

FORGOTTEN REALMS
CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

Empires of the Shining Sea

Sample file



by Steven E. Schend and Dale Donovan

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons[®]



Empires of the Shining Sea

by **Steven E. Schend**
and **Dale Donovan**

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Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

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Distributed to the book trade in the United States by Random House, Inc. and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd.

Distributed to the hobby, toy, and comic trade in the United States and Canada by regional distributors.

Distributed worldwide by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and regional distributors.

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9561XXX1501 1st Printing, August

1998

ISBN 0-7869-1237-5

U.S., CANADA,
ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
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Renton, WA 98057-0707
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Part One: History of Empires





Prologue

Though fiction to many, the Realms is all too real for many of us, and making it all up has never been an option. Thus I found myself waiting weeks for Elminster to bring lore for this project. Just as I'd given up hope of hearing anything on Calimshan or the Lake of Steam, I was awakened one night by a heavy bundle falling solidly onto my bed and me. Attached to the twine-bound oilcloth package was a tag of parchment in the Old Mage's unmistakable scrawl: "When next ye move 2,000 miles away from known locations, be so kind as to leave a forwarding address. Ye are not so easily found across two worlds, and I am an old man of middling patience. -E"

With letters from the Old Sage himself, no less than 16 massive tomes, over a dozen parchment or vellum scrolls, and other maps of obvious southern work as true sources, I got to work. It's difficult enough to work from Realmsian manuscripts, and the problems are compounded by Elminster's scribbles on everything. I warned Ed when he suggested giving the Old Mage sticky notes that it would only lead to trouble. Now every 400-year-old document is ragged with little yellow notes! Well, it beats the alternative—magic mouth spells activating when you open a tome to a particular page. Finally, Dale and I condensed the often long-winded texts and scattered sources into the work you have in your hands. Enjoy Elminster's more civil comments and the remaining materials culled from his sources.

"Within this packet, chronicler, ye shall find copies or originals of Tales to be Remembered; Elder Days of Amn; Empires of the Sands; The Phoenix Prophecies; A Slave's Life; Marches of the Calim; A Study of First Age Architecture; the treatise on Lamps, Genies, and the Works They Wrought; and excerpts I deemed appropriate for the work at hand. Ye have been made custodian of some of my rarer books and scrolls, that ye may educate thine folk about the southlands. Mind them well, for I shall expect their safe return again. Respect these works, but believe them fully not, as ye and many find one actual truth in all histories and customs: the writers' or sponsors' agendas in creating the work. Even the monks in Candlekeep leave a mark of purpose that alters a story, be it an overflourished letter or the excisement of lore deemed too lascivious for readers' eyes. Glean what ye may and avoid more colorings of the facts overmuch."

—Elminster of Shadowdale, an author excised many a time

Before we proceed, let's be clear that Calimshan is not a nice place, and it holds many morally ill social attitudes. It actively supports slavery and sexism, amid a plethora of other unenlightened cultural traits. The reprehensible attitudes of Calimshan are recorded here to provide a fairly detailed slaving state, of which there are many examples in many fantasy worlds. Hopefully, those who read this material will learn to hate Calishite slavers enough to send heroes out of their ways to bring their full efforts against them.

Legends and Tales

"The Qysar Shoon would see his greatness reflected on the annals of history, and he would trust my humble hands to the task. May Qghma take my eyes if I am lacking in my duty to our mortal master who graces us with his noble rule and wisdom, for it is my wish only to serve and record."

"In the name of the most holy Great Scrivener, I declare my tales to be true. Under his compassionate guidance I can tell no lie nor can I always tell the truth. My quill rushes at the bidding of the past and the present, though some would stop it from recording things unpleasant or mournful. Nay, he who gives us knowledge and our ways to keep it demands these things be known as much as those that give us joy. Question it I do not, for I am but a humble scribe. The tale will be told, for it is not his will to allow knowledge to fall away from our minds in order to rot in the sun like spoiled dates fallen from a tree."

—Mualak yn Dulah yn Abbas, Scribe of the Qysar Amahl Shoon IV

he lands along the Shining Sea have been dominated for the last seven millennia by Calimshan. Even though the region around the Lake of Steam and its city-states are now independent, these areas are far easier to understand within the context of their long history under Calishite rule. Thus, history for the entire territory is broken down here by the dominant historical patterns established by Calimshan, which measure time in relation to the great Imperial Ages. These general overviews provide readers with the major aspects, achievements, and touchstones of each historical period and how it differed from the next. They also provide broad links between local happenings and other major events across Faerun's history.

While Calimshan has had no fewer than five of its own distinct calendar systems tied to the various dynasties and empires of the past, all historical references are measured using Dalereckoning as a

