

= Dwellers of the Forbidden City =

Dwellers of the Forbidden City is an adventure module , or pre @-@ packaged adventure booklet , ready for use by Dungeon Masters in the Dungeons & Dragons (D & D) fantasy role @-@ playing game . The adventure was first used as a module for tournament play at the 1980 Origins Game Fair , and was later published by TSR in 1981 for use with the first edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons rules . The module was written by game designer David " Zeb " Cook , who partly ascribes his hiring by TSR to his work on this module . In the adventure , the characters are hired to find an object taken to a lost oriental @-@ style city , which has been taken over by a cult of snake @-@ worshipers , the yuan @-@ ti , and their servants , the mongrelmen and tasloi . The module was ranked as the 13th greatest Dungeons & Dragons adventure of all time by Dungeon magazine for the 30th anniversary of the Dungeons & Dragons game in 2004 .

= = Plot summary = =

The adventure begins when the player characters hear reports of bandits waylaying and attacking caravans in a jungle region . Most of the ambushed merchants and guards have been killed , but the few who have returned alive tell fantastic stories about deformed plants and deadly beasts in the jungle . The stolen goods taken from the caravans provide an impetus for the characters to enter the jungles in search of this lost treasure .

After a long and perilous journey , the player characters encounter some friendly native people and are invited to stay in their village . The characters learn from the village 's chief about the dangers of creatures called the yuan @-@ ti and their servants , the tasloi , and that these creatures recently kidnapped the chief 's son , taking him into the jungle . The chief and village shaman tell the player characters about a " forbidden city " in the jungle which they believe houses the ghosts of their dead enemies , and they supply the characters with guides to show the party the way to this forbidden city .

The adventuring environment in this module allows for both action and intrigue . The player characters can recruit allies from the various power groups and factions within the city , namely the bugbears , mongrelmen , and bullywugs , or else help pit these factions against each other for their own benefit .

= = Publication history = =

Dwellers of the Forbidden City was first used in Dungeons & Dragons tournament play at the Origins Game Fair in 1980 . The module was published in 1981 by TSR for the first edition of the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons rules , and consisted of a thirty @-@ two page booklet with an outer folder . The module was written by David " Zeb " Cook , with cover art by Erol Otus and interior art by James Holloway , Jim Roslof , Harry Quinn , and Stephen D. Sullivan .

Dwellers of the Forbidden City is the first of the mostly unrelated and unconnected Intermediate series (I @-@ series) of modules designed for characters at between 4th and 8th levels . The module was originally intended to bear the code S4 , but the code was reassigned to Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth before Dwellers was published . As published , the adventure bears the code I1 . It was one of the first adventures written by Cook , and he attributed an early version of the module to his being hired at TSR . Cook would become the lead designer for the second edition of the AD & D rules , which debuted in 1989 , and years later , he became the lead designer on the City of Villains MMORPG .

The adventure was instrumental in introducing the yuan @-@ ti as a new species of antagonists . Much like the drow from the Queen of the Spiders Series , the yuan @-@ ti have been featured in a number of 1st , 2nd and 3rd Edition books for the D & D game , and are one of the few species that Wizards of the Coast did not keep open for the Open Game License . The yuan @-@ ti have also been expanded from their introduction in this module to other game worlds , in particular the Forgotten Realms campaign setting . Other new monsters introduced to the game through this

module include the aboleth , bullywug , mongrelman , tasloi , and yellow musk creeper .

The module was set in the World of Greyhawk campaign setting , and was later used to add detail to the continent of Hepmonaland in Greyhawk supplements . In the Greyhawk accessory The Scarlet Brotherhood , by Sean K. Reynolds , the Forbidden City was named Xuxulieto , and the mountains wherein it lies are called the Xaro Mountains .

= = Reception = =

While Different Worlds described it as " a good buy " , RPGnet gave it a slightly more favorable rating of nearly 6 @. @ 8 (" Good ") . Latter day D & D writer James Wyatt described it as the first " Super adventure " , and lamented that with another hundred pages of fleshing out , it could have been as memorable as the landmark Temple of Elemental Evil .

Jim Bambra of White Dwarf reviewed the adventure in the magazine 's " Open Box " feature and gave it an overall rating of 5 out of 10 , commenting that while presentation of the module was quite good (8 / 10) , it seemed to be " hastily thrown together " . Bambra gave the adventure playability and enjoyment ratings of 5 / 10 , and skill and complexity ratings of 6 / 10 . He felt the adventure was " very mundane " and " lacks any real cohesion " . Bambra noted that parts of the adventure were created for tournament play . The tournament section deals with getting into the city , and he felt the rest of the module seemed to be tacked on to that . He did like the mini @-@ campaign included in the adventure , and the ideas included on how to expand on it . However , he felt that any Dungeon Master who used Dwellers of the Forbidden City would have to expend so much effort to make it more than " just a series of encounters , " that they were better off " starting from scratch " . Bambra concluded that this adventure was " just not worth considering " with all the other better quality modules available from TSR .

Dwellers of the Forbidden City was ranked the 13th greatest Dungeons & Dragons adventure of all time by Dungeon magazine for the 30th anniversary of the Dungeons & Dragons game in 2004 . Judge Eric L. Boyd described it as a " classic adventure " in which Cook created a " lost city jungle in the great tradition of Edgar Rice Burroughs " . The players " battle their way into the city through a labyrinth of traps and monsters or find their own way into the sprawling , jungle @-@ cloaked ruins ... Cook provides a host of backgrounds to motivate exploration of the city , but the map itself is motivation enough . " Judge Wolfgang Baur , editor of Dungeon magazine , described the adventures thus : " This adventure may be best remembered for its monsters ? it was from Forbidden City that D & D gained the Aboleth , the mongrel @-@ man , the tasloi , and the yuan @-@ ti . The aboleth that guarded one of the entrances to the city was worshipped by the local mongrelmen as a god . "