

in a personified sense as a demon or evil deity (Hab 3:5; Ps 91:3, 6; cf. Hos 13:14).

II. In Mesopotamia the representation of illnesses as demons is very common (E. EBELING *RIA* 2 [1938] 112; EDZARD *WbMyth* I 47), as well as among the Hittites (VON SCHULER *WbMyth* I 161). In this connexion the Ugaritic text *KTU* 1.5 vi:6 & par. can offer some support. It speaks in a parallelistic way of the *arṣ dbr/šd šhlmt*. But the personification can only be assumed here if *šhlmt* is construed as 'the lion of Mamētu' (WUS, no 2589), which is rather unlikely. The empirical meanings 'pestilence' or 'steppe' are more suitable (cf. VAN ZIJL 1972:172-175; DE MOOR 1971:186 for the various interpretations).

III. More cogent is the parallelism with →Resheph in Hab 3:14, given the presence of this deity in the Ugaritic texts as a god of destruction (*KTU* 1.14 I 18-19; 1.82:3; DE MOOR & SPRONK 1984:239). The eschatological hymn in Hab 3 presents Deber and Resheph marching at →Yahweh's side as His helpers. This follows the ancient Mesopotamian tradition according to which 'plague' and 'pestilence' are present in the entourage of the great god →Marduk (DE MOOR 1990:134). On the other hand, in Ps 91:6 it is Yahweh who liberates his faithful from the fear of this nocturnal demon Deber, in parallel this time with →Qeteb, another awesome destructive demon. Echoes of this representation can also be heard in Hos 13:14 (ANDERSEN & FREEDMAN 1980: 640).

#### IV. Bibliography

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G. DEL OLMO LETE

#### DEDAN דדן

I. Dedan is one of the ancestors of the royal families of Ugarit and Assyria. According to Ugaritic texts he was deified. In both Ugaritic and Akkadian texts he is also named Datan or Ditan. This name can be related to Akk *ditānu*, *didānu*, 'bison' (AHW 173) or to Akk *datnu*, 'warlike'. It also appears as a personal name in the OT, viz. *dātān* (Num 16:1; Deut 11:6; Ps 106:17).

II. Didanu, Ditanu, or also Tidanu, is the name of a tribe living in the western part of ancient Mesopotamia first mentioned at the end of the third millennium BCE. The name Ditanu appears as a component in personal names in the second millennium BCE; cf. the names of two kings of the First Dynasty of Babylon: Ammiditana, 'headman of Ditanu' and Samsuditana, 'sun of Ditanu'. Here it seems to indicate the tribe of that name. It is also mentioned as the name of one of the royal ancestors in the list of the Amorite dynasty of Hammurabi and with the spelling Didanu in the Assyrian King list (FINKELSTEIN 1966:98; SCHMIDT 1994:75-78). Apparently this name was now regarded as an eponym, the name of the tribe having been derived from the king's name. It is not certain whether a king with this name actually existed. If so, he links the dynasties of Babylon, Assur, and Ugarit (KITCHEN 1977:142). This status, be it historical or mythical, accords well with the prominent place he takes in some Ugaritic ritual texts related to the cult of the dead. In *KTU*<sup>2</sup> 1.161 the spirits of the royal ancestors ('the Rephaim of the earth') are called 'the assembly of Dedan'. The parallelism between 'Rephaim of the earth' (i.e., the netherworld) and 'the assembly of Dedan' indicates that Dedan was regarded as the first of the deified royal ancestors (SCHMIDT 1994:82 only wants to speak of commemo-

ration, not deification). In this text the names of the deceased kings are called one by one to receive sacrifices. In return they are asked to hail the living king and his city. This assembly also occurs in the Ugaritic legend of Keret. Here it is called 'assembly of Ditan' (*KTU*<sup>2</sup> 1.15.III:2-4.13-15). King Keret is said to have been exalted to this assembly after he received the promise of being blessed with the offspring he had been longing for. According to *KTU*<sup>2</sup> 1.124 Ditan could be called upon to help a sick child. His 'judgement' consists of precise indications for the medicines to be used.

### III. Bibliography

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K. SPRONK

## DEMETER Δημήτηρ

I. Demeter is the Greek deity known and worshipped for her power over grain and thus the fertility of the earth, the food supply for human beings, and mystery rites that provide a happy afterlife. Acts 19:24,38 refers to a man named after her, Demetrius, a craftsman who made shrines of →Artemis; another Demetrius is mentioned in 3 John 1:12 as a reliable Christian.

II. Daughter of Kronos and Rhea, sister of →Zeus, and mother of Kore-Persephone, Demeter was often called the Corn Goddess. Through her close relation to Persephone, Demeter has strong connections with the underworld; the two are frequently mentioned simply as the Two Goddesses. Kore-Persephone was the young daughter of Demeter as well as the wife of Aidoneus or →Hades, and thus the queen of the dead.

The myth of Demeter is related in the well-known *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, a poem of 495 lines and dating to the seventh century BCE. It was not the only version known to the ancient Greeks, however. An early reference to Persephone's abduction by Aidoneus in Hesiod that suggests the myth was known already in the eighth century (*Theogony* 913-14). Pausanias mentions a hymn by Pamphos that he considers pre-Homeric as well as a version he traced to Sicily (7.21.9, 8.37.9; 9.31.9), and Apollodorus provides a summary of the myth by drawing upon several versions (1.5). A number of poets were reputed to have written hymns to Demeter, including Archilochus, Lasus, Bacchylides, Pindar, and Aeschylus, although little is known for certain about the poems. The Parian Chronicle refers to an Orphic version of the myth of Demeter (KERN 1922: test. 221), and Pausanias mentions that Musaeus wrote about characters who figure in the myth (1.14.3), but most likely these versions reflect the Eleusinian account. In any case, the variants demonstrate that the myth of Demeter was widely known in ancient Greece, and vase paintings also testify to its popularity. Two other legends were related about Demeter. In the first, she loved Iasion and made love with him in a field that had lain fallow but was ploughed three times; the offspring of this union was Plutos, or rich harvests as the wealth of the earth (Homer, *Odyssey* 5.125-128; Hesiod, *Theogony* 969-975; Apollodorus 3.138). According to the second, a Thessalian named Erysichthon cut down the trees of a grove sacred to Demeter in order to build a palace. Although Demeter herself took the form of her priestess to urge him not to commit such impiety, he would not listen. She indicated that he would need a large hall for banquets, but he became so hungry that although he continually ate, he could not satisfy his hunger; eventually he was reduced to begging (Callimachos, *Hymn* 6. 24-119; Ovid, *Metam.* 8.738-878).

Of all the versions, the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* is the most complete. It tells how Persephone was taken away by Aidoneus or