2001: 271 fn. 47, because *e-ma-ru-uk-ka* stands for *amārukka* < *amāru* 'see'. In his edition of Berossus' fragments, Jacoby 1958: 371 regarded Ὀμόρκα· εἶναι δὲ τοῦτο as an interpolation: thus, the original text would have been γυνῆκα ἢ ὄνομα Χαλδαῖστί μὲν Θαλάτθ, 'a woman whose name in Chaldean was Thalathth'.

The whole passage has more recently received a new explanation by Geller 2012: 106–107, with fn. 128, who connects Ὀμόρκα to Akk. *marratu* 'bitter sea', later corrupted or perhaps altered in order to obtain a gematric correspondence to the numerical value of σελήνη (because the remark is regarded as an interpolation). To an Aramaic public – i.e. Berossus' readers – an explanation of *marratu* through Akk. *tāmtu* or *Tiāmat* would not have been understood, but Aram. *marta* 'lady', quasi-homonym to *marratu* and easily interpreted as an epithet for a goddess, may have been translated with the Aramaic synonym *ṭaletha* 'girl', which is a homonym to Syriac *ṭalaṯtha* 'marsh'. Thus, through such a word-play, which only makes sense in an Akkadian-Aramaic milieu, it would be possible to explain the meaning of the name. It would not be necessary to explain Θαλατθ as a corruption of an original Ταυαθε, Θαμτε, or the like: although the passage clearly refers to *Tiāmat*, no word *Tiāmat* would actually be needed here.

Finally, Kerr 2013: 39–40 fn. 18, while sharing Geller's view on Ὀμόρκα, has a different opinion on Θαλατθ, regarded as the Aramaic word for 'three' (לת, thus also Scaliger 1606: 247), which, connected to the moon in the following sentence, would suggest a survival of the Mesopotamian association of the Moon-god with the number 30.

³³ See also Delitzsch 1896: 96 fn. 1. More recently, the same hypothesis is found in de Breucker 2010. Cohen-Skalli et al. 2020: 245 n. 60 only refer to de Breucker 2010.

All in all, despite Wright's efforts, nothing points to an association between the epithet Τιάμου of the Moon-god in Greek inscriptions from Lydia and the goddess Tiāmat. But even if Wright's highly implausible reconstruction were correct, in the most optimistic scenario it would only suggest that Τιάμου was Tiāmat *according to Alexander Polyhistor*, which may well reflect a folk etymology, not the actual explanation of the epithet.

One should mention that a possible connection between Tiāmat and the moon can be actually found in a couple of Mesopotamian texts, STC 2 pl. 67ff. (probably from Babylon, dated to the Seleuco-Parthian period) and perhaps KAR 307 (from Assur, Neo-Assyrian period).³⁴

STC 2 pl. 67–68:

obv. 11' [... t]i-amat ina ŠĀ-bi d30 in-n[am-mar ...]

obv. 12' [...] dAMAR.UTU ina ŠĀ-bi dUTU¹ in-n[am-mar ...]

'[...] T]iāmat is s[een] inside the moon [...] Marduk is s[een] inside the sun.'

KAR 307

rev. 5 ša ŠĀ dUTU dAM]AR.UTU ša ŠĀ d30 dNĀ ina ŠĀ dUTU ba-aš-mu bal-bal-l[e-šú]

rev. 6 ina ŠĀ d3[0 u]m²-ma-šú ...

'The one which is inside the s[un is Ma]rduk. The one which is inside the moon is Nabû. Inside the sun there is a horned viper, [his] ...; inside the mo[on] there is its [m]other?.'

Both texts belong to the genre of mythological and cultic explanatory works,³⁵ the first one explicitly stating that 'Tiāmat is seen inside the moon', the latter saying, if correctly restored, that the mother of a *bašmu* (a horned serpent) is inside the moon, who is identified with Tiāmat because, in the *Enūma eliš*, the goddess gives birth to different creatures, including a *bašmu*, in order to fight Marduk.³⁶

Therefore, a connection between Tiāmat and the Moon, although remote – at least geographically – and erudite, could be retrieved. However, all in all, it does not seem to be enough to identify Tiāmat as the source of Τιάμου, especially if other solutions are available, involving languages that are closer to the area of attestation of the epithet.

³⁴ See Beaulieu 1999: 93–94.

³⁵ See Livingstone 1989: xxix–xxx, also including an edition of KAR 307 (pp. 99–102).

³⁶ See Beaulieu 1999: 94. See also KAR 6 ii 21' *i-na A.AB.BA ib-ba-ni MUŠ ba-[aš-mu]*, 'the horned viper was created in the sea' (Myth of Nergal and the Serpent).

3 Back to Τιαμου: Looking for an Anatolian explanation

After Wright, some scholars tried to connect Τιαμου with the Phrygian language. Calder 1928: 213 compared it with Phr. *τιαμας*, denoting the tomb or a part of it, suggesting that, when referred to the Moon-god, its meaning corresponded to the Greek epithet *καταχθόνιος*. According to Haas 1951: 3, Phr. *τιαμα-* matches Gr. *σημα* ‘sign, mark’, so that he wonders “[i]st *Men Tiamou ein Mēn Σημαντικός?*”, comparing Ζεύς Σημαντικός and Ζεύς Σημαλέος Haas 1951: 26 n. 5.³⁷

However, the origin of Phr. *τιαμα-* (also *τεαμα-*, *ατεαμα-*, and *ατιαμα-*) is unclear, but, from an etymological point of view, it seems to be unlikely that Gr. *σημα* is a cognate. An alternative explanation as a borrowing from Luw. *tiyam-m(i)-* ‘earth’ has been suggested, which might be more plausible, although the forms with initial /a-/ would remain unclear.³⁸ Were this hypothesis correct, an ultimate Luwian origin for this Phrygian word could perhaps exclude that the latter may represent the source of Τιαμου, because this epithet may receive an inner-Anatolian explanation, thus making a Phrygian intermediation, although possible, quite unnecessary.

Indeed, Neumann 1961: 71–72, based on the suggested correspondence between Τιαμου and *(κατα)χθόνιος*, regarded Τιαμου as reflecting a Lydian word *tiam-* ‘earth’, matching Luw. *tiyamm(i)-* ‘id.’ Moreover, the hypothesis that the Moon-god Τιαμου actually was the Moon-god *(κατα)χθόνιος* may find further confirmation in the inscription SEG 57:1187, in which he is paired with Μείς Ουράνιος, the ‘Moon-god of the heaven’.

Quite unexpectedly, according to Neumann, Μήν Τιαμου could perhaps correspond to Hittite *tagnaš* ^dUTU-*uš*, the ‘Sun-goddess of the earth’, alluding to the underground journey of the Sun during the night.³⁹ However, one might rather posit the existence of an analogous Moon-god of the earth, currently unattested in 2nd millennium Anatolian sources, referring to the journey of the Moon in the netherworld during the day.⁴⁰

Neumann’s connection between Τιαμου, alleged Lyd. *tiam-*, and Luw. *tiyam-m(i)-* has received some acceptance, but before discussing it, one should mention a different hypothesis, which can be traced back at least to Kretschmer 1896:

³⁷ Rejected by Heubeck 1959: 23 fn. 44.

³⁸ See the discussion in Obrador-Cursach 2020: 187–188, with references.

³⁹ Note however that Ramsay 1895: 294–295 claimed that Men was more connected to the sun than the moon.

⁴⁰ See e.g. Ricl 2011: 146–147.

197–198 fn. 5 and was followed by various scholars:⁴¹ *Τιάμου* would be the genitive of a personal name, or, with Buckler’s 1914: 180 words, “it originated from a sanctuary of local celebrity founded by an individual named *Τίαμος*”, a name that is actually attested in Lycaonia (*Τ[ί]αμον* in KILyk I 371).⁴² Such an explanation, however, is not particularly telling: personal names have an etymology too, so that, if one accepted this suggestion, the epithet would find its origin, but the problem of the etymology and linguistic belonging of the name would remain. On the same line, but with a crucial difference, Lane 1976: 68, while appreciating Neumann’s solution, stated that “in any case, the etymology, even if real, would still probably have been meaningless to Men’s worshippers in imperial times, who understood *Tiamou* as a genitive of a proper name” (fn. 11). Of course, put in this way, this might be true, although the pairing *Μεῖς Τιάμου καὶ Μεῖς Οὐράνιος* in SEG 57:1187 may speak for at least a residual conservation of the suggested original meaning. In any case, we are looking for the etymology of the epithet, so that its interpretation by those who worshipped the deity in Roman times is not really relevant from a linguistic point of view.

Thus, so far, Neumann’s solution seems to be the most solid one, although it is worth a deeper investigation, because there are some relevant issues that should be addressed, the most important of which concerns the language to which the Anatolian preform reflected by *Τιάμου* belongs. Excluding any Anatolian languages that may have been present in the area, of which we know nothing, and thus restricting the possibilities to just two languages we know, we might wonder whether *Τιάμου* could reflect a genuine Lydian word or we should rather posit an ultimate Luwian origin.

4 Could *Τιάμου* reflect a Lydian word?

In the Lydian inscriptions known so far, only one word for ‘earth’ is attested, *klida-*, which occurs in the Lydian-Aramaic bilingual inscription from Sardis (LW 1), in the expression ‘earth and water’ found in the final curse formula (Lyd.

⁴¹ See especially Keil and von Premerstein 1911: 95, 104, Buckler 1914: 180 (who however also took into account Wright’s suggestion of a connection with *Tiāmat*), Lesky 1931: 695, Stauffenberg 1936: 761. *Τίαμος* is also included among the personal names by Petzl 1994: 148, with reference to *Μεῖς Τιάμου* among the divine names, where the occurrences are listed.

⁴² Cf. Ramsay 1905: 173 (no. 54), but note that Zgusta 1964: 512 regarded this personal name as secondarily derived from the divine name *Τιάμου*.

klīdal koful-k = Aram. *tyn w-myn*).⁴³ Of course, the existence of a Lydian word for ‘earth’ does not exclude the possibility that there might have been others (cf. e.g. the case of Hieroglyphic Luwian, in which the most common word for ‘land’ was /taskwari-, but a relictual form /taggami/ is also attested, on which see below).⁴⁴

While Τῆρου may well correspond to Luw. *tiyamm(i)-*, the question we will try to answer in this section is: is it possible that the Proto-Anatolian preform of Luw. *tiyamm(i)-* may have yielded in Lydian a similar outcome to the one reflected in Gr. Τῆρου?

The first macroscopic problem that a Lydian origin would involve concerns the alleged absence of a synchronic approximant /j/ in Lydian, which should probably be reconstructed in the Anatolian form behind Τῆρου. In Lydian words in which we would expect /j/ on etymological ground, a letter usually transcribed as <d> is found, which is generally believed to represent a voiced interdental fricative /ð/.⁴⁵ Thus, Τῆρου would be incompatible with the phonological system of Lydian (also note that the sequence *ia* is currently not attested in Lydian). However, Oreshko 2019, after a careful re-evaluation of all the data, suggested that the Lydian letter conventionally transcribed as <d> would render the sound /j/. This hypothesis is very interesting and, in my view, reasonably well founded, although some doubts remain. If he were right, the Anatolian form behind Τῆρου would not be incompatible with the Lydian phonology.

A second problem involves the ultimate origin of this /j/ in our word. As is well-known, Luw. *tiyamm(i)-* comes from the PIE root for ‘land’, **d^héǵ^h-m*, **d^hǵ^h-m-os*, which also yielded *tēkan*, *taknaš* in Hittite (as well as Gr. χθών, Skt. *kṣam*, etc.).⁴⁶ The Luwic languages – i.e. Luwian, Lycian, and Carian – are characterised by the approximant outcome /j/ of the voiced palatal stop before a front vowel, which is then lost before /i/ (Melchert 1994b: 254), so that PA **dǵem-* > Luwic **dyém-* > Luwian *tiyamm(i)-* through Čop’s law. Before a back vowel, the change did not occur, which would explain the relictual HLuw. dative form (“TERRA”) *ta-ka-mi-i* (SULTANHAN § 39), allegedly /taggami/ < **dǵǵom-*.⁴⁷ Did the same change also take place in Lydian? Unfortunately, we have no data to answer this

⁴³ This corresponds to the typical Achaemenid diplomatic formula ‘earth and water’, well-known from Herodotus, on which see e.g. Kuhrt 1988, Nenci 2001, Munn 2006: 222–225 (who suggests that the formula was originally Lydian), Rung 2015.

⁴⁴ See also the remarks by Oettinger 2020: 105 on the multiple names for “earth” in other Indo-European languages.

⁴⁵ See especially Melchert 1994a, with previous literature.

⁴⁶ I am following here the reconstruction suggested by Kloekhorst (EDHIL: 858–862).

⁴⁷ However, according to Kloekhorst (EDHIL: 861), this form should be explained either as /tgmī:/ < **dǵm-éi* (= Hitt. dat. sg. *takni*) or /tga:mi/ < **d^hǵ^hōm* (= Hitt. *tagān*) + *-i*. See also Melchert 2012: 214.

question, and the belonging of the Lydian language to the Luwic subgroup (or, more generally, to a Southern Anatolian group, together with Luwic languages), which has been suggested, is by no means assured.⁴⁸ Based on the word for ‘water’, *kofu-*, perhaps < PA **ĝōbu-* or **ĝōwPu-* (Melchert 1994b: 331), we can assume a velar outcome of PIE **ĝ^(h)* in initial position before back vowel, but we have no data before front vowel.⁴⁹

Furthermore, PA **/d/* before **/u/*, **/i/*, or **/j/* yielded a sound graphically rendered by the Lydian letter usually transcribed as <c>, perhaps a voiced alveolar affricate /dz/ (Melchert 1994b: 334), but this is true for original **/j/*, while we have no clues on the outcome of **/d/* before secondary */j/*, allegedly resulting from **ĝ^(h)*. However, if Lydian was a Luwic language participating in the Proto-Luwic change **ĝ > j*, one should expect the specifically Lydian change **dj > c* to occur later, thus also involving secondary */j/*. Were this the case, Τιαμου would perhaps be the reflex of a genuine Lydian word only if the alleged change **ĝ > j* before front vowel in Lydian were independent from the analogous change occurring in the Luwic languages.⁵⁰

As far as vowels are concerned, there are no serious problems: α may reflect Lyd. /ā:/, which comes from PA stressed **a*, **e*, **o* before a syllable starting with a nasal onset (Melchert 1994b: 349). The final -ou is more difficult to evaluate: it could simply represent a Greek genitive,⁵¹ and in all likelihood it was understood as such at the time of attestation of the inscriptions (see especially τοῦ κυρίου τοῦ Τιαμου in TAM V,1 317), although, according to some scholars, the possibility exists that it ultimately reflected a Lydian form in -u with nominative function.⁵²

All in all, the Lydian interpretation involves some assumptions that are by no means assured, particularly the value */j/* for the Lydian letter currently transcribed as <d> and the change **ĝ > j / -V_[+front]* (perhaps independently from the Luwic languages). Were these assumptions confirmed, there would probably be no obstacles to regarding Τιαμου as the Greek adaptation of a genuine Lydian form, probably to be reconstructed as **/tijā:mV/*.

48 On the dialectal position of Lydian among the Anatolian languages, see e.g. Oettinger 1978, Melchert 2003, Gérard 2005: 14–15, Yakubovich 2010: 5–6, Rieken 2017 (especially p. 303).

49 See also Gérard 2005: 67–68.

50 Cf. e.g. Rieken 2017: 302, according to whom the change **ĝ > j (> Ø)* before front vowel would be “rather trivial”, so perhaps of little value as a shared innovation.

51 See e.g. Kretschmer 1896: 197–198 fn. 5, Keil and von Premerstein 1911: 95, 104, Buckler 1914: 180, Lesky 1931: 695, Heubeck 1959: 23 fn. 44, Neumann 1961: 71–72.

52 See e.g. Ramsay 1883: 60, Nock 1972: 156 fn. 112.

5 Would the Luwian solution be historically credible?

Since a Lydian solution is highly speculative and cannot be proven so far, one should explore the alternative, perhaps more likely, explanation, i.e. Τίαμου as reflecting Luw. *tiyamm(i)*- ‘earth’, either directly or as a Luwian borrowing in Lydian. In this case, of course, the etymology is not problematic (see above). The issue that should be addressed rather concerns the historical plausibility of the presence of a Luwian epithet in the Lydian area.

As is well-known, the presence of Luwians in western Anatolia – the ancient land of Arzaw(iy)a – is beyond any doubt, at least in the 2nd millennium BC, as is shown e.g. from personal names and a limited number of hieroglyphic inscriptions,⁵³ despite the fact that rituals from Arzawa found in the Hittite tablet collections did not include incantations in Luwian language (only sporadic Luwianisms are found), unlike the ritual texts from Kizzuwatna, Iṣtanuwa, and possibly Tauriša.⁵⁴

The Greek adaptation as a stem in *-o-* may be not surprising for a Luwian consonant stem, although we do not know what exactly the Luwian model was, and we cannot assess the possible role of other languages as intermediaries between Luwian and Greek.⁵⁵

If the hypothesis of a direct transmission from Luwian is not accepted, one might note that some Luwian words seem to be attested in Lydian, especially in the onomastic field, so that the Lydian language may have played the role of intermediary. Yakubovich 2010: 97 lists a number of Lydian personal and divine names that closely resembles Luwian names,⁵⁶ some of them also showing specific Luwian phonetic changes that do not coincide with the Lydian outcomes. The clearest example is the Lydian personal name *Tiwda-*, as well as its derived adjective *tiwdali-*, which would match the Luwian divine name *Tiwada-* found

⁵³ On the hieroglyphic inscriptions of western Anatolia, see especially Oreshko 2013.

⁵⁴ For a thorough discussion of the different Luwian traditions in the 2nd millennium, see Mouton and Yakubovich 2021.

⁵⁵ The existence of the PN Τίαμος (KILyK I 371) may also have some relevance in this issue, but, in my opinion, it is not necessary to assume that the epithet reflected a personal name, as sometimes suggested (see § 3 above).

⁵⁶ Yakubovich’s table includes the personal names *Tiwda-* (= Luw. DN *Tiwada-*, see below), *Walwe-* (= Luw. *walwa-* ‘lion’), and *Katowa-* (= Luw. *Katuwa-*), and the divine names *Šānta-* (= Luw. *Šanta-*), *Kufaw-* (= Luw. *Kubaba-*, but see Oreshko 2021), and *Mariwda-* (= Luw. *Marwaya-*). He then adds some Lydian nouns in Greek transmission, like Ουρπαλος (= Luw. *Warpalawa-*) and Μυταλις (= Luw. *Muwattalli-*), to which one may add Μυτάλιδι in Hipponax and Μυττάλυτα in Hesychius (see Rizza 2001), although, since it was the name of a well-known Hittite king, its presence in western Anatolia cannot specifically prove Luwian influence on Lydian onomastics.

in compound names, clearly related to the Luwian name of the Sun-god Tiwad < PA **dīwod-* (cf. Hitt. *šiwatt-* ‘day’), ultimately from PIE **diēu-* (Hitt. *šīu-* ‘god’). The same PIE root gives *ciw-* ‘god’ in Lydian, with the affricate outcome of the initial dental stop, which would prove the original non-Lydian character of the PN *Tiwda*.⁵⁷ However, if we accept Oreshko’s hypothesis, this name would rather be *Tiwja-* (perhaps matching Τίβιος, Τίβειος in Greek inscriptions from different regions of Anatolia), for which a Phrygian or a north-Anatolian origin is suggested by Oreshko 2019: 219–223. The whole issue of Luwian words in Lydian would be worth a deeper investigation, with a careful reconsideration of all the material, which cannot be discussed in this paper. For the time being, we can tentatively regard the presence of a Luwian divine epithet in Lydia as plausible.

Finally, the absence of a Moon-god of the earth in Hittite and Luwian cuneiform sources of the 2nd millennium BC is not a serious counterargument to the hypothesis supported here, because, as mentioned, evidence for a Moon-god (κατα)χθόνιος exists for the 1st millennium.⁵⁸

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I tried to corroborate the hypothesis that the Moon-god Τιαμου occurring in Greek inscriptions from Lydia is best explained as ‘the Moon-god of the earth’, which is independently attested in Lycaonia as Μήν (κατα)χθόνιος. The epithet Τιαμου should be probably regarded as the genitive of a Greek noun (*τιαμος) adapting a local word meaning ‘earth’, which may belong either to the Lydian or the Luwian language. The viability of the Lydian solution is unfortunately hampered by our poor knowledge of the Lydian language and implies the assumption of a number of preconditions that are unprovable so far. Therefore, assuming a Luwian origin for the epithet – either directly from Luw. *tiyamm(i)-*

⁵⁷ See also Starke 1990: 150 and Melchert 2013: 36.

⁵⁸ Despite the claim by Tatišvili 2007: 186, I was not able to find a Moon-god of the earth in Hittite texts. In the sequence ^d30 URUKASKAL-na [A]N ù 'KI'-ti found in KBo 1.1+ rev. 54' (Akkadian treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza of Mittani, CTH 51.1.A), Heaven and Earth are probably separate entities, not modifiers of the Moon-god of Ḫarran. However, indirect evidence can perhaps be found in some sporadic association of the Moon-god with chthonian deities, see e.g. [(^d30-a)]š ^dUTU-uš *ták-na-aš-ša* DINGIR^{MES}-uš, ‘the Moon, the Sun, and the deities of the earth’, in the Song of Ḫedammu, KUB 33.122 ii 8' (CTH 348.I.1.F, NS). It also should be mentioned that a broken divine name ^dTeam[m]a[...] is found in Hittite texts (see Steitler 2017: 269–271), but it is probably a Hattian deity unrelated to the Moon-god Τιαμου.

‘earth’ or mediated by a borrowing in the Lydian language – is less problematic from a linguistic point of view, and can be historically plausible.⁵⁹

If an Anatolian origin were to be proven for *τιαμῶς, one of the most interesting aspects would be the quite late date of attestation (2nd–3rd c. AD). One might of course imagine that the break in continuity that can be observed is just an illusion, i.e. it could be merely due to a random lack of documentation. However, it could also be a late retrieval of a local tradition, which had remained outside the written tradition until then. In the latter case, it would be very tempting to connect the revitalisation of this local cult in Lydia to the restoration and re-erection of pagan statues, altars, and stelae with Lydian inscriptions in the 4th century AD, which has been persuasively explained by Rojas 2019: 35–43 as a reaction against Christianisation. However, a thorough discussion on the historical and cultural context of this Lydian cult falls beyond the narrow scope of this work.

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⁵⁹ The possibility of a Phrygian intermediation also exists, although it would be, as mentioned, unnecessary, and perhaps less likely, given that Phr. (α)τε/ιαμα-, allegedly from Luwian *tīyamm(i)-*, denoted a part of the monument, while the epithet *Τιαμῶς*, if actually meaning ‘of the earth’ (see especially *Μεῖς Τιαμῶς καὶ Μεῖς Οὐράνιος*), would be semantically closer to the Luwian word.

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