

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]

DUNGEON MASTER™
Guide

2nd Edition

Rules
Supplement

Creative Campaigning

Sample file



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Alternate Campaigns

The kingdom of Ulova is a land of pastoral beauty and shocking savagery. King Thuon rules from his castle in the bustling city of Stoneburg. His knights defend the land against raids by the goblins of the Treacherous Hills, while the Tanglebranch Forest harbors enclaves of wood elves and their deadly enemies, the gnolls. The Granite Mountains are home to the ancient kingdom of the dwarves, while far in the north, the Evil Dark Lord Sythas threatens to bring all free peoples under his terrible yoke, with his hordes of undead warriors, orcs, goblins, evil sorcerers, and . . .

Sound familiar? With minor variations, the passage above could apply to thousands of different AD&D® campaigns. Set in a kind of medieval Europe writ large, it includes the typical castles, knights, sorcerers, elves, magical swords, orcs, dwarves, and generic evil dark lords that have become the staples of

fantasy fiction. Most are not true medieval states, but a historical hodge podge incorporating elements of the ancient, Renaissance, colonial, and even industrial ages in a free-wheeling mish-mash of ideas intended for entertainment more than accuracy.

Since *fantasy* is the operative word here, nothing is inherently wrong with a campaign like this. If the idea didn't work, there wouldn't be so many campaigns of this type. Medieval or even pseudo-medieval campaigns can be rich and rewarding, and provide players with endless adventure.

But occasionally, a DM or player wants something different. Why limit campaigns to the ordinary when there are so many possibilities? The ancient world did not consist solely of Europe; fantasy fiction is not limited to endless repetitions of simplistic good guy vs. bad guy clichés.



Many other game settings exist, a few of which are detailed in AD&D® products, such as far east adventuring in Kara Tur, nomadic cultures of the asian steppes in the Horde setting, and the exotic cultures of Central America in Maztica. In the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, the Gazetteer series provides guidelines for developing many non-European lands.

More territory awaits gamers in the settings of the polar regions, the Trojan War, the American Revolution, ancient Egypt, the stone age, and the African jungles. Player characters might be hired to assist the building of the pyramids, to deliver a message to Napoleon before he reaches Waterloo, or to accompany the Lewis and Clark expedition.

There is even more to fantasy than historical Earth. The worlds of fantasy fiction are exotic and unique, and all can provide ideas to the ambitious DM who wishes to expand his or her campaign beyond the realms of the ordinary.

This section of *Creative Campaigning* is intended to assist DMs in creating new and original campaign settings. Several major types of campaigns will be discussed, along with specific examples which may be used as described or as a guide for the DM to develop.

The Joys of Research

The suggestions in this section can only scratch the surface of the myriad alternative campaign styles. The information provided here should serve as a springboard for further investigation and research. Aspiring DMs are encouraged to investigate their local libraries and bookstores for more information on the historical eras, cultures, and peoples discussed below.

Campaigns in Historical Time Periods

Giuseppi knew something was wrong the moment he entered the alley. The cloaked figures appeared, silhouetted in the gaslight. Giuseppi redoubled his steps, only to find the other end of the alley blocked by two more figures—these with drawn rapiers. Giuseppi's heart raced as he realized he was trapped. Desperately, he turned back, only to find his other pursuers close behind.

"Giuseppi Cardillo!" said low, grim voice. One of the figures threw back his hood. "You have stolen something from the guild of magicians. Return it, and your death will be swift."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Giuseppi stammered. His enemy knew he was lying, but Giuseppi hoped he could buy some time. He fumbled beneath his cloak until his hand felt the reassuring sensation of metal and polished wood.

"Fool!" spat the enemy wizard, raising his hands to cast a spell. "Prepare to die!"

"No!" Giuseppi shouted, pulling twin pistols from his belt, cloak whirling. Without hesitation he fired, the flintlocks flashing with a roar like thunder in the cramped space of the alleyway.

The wizard tumbled backwards, astonishment on his face, and Giuseppi rushed away from his shocked pursuers, out of the alley, and into the busy street beyond.

Wait a minute. Pistols? Gaslight? What kind of AD&D® campaign is this? The answer, of course, is that it is a campaign set in an alternate time period from the typical middle or dark ages.

While some guidelines for setting your AD&D campaign in other time periods are given in the core rules books, most of the rules are geared toward the medieval period. This portion of *Creative Campaigning* is intended to expand upon the Dark Ages through Renaissance periods listed in chapter six of the *DUNGEON MASTER™ Guide*.

For each period discussed below, the following considerations are addressed:

Overview—a general description of the period and pertinent philosophy.

Basic rules modifications—adjustments to character classes; equipment based on technology; money; magic; and monsters appropriate to the setting.

Note that the campaign restrictions listed below are only suggestions. If they do not conform to your own view of the period described, change them to suit your needs.

Remember that the brief overviews given can provide only the barest glimpses of these rich historical periods. As stated earlier, much more wonder and color can be created by researching these periods at your local library.

The Bronze Age

Overview: The age of ancient Babylon, Persia, and Greece is a period of legendary heroism, deadly monsters, and powerful gods.

The world is divided into small kingdoms or city-states. Many early social systems such as monarchy, democracy, and oligarchy are developing. The people are often suspicious of strangers, and warfare between the infant kingdoms is frequent.

Not only do the gods truly exist as living entities in the minds of the people, but they walk the land, often in the company of monsters or legendary heroes. In this era, heroes could outwit or outfight the gods and win. Gods take sides in human conflict, sending good fortune to their chosen champions and catastrophe to those who are out of favor.

Omens and prophecies carry particular potency in bronze age life. Soothsayers and oracles are highly respected, and even the most obscure prediction is seen as a message from the gods and treated with deadly seriousness.

The bronze age is, above all else, an age of

heroes, when 300 brave warriors could hold off the gathered forces of an entire empire (as did King Leonidas and his Spartans at the pass of Thermopylae), or a lone band of adventurers could topple kingdoms and change the course of history, as did Perseus, Odysseus, and Jason. It is an era, therefore, well suited to AD&D® game adventures.

Class restrictions: The following classes are restricted:

Fighter: Rangers do not exist.

Wizard: Magic is a young science. Spellcasting is slower; all time units are increased by one unit (i.e., a spell that takes one segment to cast now takes one round, a spell requiring one round now takes a turn, and so on). Illusionists and diviners are the only specialist mages allowed. Spells of levels seven, eight, and nine do not exist.

Clerics: Priests and druids are allowed, and can be very powerful. However, they derive their spells from gods who are notoriously fickle. Each time a clerical spell is cast, there is a percentage chance equal to the spell level that it will not work because the god is otherwise occupied, upset, asleep, etc. This percentage is cumulative each day; if a cleric has cast three first level spells (1% each=3%), two fourth (4% each=8%), and a sixth (6%), then attempts to cast a fifth level spell (5%), there is a 22% chance that the spell will fail. This accumulation never exceeds 95%.

If the result of a roll is 01 (except on a 1st level spell), then the cleric has offended the god in some fashion and suffers a catastrophe, resulting in the spell backfiring, or having an alternate or opposite effect. Once a cleric's spell has failed, he or she may not cast any more spells for the rest of the day.

Rogues: Locks, as we know them, do not exist in the classical world. The lockpicking ability is therefore eliminated.

Otherwise, thieves and bards function normally. Bards take on an important role in classical society, telling tales of ancient bravery

and inspiring the general populace, as Homer did in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

Weapons and Equipment: Table 23: *Equipment by Time Period* in chapter six of the *DUNGEON MASTER™ Guide* references weapons and armor available for specific time periods. Use the "Ancient" column to determine an item's availability in the Bronze Age. Refer to the entry *Equipment by Time Period (The Ancient World)* for more details on bronze equipment and other combat modifications.

At the DM's option, mythical or legendary items such as the bow of Odysseus, the shield of Perseus, or Cupid's arrows may be allowed.

Monetary System: Barter is the rule over most of the world, but many sophisticated cities have invented currency. This takes a variety of forms, from the familiar gold coins to bars, rods, ingots and other, more unwieldy shapes.

Spells: Wizard spells of seventh level and higher are not available, except under unusual circumstances (such as a boon from a god or extensive research). Such spells are normally reserved for the gods. If the DM uses the spell component rules, he may wish to evaluate the availability of components based on technology.

Monsters: While most AD&D® game monsters exist in the bronze age, the familiar creatures of ancient legend are particularly suitable. Those associated with sylvan settings are especially appropriate, as are other creatures of mythic origins as follows: dragon, cyclops, gorgon, hippocampus, hippogriff, hydra, lammasu, medusa, merman, naga, nereid, nixie, nymph, rakshasa, sea lion, sphinx, titan, wyvern.

Humanoids and demihumans exist in the bronze age, but often in the form of legends,

