

Sammu-rāmat or **Sammu-ramāt** (“Sammu is exalted” or “Sammu is beloved”); WSem. or Akk.; fem.; wr. *Ml.sa-am-mu-ra-mat*; ft. *šmyrm*, *šmrmt*; 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 Σεμραμῖς and Σεμ-

ρᾱμυς. According to Diodorus (II 4.6) the name signified “dove” in the language of Syria (i.e., Assyrian); Σᾱμυ- (*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 *šmy r’m*, “thunder of heaven,” since she was born in thunder (Leviticus Rabbah 19:6). Weinfeld (1991) suggests that the name is derived from WSem. (Phoen.) *šmm rmm* “high heavens,” and is a hypostatic entity based on a title of Anat. Considering the WSem. name type DN-rāmu/rāmat (“DN is exalted”), as well as the Akk. form DN-ramāt (“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 *šammu* rather than *sammu* since WSem. -š- is rendered by NA -s-. If the name proves to be Akk., then *sammu* may be a variant form of the NA deity *ša(-a)-mu* (Frankena [1953] 111 no. 193), meaning “red” (AHw 1019f s.v. *sāmu*).

Wife of Šamši-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 Sammu-ramat; 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 (Uratu), and Novotny (2001) 181ff proposes that she could have been a princess from Bit-Adini, Bit-Gabbari, Carchemish, Gurgum, Namri, Patina, Que, or from Šubria. In the absence of further evidence these proposals must remain quite speculative.

b. In the inscription on her own stele from Assur: “Monument of Mī.sa-am-mu—ra-mat Mī É.GA[L] of Šamši-Adad, king of the universe, king of Assyria, mother of Adad-nerari, king of the universe, king of Assyria, daughter-in-law (Mī.kal-lat) of Shalmaneser” RIMA 3 A.O.104.2001:1 (not dated).

c. In an inscription of Adad-nerari: The inscription on the Pazarcık stele from the vicinity of Maraş begins “Boundary stone of Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, son of Šamši-Adad, king of Assyria (and of) Mī.sa-am-mu—ra-mat Mī É.GAL (“queen”) of Šamši-Adad, 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.O.104.3:3. The inscription describes how, when Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, caused Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, (and) Mī.sa-am-mu—ra-mat Mī É.GAL to cross the Euphrates, he (Adad-nerari) made battle with them, (and) with Attar-šumki 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.O.104.3:9; it is said that, in this same year, they erected this boundary stone between Ušpilulume, king of the Kummuhites, and Qalparu(n)da, king of the Gurgumites. The inscription concludes with an injunction against removing the stele from the possession of Ušpilulume 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 Nabû and set them up in the Nabû Temple of Kalhu. The inscription on both statues is the same: after a passage in praise of Nabû it is said that Bel-tarši-ilumma had the statue made and dedicated it for the life of Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, and for the life of Mī.sa-am-mu—ra-mat Mī É.GAL NIN-šú RIMA 3 A.O.104.2002:9.

e. In post-Assyrian sources: Semiramis (i.e. Sammu-ramat) 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.

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