

# War of the Mountain King

## A alternate-history RPG fantasy campaign setting

### #6 Campaigns

It's easy enough to play a campaign from the Americans' point of view: your country has been dropped down in the middle of a world full of unpleasant magicians and kings, and now you have to figure out how to keep the rest of the planet from destroying you. Or how to conquer it. Or how to figure out how to learn all their magic, or at least use it. Or how to get the rest of the planet to have revolutions that will replace the nasty regimes with more palatable ones, or... the *point* here is that the story-lines are fairly obvious. But what if the focus of the campaign is on Pasalan characters? What is a profitable line of play there, then?

One strong possibility is to play a Pasalan-centric **War of the Mountain King** campaign from a *horror* perspective. And by 'horror' read 'Lovecraftian cosmic terror.' After all, consider how early 20th century Americans might look, from a Pasalan perspective:

- Americans are, first and foremost, literally from an alternate dimension. One where the laws of the universe are *different*.
- Americans are immune to magic. Not just unable to *manipulate* magic - most people in Pasales cannot do that - but magic does not catch on them. This not unlike a human seeing a species that gravity flatly ignores; such a thing violates what the Pasalans thought of as being universal laws.
- Americans have, instead of clean and sensible magic, **technology**. They have taken astrology and alchemy and smithery far beyond what Pasalans would have thought possible, or even wise; and the Americans have mostly used it for horrible weapons of war. With 'horrible' not being an euphemism, as anyone who had suffered through a mustard gas attack could attest. And there's never any

doubt as to where the Americans have their dark, demonic mills. The very air, water, and ground are typically permanently scarred by the fumes and ichors cast off by American 'industry.'

- Americans themselves have barbaric beliefs. Many will openly belittle Pasalans over things like physical characteristics like skin color and facial features. Rather more have difficulty taking mages or other nobles seriously, if that mage is a woman. And they're all so incomprehensibly **inconsistent** about it.
- Worse yet, even 'nice' Americans have *disquieting* beliefs. They openly mock and deride the basic principles of Pasalan society and government. Some Americans will happily connive in destroying Pasalan society, in order to replace it with some mad system involving, as one of their more wild-eyed political radicals put it, 'all men shouting and voting and reveling in joy.' And the Americans who are **not** happily conniving will still typically turn a blind eye towards advocates of such anarchy and implied bloodshed.
- And then there are the books. Books mostly written in the Americans' strange and barely understandable language. Which is good, because the books talk about strange sciences and blasphemous paths to enlightenment. Learn the American tongue, learn their alphabet - their seductive, dangerous alphabet - and then run the risk of understanding their forbidden tomes. And then... acting on that knowledge.

...This is not the only lens for a Pasalan-centric campaign, of course. Nor is it even the best one. But the central theme of ***War of the Mountain King*** is what happens when two wildly disparate cultures smack into each other. That's an easy excuse for breaking out the Deep Madness.

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