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RELICS & RITUALS™

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Preface

by Gary Gygax

Magic and the marvelous are the heart of the fantasy genre, be it fiction or game. Interestingly, this book you hold has a touch of the former while it serves yeoman's duty in regard to the RPG. That you'll see immediately after delving a bit deeper into the volume. The publishers have included in this glorious mass of magical information a hint of the fictional story — that is, the connection of all of the extraordinary game material herein to a fantasy-world setting with an intriguing background and engaging environment. That said, consider what the work offers:

Not only do you have before you a key to opening a whole new fantasy world, one that is optional in regard to use, of course, in that you can embrace it as a whole, use some of it or ignore it for whatever campaign setting you prefer. In addition, you hold a compilation of exciting material to include in your game system and campaign that cannot fail to make them more diverse and challenging. It should go without saying that players will be eager to gain the new things described herein.

This work is compatible with the new D20 fantasy game system (whose trademarked name the publisher informs me we are unable to mention here due to the licenses under which this volume is published, so "D20 fantasy game" must suffice). It is also a means of entering the *Scarred Lands* world setting. So you have two direct options, plus whatever other use you choose to make of *Relics & Rituals*. If you pause now and page through the book, you'll see what I mean. The D20 fantasy game-specific material aside, look at the sheer volume of magical material given. Not only is it a lot, but new approaches present themselves here. Armed with the broad applications possible for the work, follow along with this quick analysis of the major parts of this excellent addition to your library of RPG core rulebooks.

The seven new prestige classes can be added to the new D20 fantasy game, used in the *Scarred Lands* world setting as a part of that game or with some modified form of it based on the D20 system. With a bit of adjustment, these classes are also quite adaptable to some other RPGs. In all, these are most interesting approaches to the player-character role.

Next there is the host of new spells for all the D20 fantasy character classes. Because in the new *PHB* space considerations caused a diminishment of the spells available, the collection of new ones herein is most useful to the DM, and will certainly be appreciated by players with spellcaster characters. Take a moment to look at the material and you will see that these aren't "fillers," but interesting, useful and potent castings for NPCs and PCs alike. This work goes beyond mere supplementation of spells, though.

The addition of *ritual magic* is a great innovation, a glittering jewel. By means of this and the *true ritual*, a whole new facet of major spellcasting has been added. It can augment the new D20 fantasy game or be used otherwise, as stated previously. As a matter of balance, it seems that the true ritual is closed to the sorcerer character, thus validating the wizard class as a potent archetype beside the cleric

and druid. With these additions to the system, there is unquestionably a whole new dimension brought into play. Hats off to the designers for this special feature!

What was said above regarding spells holds doubly true for the new magic items *Relics & Rituals* brings to the game. While only spellcaster characters are diminished by reducing the number of spells in the new D20 fantasy game, having fewer magic items available affects all characters. Again, space limitations required the *DMG* to offer fewer such things. Here you have a whole new selection of interesting, useful and diverse magic items so as to fill your game with marvelous objects. Of course, all players are eager to gain such things for their characters. Having a truly grand inventory from which to select means that your adventure encounters will not be repetitious in regard to special rewards possible.

Included in this list of "items" is another innovation, *tattoo magic*. The list of these special markings for a character isn't large, but the impact they can have on the game is. Although the magical tattoo is aimed mainly at play in the *Scarred Lands*, there is every reason for a new D20 fantasy DM to add it to his or her campaign. As you examine this new aspect of magic, I suspect you will be rather gleeful in accepting it. As a matter of fact, I wish I had thought of the concept. It will certainly be brought into my own work and campaign. What fun! In a book filled with useful information of a magical sort, this is another jewel amongst the gemstones.

The magical additions also include even the most potent of dweomered things, the *relic*. Gentle Reader, if you don't mind, pause a moment from perusing this foreword to have a look at the aforesaid section: Chapter Six. It isn't large in size, but it is rich in content, adding both minor and major artifacts for inclusion in a campaign.

Allow me to add just a few more words here. The *Scarred Lands*, of which I know insufficient details at this time, seems a most intriguing setting. Perhaps you will find it likewise. If so, consider how very adaptable its premise is, the war between gods and titans, and the resulting "world" thereafter. Does it not lend itself to adaptation into many different settings? From the mythological Greco-Roman and Norse (substitute "giant" for "titan" and there you are) to any authored world environment in which two or even several groups of deities contended and one triumphed.

To sum up, this work is one that you just can't pass up. It has material for creating a new campaign-world setting that is precious inlay on the coffer. What a magical treasure it holds, too! What you have is like a chest full of gems. Don't let it escape your possession.



Gary Gygax
Lake Geneva, WI
December 2000

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Introduction

This volume of arcana aspires to two purposes. The primary one is to stuff you full of fodder for your fantasy campaign, no matter what fantasy world you use for your epic adventures. The five-course meal of prestige classes, spells, rituals, magic items and artifacts presented here will hopefully appease your appetite for new options for your campaign's heroes as well as fatten your gray mater with new inspirations for quests and heroic conflicts.

The second purpose is to provide more bits of fable and fact about the Scarred Lands world that we at Sword & Sorcery Studios use as our fantasy campaign setting. All of our core books such as this volume, *Creature Collection* and *Creature Collection 2: Dark Menagerie* are intended to be resources for any campaign world while showing careful readers some of the key struggles and personalities of the Scarred Lands. If you choose to pluck some of these Scarred Lands setting bits and drop them into your own personal world (or even — though may Chardun have your hand! — some other published game world), that's fine. If you choose to immerse yourself fully in the Scarred Lands setting, so much the better.

Finally, be sure to log onto swordsorcery.com. Not only do we post new information about the Scarred Lands and other products, but we also have plenty of opportunities for you to contribute to this world and *really* make it your own.

Enjoy!

The Producers, Writers and Editors @
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