

The¹ Aata² of D'nalyram³ by Susan F. Kromholz and Alexander Randall Vⁱ

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During the autumn of 1978, a field of study was begun emphasizing the various environmental and social factors at the local, regional and interregional levels, of the ethnology of an unusual group of nomadic wise men/women from the province of D'nalyram. This group of professional miracle-workers comprises a discrete social construct, and as such, is a logical choice for a very limited study of this nature.⁴

Few references to the Aata of D'nalyram exist in the professional literature, whether anthropological or sociological. However, by utilizing these meager studies⁵ and by constructing models for evaluating the contexts and constructs of the Aata, the authors have been able to develop an incomplete picture of this culture. Initially, it must be noted that the Aata practice individual transhumance⁶ and that they are clearly without formal territory, land, or visible means of support. To add to the confusion, while D'nalyram is, in fact, a province of the New World, the Aata are based in the Old world⁷, functioning on the periphery of the territories of the warriors of the pentagone.⁸ D'nalyram, as a New World province, is contiguous with the capitol of the Lane of the WE (or US), at Pound

¹ Generic Plural

² The sobriquet 'Aata' is believed to be derived from the marriage of titles of two levels of wizards (AA and TA respectively). These levels are known to exist. Other levels may also be present in D'nalyram (viz. PA--Permanently Anointed) but if so, members of these sub-groups are tied to the soil in a headquarters of sorts and do not, strictly speaking, belong in a study of Aata group dynamics.

³ pronounced "dálly-ram".

⁴ The authors, Drs. S. Foster Kromholz (AB, MA-ABT, MA, PhD, AA) and Alexander Randall V (BS, MA, MEd, EdD, AA) wish to express their deep and sincere thanks to Mr. Halvard Brooks Johnson (BA, MA, ABD, TA) and Ms. Cameron Hall (BA, MA, TA) for their continuing derision, and also to the directors of the Golden Fleece Foundation for their grant No. D12345A which has supported this landmark study.

⁵ No works referred to will be referred to in the body of the text.

⁶ Look it up!

⁷ Note that indigenous Americans might quibble with this use of terms. The authors, however, stand by their ethnocentricity.

⁸ probably not related in any way to the mythical British warrior king Pendragon, a contemporary of the mythical British warrior King Arthur. (nb. T.H. White, *The Once and Future King*, Putnam, 1958.)

Laundry.⁹ Unfortunately, it is not at all clear whether or not the Aata are truly full-fledged members of the WE, or if they have, at any rate, possibly, an organized affiliation thereto. However, although documentary evidence is scanty, the authors believe (with heavy hearts) that it is probable that the Aata pay regular indulgences to the political bosses of the WE.

Numerous ethnographic and ethnologic studies of wizard societies have presented models that allow the authors to posit that the Aata are clearly a group derived from the same tradition as the druids and magi who occupied two of the lands conquered by the warriors of the Pentagone. It is not possible, however, to connect the Aata directly with either of these groups.¹⁰

In organization the Aata consist of a bi-sexual group of wise people whose primary function is considered to be the instruction of the young warriors of the Pentagone. The Aata are connected with the lore of the "high arts." They speak an Indo-European dialect, known as "lecturese," in the course of their multi fold duties. They are easily recognizable (to cognoscente) in that they affect a ritual costume built around special blue pants. It is thought that the donning of these pants (worn by males and females alike) aids in creating an atmosphere of separation between the Aata and their students. Most of the latter wear ritual costumes of green.¹¹ The blue pants of the Aata are reputed to last forever. The authors doubt that this myth has a basis in reality.

The Aata are unquestionably a landless group. On no occasion has a single Aatan been observed in the course of his duty with more than his worldly possessions stuffed into the trunk of a pre-aged car. The utilization of cars by the Aata of D'nalyram is an interesting phenomenon, but not as interesting as the manner in which the Aata use High Magic to keep the pitifully obsolete vehicles running. There are a large number of secret incantations and rituals¹² used whenever the pov's are taken onto the road. The vehicles

⁹ R. Nathan, *Digging the Weans* (Knopf, 1960) passim. Concerning an alternate reading, Nathan writes: "Obelgast-Levy translates the first word of the name as 'washing'; the second is obviously the sign for 'weight'. It is not known what--if anything--was washed there."

¹⁰ A connection might be made, however, to Bryant's study of wizardry among the Ata. The authors note the semantic similarity (the Aatans are often known to lose an "A") and also the fact that Bryant's tribe are wizards of sleep. The Aata are noteworthy for their ability to put young warriors into a soporific state resembling trance or total abandon. See: *The Kin of Ata are Waiting for You*.

¹¹ The authors note that these rituals are fully delineated in the classic study, *The Body Ritual of the Nacirema* (University of Chicago offprints), and suggest that the Aata are possibly a sect of the Nacirema, although this theory is at variance with the opinion that they are associated with the WE. This question requires considerable further research and another substantial grant-in-aid.

¹² All too boring to detail here.

are held in great importance, as they allow the Aata to battle constantly with their greatest enemies, of whom the most fearsome is said to be called "Glatteis" (or Black Eyes).¹³

Glatteis is a formidable enemy indeed, and many an Aatan has been known to rain curses on Him. It is said that by praying to the proper elders of the Aatan (members of the PA, see footnote 2) it is possible to individual Aatans to avoid confrontation with Glatteis, but this claim could not be substantiated by the authors, nor could a model be found to deal with the multi fold aspects of this construct. In any case, no Aatan will have to confront Glatteis for an extended period, since the Aata move constantly from Pentagonian camp to Pentagonian camp.

An Aatan receives a geometric series of magic papers, each telling him his next destination. These papers are printed laboriously by the (PA) Office of Logs and Sticks¹⁴ and carry symbols of great runic power, the most formidable of which is an impression bearing the high ritual rune "GS-IS". Although it has been impossible to establish the exact meaning of this rune, the authors believe that it might concern the Intelligence Quotient of its bearer. At any rate, the symbols allow the Aata to transit to their new locations, although they are seldom read by anyone.

These runic messages are further significant in that they involve part of the rites des passages whereby the Aata rise in rank. The most confusing aspect of these runes, however, is that they are reported magically to change message, and as a result, force an Aatan in mid-travel to change direction and head for a new camp. These magic changes often occur in conjunction with Aatan travels to the mythic land of Myd (or Mëd) .

When an Aatan disappears suddenly, he/she is said to have "gone to Myd". This is a magic land similar in detail to the Isles of the Blessed¹⁵ or the Western Isles¹⁶. In Myd, the warrior students are all eager to learn and properly venerate their Aatan teachers. The sun shines every day in Myd, and when rain is needed for the crops, it falls only at

¹³ ME akin to or <glättenrusse <L.glotlusem, whence O.S. *glockenleisen?: prob. Echoic. *Oder etwas so ähnlich*: O.H.G.

¹⁴ It has been suggested that the Office of Logs and Sticks is derived from the Latinate logic or the Platonic logos. This derivation supposes a connection with a rational process, however which cannot be substantiated. More likely, this curious title is related to the Hopi system of rain dancing as reported by many anthropologists (n.c.v. "*National Geographic Magazine*," var. dates.).

¹⁵ peruse: R. Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Penguin, 1955).

¹⁶ peruse: J. Weston, *From Ritual to Romance* (Doubleday, 1957).

night.¹⁷ All the sheep in Hyd have fat tails.¹⁸ Olives fall ripe off the olive trees, without pits and stuffed with a red substance. These details, of course, represent the usual touchingly naive attempt by primitive tribes to compensate for the rigors of their precarious existences.

Everyone in Myd is healthy, although selected Aata whisper that a dread disease stalks the magic land. This disease seems to affect the Aata's lower gastrointestinal system. Nevertheless, the Aata are willing to do anything to get to Myd.

Perhaps the most mysterious aspect of the Aata is their anonymity. Although they are of elevated rank among the warriors of the Pentagone, and although they are often seen partaking of Pentagonal food and drink, yet the magic markings they carry are sometimes not recognized by the guardians of the Pentagonal camps. Further, in direct contradiction with general Pentagonal practices, shelter is often not provided for the Aata as they travel from camp to camp. Some Aata do report that derelict and/or deserted yurts are sometimes lent to them for a short time, but this is increasingly rare.

Of all the lore taught to the young warriors of the Pentagone by the Aata, the most important seems to be the magic of the rune "7". This rune has a special meaning in the compilation of data (socialization, articulative dynamics, ineluctable modality of the visible¹⁹, ad nauseum) pertinent to the elevation of the Aata within their greater peer groups. The ritual of elevation is known by the sacred name²⁰ of SOCRATES (*Student Often Criticize Rituals (that) Aatans Term Essentially Significant*). The authors have been unable to determine why the Aata, a twentieth century clan, should employ the name of a Greek philosopher in their rites. We conclude that this is a serendipitous usage.

One final aspect of the Atta of D'nalyram must be discussed. Yearly, soon after the spring equinox and shortly before the summer solstice, the Aata foregather and enact a ceremony fraught with magic, pagan mysteries and the planting of seeds. Unfortunately, as the Aata are (now) a landless tribe, aspects of the ceremony relating to fecundity have, of necessity, become greatly ritualized.²¹ In the ceremony, those few young warriors who have survived the rigors of the instruction, have internalized the magic of "7" and have paid monetary tribute to the appropriate elders are permitted to don ceremonial garb

¹⁷ Op.cit. "Camelot".

¹⁸ perhaps related to the Aatan ritual of initiation, viz. below. Nb. "parchment". (Look THAT up.)

¹⁹ James Joyce: somewhere.

²⁰ nb.: YHWH, SOMA, OED.

²¹ see reports of Cherokee Indian spring rituals related to the Old Testament festival of Succoth (C. Gordon, *Before Columbus*, Crown, 1971.)

consisting of a square hat and black cape. Dancing two by two (in imitation of the Aata) the initiates' parade to the sound of strange music called "*Pumping Circumferences*" (after the patterns of the dance?). They come to rest in rows, and are then lulled by the repetition of ancient chants, known by all but spoken only by the most elderly and derelict of the Aata. It is at this time that the initiates learn the Aatan chant "*A horse divided against itself cannot stand*" and learn the most sacred slogan of the wizards of D'nalyram: "*Flexibilius adque Rigidicum*".²²

In conclusion, the authors feel that the Aata of D'nalyram represent an aberrant group at odds with the socio-economic realities of today's world, and that, as such, they should be continually fostered, thus providing fertile ground for further study.²³ ii

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Editor please note: A modern reprint might include "where they are now..."

ⁱⁱ The authors wish to dedicate the above study to their friend and colleague, the Aatan Phil McGarr. They think he would have loved it.

²² Flexible yet Rigid

²³ whereas this report has no relation to anything, any resemblances to anyone/thing/place un/kown, are purely intentional.