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THE GREAT STAG: A SUMERIAN DIVINITY AND ITS AFFILIATIONS

BY

Ida Bobula, Ph. D.

One of the elements of human culture which migrated from Western Asia into the Western World seems to be the concept of a benevolent, divine father who created mankind out of clay and who cares for the welfare of the Earth.

The Mesopotamian divinity, who in contrast with most other male gods of the early Pantheon, was considered benevolent, was the water-god Enki. It seems that his cult was so deep-rooted that it survived the fall of Babylonia and was inherited by many younger nations, who brought it to Europe, where traditions which have come down to modern times seem to be the still-living fragments of this ancient cult.

Enki came to be known later as Ea¹. Ea's name was written with four strokes of the stylus; it seems that his holy number was four times ten: forty². It may be inferred from one of the texts that he was considered—at least in one period—the fourth in rank of the "Great Gods"³. He was supposed to be the child of Enlil⁴ and the goddess Nammu, the primæval sea⁵.

Enki was one of the first divinities of the Sumerian Pantheon to be identified by archaeologists, more than 50 years ago⁶, as the water-god, whose regular attribute was the spouting, overflowing vase and two streams with fish.

The figure of Enki appears on many cylinder seals and other monuments. Seldom standing—more often seated on his throne—he wears the horned, high hat of the great gods⁸, and often holds the rod and the ring, symbols of divine power, which in Sumerian art distinguish gods from mortals, but which are not special attributes of any one god⁹. His special attribute is a horned animal, usually the ibex or mountain goat, which is often depicted together with the fish. On a few seals a third animal appears in Enki's presence: a bird which seems to be the eagle.

Later the fish and the horned animal are contracted into one single monster: the well-known fish-ram symbol of Ea, which has long been recognized as a sign of the Zodiac¹⁰.

Many authors have asked: why is the name of the water-god Enki, which means "Lord of the Land"? Frankfort answers: in the marshes of Southern Mesopotamia land and water are so intimately mixed that they seem to be essentially the same!¹¹ We cannot agree: land and water must have been contrasted even in the primitive Mesopotamian mind. But *ki* did not mean "land" only, it meant "earth", too; and we may presume that Enki was supposed to be the Lord of the Earth. The three

animals we see around Enki — the fish, the bird and the horned goat — may well symbolize the totality of the animal world — all that flies, swims or runs. Water is essential to the life of all of them.

The transparent symbolism of Sumerian creation myths makes it clear that Father Enki was regarded as creator and special father of the plants, too, who are mothered by many goddesses¹². Finally the goddesses inspired Enki to create man, which he did — fashioning men from clay, to be the servants of the gods¹³.

Being thus responsible for the existence of man, Enki was naturally supposed to take far more interest in his creatures than any other god. Enki organized the peoples and decreed fates for them¹⁴. He taught man agriculture, cattle-breeding and industry. He gave to mankind "bread to eat". He wrote all the fundamental laws of civilization on clay tablets. These were kept in Enki temple at Eridu. He was the god of wisdom, healing and every other kind of magic. In danger he was the helper. He saved humanity from the deluge by secretly instructing Ut Napistim, the Sumerian Noah, to build an ark in which he survived.

This myth, so reminiscent of the Biblical story, has led some earlier authors to believe that the strongly delineated square in which Ea's figure sometimes appears is the Ark¹⁵. Lately it is believed rather that this square symbolizes Ea's home in the watery depths¹⁶.

It is possible that the square connected with Ea — the square which surrounds him or on which he sits — is the symbol of the World, which in the Sumerian mind was something four-cornered¹⁷. The square is sometimes marked with a cross, a sign which is related to the number four.

The most frequent divine companion of Ea is his Janus-faced messenger, whose name has been read as Usmu or Isimud. He is the man sent by the god on various errands¹⁸. Another form of Ea's servant is that of the fish-man.

Often we see one or two gigantic doorkeepers¹⁹ by the throne of Ea²⁰; these are called the twins²¹.

Enki-Ea had many names²², one of them DARA-MAH "The Great Stag"²³. On this quality of Ea we may read numerous comments²⁴. This name of Ea was probably of astrological origin, connected with his benevolent activities as helper of the Sun, his nephew, whom he liberates daily from his mountain grave.

It seems that the Zodiac was the subject of early speculations by Sumerian — maybe pre-Sumerian — astrologers. In the early art of the Near East we find everywhere horned animals — stags, deer, goats, ibexes — who wear between their horns the sun-disc or a symbol of it, which may be a square, a cross or a sunbird: the eagle²⁵. The examples are well known, beginning with the pottery of Susa I. Sometimes, instead of two horns, there are two animals flanking the Sun symbol²⁶. If we ask, why is this motive so widespread, we may suppose: because it was a message of joy and happiness. When the Sun appears between the horns of the heavenly stag — i.e. at the winter solstice — winter is passing, the sun regains its former strength, the days are getting longer, a new cycle, a new year begins. A disc or a bird between horns must have stood for the Great Stag, bringing back the Sun between its horns²⁷.

The rout of winter darkness and the retrieving of the Sun must have meant the greatest possible service to a more or less primitive human society. No wonder that the cult of the benefactor persisted so long.

Helping humanity is traditional in Ea's family. His son, Dumuzig—later known as Tammuz and much later as Adonis—is the shepherd-god who dies with the dying vegetation, but comes back to life, too, like the plants. The epithet of this god is SABA (staff holder, shepherd-prince), which recalls the name Csaba of the young prince of Hungarian legend, the immortal hero who always returns to help his people. His plant has the power to heal all wounds, too, probably being related to the ever-green Tree of Life, which is the symbol of Tammuz.

Two Hungarian chronicles preserved a name taken from the ancient pagan religion: that of the god DAMAÇEC. This corresponds obviously to DUMUZIG. After the conversion of the Hungarians to Christianity, most of the legends which made up the Magian religion of the forefathers, were discarded. Yet, the Csaba story survived. The figure of Csaba was smuggled over, from mythology to history, by medioeval chronicle writers, who rationalized the concept: "son of the great Ruler" and wrote that Csaba was son of Attila, king of the Huns. We are informed by those chronicles that the real Huns rallied around Csaba, who saved a small group when most of them were killed, led them to safety and bid them to prepare for reconquering Pannonia. Árpád, the historical figure of the Hungarian conquest in the ninth century A. D., is said to be a descendant of legendary Csaba.

It is well possible that in contrast with his father, Dar-Mah, the Great Stag, Saba was once thought of as the Little Stag or goat which would sound as DAR-GE. This could account for later divine names in the Near East, like Tarku, Targitaos, etc.; ultimately for the names TURK and TUR-AN, this later being the land covered by the Northern Sky, the sky of Capricorn, as opposed to IRAN, covered by the Southern Sky (UR-AN), the sky of Leo.

On the seals of the Kassites—a people of speech and race which is little known but of whom Moortgat remarks that they had many graphic ideas and symbols in common with the early Sumerians—we often see a divinity who may be Ea, or rather Marduk, the son of Ea. On these seals the Kassite cross appears frequently²⁸. We see also in the art of the mountain peoples, neighbors of Mesopotamia, horned animals defending the Tree of Life.

Sumerian thought deeply influenced Greek thought. We may wonder—like the British editor of Lenormant—whether the cult of Ea had not something to do with the idea of Thales, that the first cause of all things was water? May not Ea have influenced the use of the word EU "good"? Had Father Ea something to do with the concept of a later IU ppiter?

On the peripheries, far away in space and time, a snake cult, or a tree cult seems indicative of some cult of Ea and his family²⁹. But the staunchest survivor seems to be the stag cult.

Indeed, the Celtic divinity Cernunnos, so ably described by Phillis Pray Bober, may well be one of Ea's late manifestations³⁰. He is a god of waters, like Ea, wearing horns and a torque (the ring, left over after disappearance of the rod) like Sumerian divinities, and accompanied by a horned serpent, which is probably a variant of Ea's horned fish. (The water streams of Ea, if they are carelessly drawn, may easily be mistaken for snakes.)

The Celts, however, were certainly not the last carriers of Mesopotamian traditions towards the West.

At the time of Rome's decline, among the Eastern cults which invaded the empire must have been the cult of the divine stag, and his father, the divine bull (Enlil). Early Christianity found entrenched in Rome the Babylonian custom of celebrating New Year or winter solstice, with green wreathes, food and drink, song and dance, exchange of gifts, and people enacting the heavenly drama in masks of stags and bulls. The custom remained popular all over Europe. We have a series of documents from the fourth to the ninth centuries in which Church authorities of many countries forbid the people to have anything to do with these pagan practices³¹.

Condemned and vehemently denounced over many centuries, the originally benevolent stag divinity became in people's minds the devil, with horns and cloven hoofs. This is why a diabolical stag, which leads its followers to destruction, appears in later European folklore. Such is the Finnish stag of Hiisi³².

Since we cannot follow up all the traces, let us examine one of the best survivals of the old traditions: the stag of light in Hungarian history and folklore.

In a former study³³ I tried to explain how the Hungarians of the ninth century could bring with them a wealth of Babylonian traditions and the staunchly conserved hieratic language of the Magians.

It seems that they also brought along the cult of the benevolent stag divinity. The chronicles state that the Hungarians in their westward migration were guided by a white stag. According to the sense of the somewhat cryptic national traditions, the great mother of the Hungarians conceived the conquering duke in a hieros gamos with the divine eagle— (the eagle of Ea, the eagle of Lagash?). Her name is Emese. The corresponding Sumerian word Emes, according to Deimel, is "priestess of Ea"³⁴. She dreams about the future: a mighty river issuing from her womb covers distant lands...³⁵. Such a hieros gamos seems to be illustrated on a gold vessel said to be of Bulgaro-Turkish origin. We even find traces of the name DARA-NAH³⁶.

The divinity to whom these signs point, was, it seems, regularly celebrated at the feast of Karácsony — the Hungarian word today for Christmas— of unexplained etymology. It seems to conserve in its first syllable the Sumerian GAR "turning" or "originating".

About 50 years ago a special ethnographic survey revealed in Hungary 179 villages which observed the traditions of "Reg"³⁷ or "Regolés"— the pagan or semi-pagan celebration of the New Year.

Gy. Sebestyén collected and published in one volume all the variants of the "Reg" ceremonies and songs; in a second volume he wrote a study on the probable origins and the European analogues of the custom³⁸. The essence of this custom is that on Christmas or New Year's night³⁹ a group of singers go from house to house in the village, dressed in queer costumes or animal skins, often with blackened faces. They carry special instruments, drums, sticks with chains and other noise-makers, with which to rattle at the end of every verse they sing. They ask for permission to enter, and if admitted, they proceed to sing their song, which announces that God has descended upon the house, angels bringing a table covered with food and drink amid a great light: now is the time to feast! Most of the songs speak of a miraculous young stag, which comes through the clouds, from heaven, and brings the sun between its bright horns.

In the song a lake appears full of fish, in the lake a round island rises⁴⁰, the miraculous stag descends upon it and feeds on the young reeds. In some variants, the stag speaks; he asks King Saint Stephen (the energetic uprooter of pagan traditions) not to hunt him, for he is not a wild animal, not a devil he is the Lord God's messenger! After this, the most important part of the song is a series of blessings, which are all wishes for the prosperity and fertility of the family, their crops, their animals. In many places the singers arrange marriages; they mention together a girl and a boy who should get married. The young people take this seriously, it is the voice of public opinion. Every verse is followed by rattling, dancing and various forms of the following refrain: *EJ REGÜ REJTEM!* This refrain, which has no meaning in Modern Hungarian, has been repeatedly analyzed for half a century and many suggestions have been offered to explain it, none of them satisfactory⁴¹. The refrain may perhaps be a magic formula: Ea's incantation. At the end of the song, the singers levy a toll on the house; they ask for half of the cash the master of the house has, while from the mistress they ask a bountiful gift of foodstuffs⁴². In fact they are satisfied with a much smaller gift, but the song may preserve the memory of ancient priestly demands.

Today the group of the "regös" singers is usually a gang of young boys who keep up the old tradition for the sake of the gifts which may be collected⁴³. But the name "regös" points to an order of professionals which must once have performed the ceremony.

The "regös" name of the old royal entertainers is fully documented⁴⁴. May we add that, while 179 villages have conserved the old custom under its own special name, there are many more places where variants of the ceremony exist under different names: for example, the "Turkajárás"⁴⁵ or "Szüzgulyafordítás"⁴⁶. Sebestyén brings up many analogies in the solstice feasts of Poland, Roumania, and the Southern Slavic countries. While he recognizes expressly that the center of the territory where the custom still lives is Hungary, Sebestyén believes that the Hungarians inherited it from Rome, in a complicated way, through hypothetical Avar-Slovene Székelys. This explanation is scarcely acceptable. According to what we know of the Roman and the Western ceremonies, these were but faint echoes, a masquerading carnival with the masks of the Zodiac animals. The Hungarian ceremony was a serious religious rite—organic fertility magic—called by its true Mesopotamian name, which survived in Hungary only. It was a more complete and stronger variant which arrived in Europe at a time when the Western practice was dying. It did not come thorough Rome, but straight from the East, as the last conscious ritual in honor of the beneficent Great Stag god. Christian clerics made constant war against the pagan tradition and called it "the feast of the devil"⁴⁷—in Hungary, as elsewhere. Thus the ancient "Lord of the Depth" gradually became the Lord of Hell.

Stags and birds remained popular subjects of art. But the Sumerian *DARAMAH* name of Enki survived only in the queer devil-names⁴⁸ *DORÓMÓ*, *DURUMÓ*, *DROMÓ*, used all over Hungary to denote the Prince of Darkness⁴⁸.

Such was the end of the great and ancient bringer of light. In the decorative arts, the symbols of Ea live on independently. The stags who guard the Tree of Life reappear, but people have forgotten their meaning⁴⁹. The divine face goes into hiding, behind a camouflage of flowers. Only

the keen glance discerns in Hungarian ornaments the round eyes, the eyebrows, the horns of the horned divinity. If you ask the Hungarian peasant woman what she embroidered on her pillowcase, she will answer: tulips. But look and you will see the ancient message of resurrection, the horns of the Great Stag and between them the disc of the victorious Sun.

NOTES

¹ Ea, according to F. Lenormant: "dwelling, house" (Chaldean Magic, London 1878, p. 155). But in the Sumerian mind "to build" was related to create, "to generate". Ea, "Beischlaf". F. Delitzsch, Sumerisches Glossar, Leipzig, 1914 p. 30.

² A. DEIMEL: Sumerisches Lexicon II. 3. N° 925.

³ Enki was preceded by Anu, the distant sky divinity of the universe and Enlil, the "Holy Wind", the violent storm god. Ninmah, the great mother, goddess of birth-giving, preceded Enki, too. S. N. KRAMER: *Sumerian Mythology*, Philadelphia, 1944, p. 63.

⁴ Kramer, op. cit. p. 63.

⁵ Kramer, op. cit. p. 70.

⁶ L. HEUZEY: *Le Sceau de Goudéa*. Revue d'Assyriologie, 1902, p. 30.

⁷ STEPHEN LANGDON: *Semitic Mythology*, p. 95, and L. HEUZEY: *Les Origines Orientales de l'Art*, Paris, 1915, p. 156.

⁸ E. DOUGLAS VAN BUREN: *Symbols of the Gods in Mesopotamian Art*. *Annalecta Orientalia*, Roma, 1945, p. 104.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 155.

¹⁰ L. HEUZEY: *Le Sceau de Goudéa*, p. 133.

¹¹ H. FRANKFORT: *Cylinder Seals*, London, 1939, p. 122-23.

¹² In one of the still not quite clear myths of creation we are told that after a rather complicated process of impregnating a series of divine ladies, Enki became the father of a variety of plants and trees. But being curious, he ate those plants, which reminds one of the later Saturn story. The goddess of birth cursed Enki for this and he almost died of the curse, but then the great lady had pity on him and began to bear again. That much is clear, that Father Enki, the personified Water, is the father of plants, too. Kramer, op. cit. p. 57.

¹³ KRAMER: op. cit. p. 70.

¹⁴ KRAMER: op. cit. p. 59.

¹⁵ L. HEUZEY: *Le Sceau de Goudéa*, p. 131.

¹⁶ FRANKFORT: op. cit. p. 123.

¹⁷ "Four corners of the world" are often mentioned. We may have inherited this concept in the four cardinal points of our compass, which are arbitrary. In connection with Ea's throne, mostly square and bearing the sign of the cross we may recall that four strokes of the stylus made a sign which Delitzsch reads as NIG, "something, anything, treasure, possession", connecting it with the identically written GAR, "to be, to become" (Op. cit. pp. 80 and 200). Fossey gives to this sign the meanings: "four; to bring; to place". (*Syllabaire Cuneiforme*, Paris, 1901, no. 509). Deimel reads it as NINDA and interprets it as having the meanings "four" and "bread box". (N° 597). The same sign is explained by J. Dineley Prince as having evolved from a square, with the meaning "building". Prince believes that the sign had two pronunciations: GAR and NGA (p. 110). The same author explains an almost identical sign as "surround, totality, collect" pronounced GAAR, but the name of the sign is NINDA. He explains also the word NIGI as dwelling. The sign list of Stephen Langdon gives a square as the early sign for "totality, universe". (p. 294). R. Jestin translates NIG as possession, treasury, luck, everything: "toute chose". (*Le verbe Sumérien*, Paris, 1943, p. 395). His words for GAR: "introniser, rétablir". We may add to these data for consideration that in Hungarian four is NÉGY, totality is MINDEN and the great feast of Ea, the winter solstice—today Christmas—is called (GAR-A-SU-MU) KARÁCSONY. These data belong to the already copious literature on the "four-corners".

¹⁸ Many years ago Lenormant believed that the fish-man Oannes mentioned by Berossus or the Euhannes of Hyginus are identical with Enki-Ea. (François Lenormant: *Chaldean Magic and Sorcery*, p. 203). This view is still held by Charles Virolleaud (*Légendes de Babylone*, Paris, 1949, p. 17). We must rather believe that the two-faced messenger and doorkeeper, the door incarnate (Ianua) is the famous Oannes or later Janus, the divinity of entrance and beginning. January begins the year, right after the feast of

the winter solstice Janus, the messenger of the water-god may be the prototype of a later Joannes, who christened with water and walked before the God-man. The leader of the last pagan resistance in Hungary was called Janus, too.

¹⁹ These reminded L. HEUZEY of the later myth about the columns of Hercules. *Le Sceau de Goudéa*, p. 133.

²⁰ E. DOUGLAS VAN BUREN: *Symbols of the Gods*, p. 46.

²¹ TALIM meaning "twins or companions". Frankfort, op. cit. p. 60. These twins may well be the heavenly Gemini, or the first Cherub angels. KUR in Sumerian means "guarding" (Deimel, S. A., p. 147: Bewachung).

The door leading to Enki is probably of symbolic importance: it may be the door which separates man's *defined* world from Enki's infinite depth, the Abzu.

The long life of such mythological concepts seems to be illustrated by the importance of the secret trap door, which recurs in Hungarian folklore, the door of the underworld through which the hero has to pass when in quest of the "Water of Life". The archaic name for door, passage, in Hungarian is AJ.

²² Lenormant's reading of the name was HEA. On the names of Enki-Ea see Deimel: *Akkadisch Sumerisches Glossar*, p. 91. Among them are: DINGIR MAGUR "the god boat", NUDIMMUD "creator", DINGIR KAR-RA-E and MUL GULA. In Sumerian times Enki, in Accadian times Ea was the generally used name. It may be supposed that these names were somehow related with the Sumerian root A. meaning both water and father, or generation. Deimel, when treating this root, mention its resemblance to Indoeur. AHWA "water". (Sum. Akk. Gl. p. 1). A. FALKENSTEIN writes: "...vielmehr kommt der Zeichen E in der alteren Zeit der Lautwert A zu..." (Die Sprache Gudeas. Roma, 1949, p. 25). These suggest one more addition to the innumerable attempts to explain the holy name JAHVE. Did not a very early common culture of many peoples possess the concept of a god-water or god father, the Creator?

²³ DARA, DAR, TAR were in Sumerian generic names of the swift cervidae, ibex, mountain goat, deer, stag, perhaps mouflon.

²⁴ "The ibex or ture (*Capra Caucasia*)... was also perhaps AYALUM in Babylonian, Hebrew AYAL... The Assyrian TURAKHU is translated Steinbock by Delitzsch. It is one of the names of Ea... and forms part of four other names of Ea". WARD: *Cylinder Seals*, p. 416.

²⁵ "A pre-Sargonid god of fertility, worshipped throughout the land, under a variety of epithets was represented everywhere in his warlike aspect by the lion headed eagle". Cf H. FRANKFORT: *Early Dynastic Sculptured Maceheads*. A. Orientalia 1935, p. 105.

²⁶ Creating one of the heraldic schemes, which Edith Porada has well called Mesopotamia's legacy to later art. *Mesopotamian Art in Cylinder Seals*, N. Y. 1947.

²⁷ Much material to illustrate the connections of art and astrology has been assembled by Prof. Willy Hartner, which he showed in a lecture: *Early Traces of the Zodiac in the Near East*. Chicago University. 1949.

²⁸ *Bildwerk und Volkstum Vorderasiens zur Hethiterzeit*. Leipzig. 1934, p. 12.

²⁹ Ea was a divinity of the subterranean waters. Vladimir Georgiev, the Bulgarian decipherer of Minoan inscriptions, tells us that YA was the Minoan syllable expressed with what we call the Delta letter, and which corresponds to Latin ianus, underground passage. (*Inscriptions Minoennes Quasi Bilingues Annuaire de l'Université de Sofia*. 1950, p. 21). The wise animal inhabiting the wet underground passages is the snake. And we are told: the mysterious prehistoric stone buildings of Western Europe occur invariably at spots where underground water currents are meeting (Charles Diot: *Les Sourciers et les Monuments Mégalithiques*. Boug, 1935). Lenormant stated "that the serpent was one of the principal attributes and one of the forms of Hea". (*Chald. Mag.*, p. 232). The snake of Ea seems to be somehow related to Marduk's dragon. The dragon in Hungarian folklore is often called SÁRKÁNYKÍGYÓ, "dragon-snake".

³⁰ *American Journal of Archaeology*. Vol. 55, N° 1.

³¹ Enumerated by Sebestyén, op. cit. p. 291-304.

³² Hiisi is a spirit of the underworld, the underworld itself. Hiisi rides a vicious fish, who swims in the waters of Tuonela, the underworld. The fish tries to catch the souls of the deceased; he makes himself a body of plants and appears over the earth as stag to lure the living. Kalevala, 13th Runo.

³³ *Sumerian Affiliations*. Washington, 1950.

³⁴ "e. Priesterin Ea's". *Sum. Akk. Glossar*, p. 92.

³⁵ Ea's name may be hidden in the archaic Hungarian word for river: 10. The idea of "good" is expressed in Hungarian by the word jó. A royal edict of the XI-th century forbade Hungarians to celebrate at rivers, fountains and trees. But a belief in the fertility magic of water survived until modern times (East).

³⁶ Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, Byzantine emperor and writer, relates that in the

X-th century a young prince of Hungary visited Constantinople — his name was Ter-matzous. (M. H. K. p. 128).

³⁷ The Hungarian word REG corresponds to Sumerian RIG, "to speak, recite". (Deimel, S-A, p. 191: Sprechen), also to Accadian RAGAHU (Deimel A. S., p. 395: schreien, rufen, beanspruchen); maybe to Sanscrit rk*, too — see RIG-VEDA.

³⁸ Regös énekek, A. Regösök. Budapest, 1902, Athenaeum.

³⁹ In mediaeval centuries the year began on December 25th — only since the end of the XV-th century have Christmas and New Year been separated.

⁴⁰ The house of Ea, the "mountain of Ea" emerged from the waters, too. (Falkenstein, op. cit., p. 25).

⁴¹ The first word: EJ or HEJ —an exclamation— contains perhaps the name EA or HEA. The second means: recitation. The third word: REJTEM may be related to Sumerian RI "to protect" —UH "magic"— Accadian RUHTU "magic". The refrain meaning: "Ea's recitation: protective magic".

⁴² In some variants the foods are enumerated: a large ox to roast, hazelnuts for stuffing and Perec cakes to hang on the horns of the ox. The perec is a round hard cake, which has a hole like a doughnut and recalls the torques of Cernunnos.

⁴³ Some texts of songs, photographs of the groups and descriptions of the ceremony in Vol. 3 of A Magyarorszag Néprajza, Budapest, 1938. Egyetemi Nyomda, p. 357.

⁴⁴ In a document of King Louis of Anjou, dated 1347. After the extinction of the national royal house, bad days must have come upon the former order of royal entertainers. The document states that the former property of the "Combibatorum Regalium conditionarium vulgariter Regus dictorum" the land called "Regteluk" is given now to a comes Lorand. K. SZABÓ: A Királyi Regösokról. Szabadok, 1881, p. 553.

⁴⁵ A group of boys go round leading one of their number in stag's mask. Many variations of the custom are described in ethnographic publications.

⁴⁶ The word means: "turning the virgin cattle". A group of men go from house to house on New Year's night and make a noise with whips, horns and bells under the windows. This custom of several Hungarian villages in county Zemplén is described in Ethnographia, Budapest, 1926, p. 89. We may read there about the custom of Hajduszoboszló, county Hajdu: lighting fires and sounding cowbells at New Year's night.

⁴⁷ G. HELTAI: *Dialogus*. Kolozsvár, 1552, Introduction.

⁴⁸ The name is documented in witch processes: witches confessing that they were in the "army of Drómó". See also Ipolyi: Magyar Mythologia. The variant Dorómó occurs in a play of Csokonai: Tempefői. Listed as Durumó in the Magyar Etymologiai Szótár with the remark, "etymology unknown". (Gombocz Melich, Budapest, 1930, p. 1451).

⁴⁹ B. HÓMAN: a Hungarian scholar of German origin, contended that the stag of the Hungarian origin-myths was a loan from German traditions. (A Magyar Húnhagyomány és Hún-Monda. Budapest, 1932, p. 64-65). Berze-Nagy refuses to believe Sebestyén's good guess too, that the Hungarian stag is connected with the Capricorn of the Zodiac—he tries to prove that the Hungarian stag was female, could not have horns, and came from Eastern folklore and is of eschatologic character; it originated in the IX-th century A. D. We believe we have shown that Berze is right about the Eastern direction, but the stag is much older than a mere 1000 years. Being miraculous, it could well be female, yet have horns. We have pictures of such animals (e.g. in Scythian art.).