Sammu-ramat or Sammu-rāmat ("Sammu is exalted" or "Sammu is beloved"); WSem. or Akk.; fem.; wr. Mt. sa-am-mu-ra-mat; ft. šmyrm, šμrmt; Tallqvist (1918) 191; Stamm (1939) 82 n. 2; Eilers (1971) 38-46 (with bibliography of previous literature); Schramm (1972) 513 n. 2; Zadok (1976c) 119 n. 63f; Zadok (1977a) 66, 85, 249, 390; Zadok (1978d) 75f; Weinfeld (1991). In Classical sources Sammu-ramat appears as Σμμυρμε and Σμμυ-
Samnuga-belu-usur

According to Diodorus (II 4.6) the name signified “dove” in the language of Syria (i.e., Assyrian); سمع (sammu) probably would have derived from Akk. summatu (Eilers [1971] 39) or even summu. Rabbinic sages, discussing the name of Nebuchadnezzar’s wife, understood the name Semiramis as سم يرم, “thunder of heaven,” since she was born in thunder (Leviticus Rabbah 19:6). Weinfeld (1991) suggests that the name is derived from WSem. (Phoen.) سم يرم “high heavens,” and is a hypostatic entity based on a title of Anat. Considering the WSem. name type DN-ramid-/ramat (“DN is exalted”), as well as the Akk. form DN-ramat (“DN is beloved”), it seems likely that the element Sammu is a theophoric one. If this proves to be correct, then the writing of the DN without the divine determinative is not problematic since it was often omitted in personal names. If the name is WSem., then the original form of the first element may have been سمع rather than سم무 since سمم is rendered by NA -s-. If the name proves to be Akk., then سمع may be a variant form of the NA deity سم-a-mu (Frankena [1953] 111 no. 193), meaning “red” (AHw 1019f s.v. سمث).

Wife of Šamsi-Adad V, mother of Adad-nerari III:

a. Her origins: Over the years, there has been a great deal of speculation about the origin of سمع-رامات; unfortunately, nothing certain is known from contemporary sources. However, some Classical sources suggest that she came from the Levant, while others suggest that she was a native Assyrian (see e. below and Weinfeld [1991]). Lehmann-Haupt (1910) proposed that she was a Babylonian princess, though Brinkman (1968) 217 n. 1360 correctly points out that there is no evidence for this. Eilers (1971) 33f, 68 suggests that she may have been a princess from the Armenian highlands (Urartu), and Novotny (2001) 181ff proposes that she could have been a princess from Bit-Adini, Bit-Gabbari, Carchemish, Gurgum, Namhi, Patina, Que, or from Šubria. In the absence of further evidence these proposals must remain quite speculative.


c. In an inscription of Adad-nerari: The inscription on the Pazarc1k stele from the vicinity of Maraš begins “Boundary stone of Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, son of سمى-آدات, king of Assyria (and of سمى-أم-مو-رامات سمى E.GAL (“queen”) of سمى-آدات, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nerari, strong king, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law (kal-lat) of Shalmaneser (III), king of the four quarters” RIMA 3 A.0.104.3:3. The inscription describes how, when Ušipulume, king of the Kummuhites, caused Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, (and) سمى-أم-مو-رامات سمى E.GAL to cross the Euphrates, he (Adad-nerari) made battle with them, (and) with Attar-sumki of Arpad and the eight kings who were with him at the city Paqar(a)hubuni; he took away their camp and they dispersed to save their lives RIMA 3 A.0.104.3:9; it is said that, in this same year, they erected this boundary stone between Ušipulume, king of the Kummuhites, and Qalparu(n)da, king of the Gurumites. The inscription concludes with an injunction against removing the stele from the possession of Ušipulume or his descendants.

d. In the inscriptions of Bel-tarši-ilumma, governor of Kalhu: Bel-tarši-ilumma, governor of Kalhu, dedicated two identical inscribed statues to the god نابُ and set them up in the Nabû Temple of Kalhu. The inscription on both statues is the same: after a passage in praise of نابُ it is said that Bel-tarši-ilumma had the statues made and dedicated it for the life of Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, and for the life of سمى-أم-مو-رامات سمى E.GAL RIMA 3 A.0.104.2002:9.

e. In post-Assyrian sources: Semiramis (i.e. سمع-رامات) is a figure who crops up the accounts of later authors such as Berossus, Herodotus, Diodorus (drawing on Ctesias, Athenaeus and other historians), and Nicolaus of Damascus. It is generally accepted that the legend of Semiramis contains many ingredients from various traditions. For the various proposals, see Lewy (1952); Eilers (1971); Nagel (1982); Pettinato (1985); Weinfeld (1991); Roux (1992) 301f. With regard to her supposed forty-two year rule, Zawadzki (1990) 70 n. 9 has pointed out that this figure is identical to the regnal span quoted for Assurbanipal in an inscription of Nabonidus. J. R. Novotay

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