

Twin Empires

Game Master's Guide

Version 1.01

A Pathfinder RPG Sourcebook

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The Fate of Nations is in Your Hands

War is on the horizon.

Two great empires now stand on the brink of the greatest conflict in recent memory.

Soon the Twin Empires will march to war

The end draws near.

Are you ready?

Introduction

Before reading any further, be advised that this booklet is meant only for Game Masters that plan on running this campaign path. Basically; PLAYERS READ NO FURTHER.

Two Guides Are Better Than One

Now that I've got the essential player tossing out of the way let me be the first to congratulate you on the steps your about to take. If you haven't already done so, stop reading this and go read the *Player's Guide*, as all information in this booklet makes the assumption that you've read through the *Player's Guide*.

If you've been wondering about why there's a separate Game Master's guide along with the actual adventures; allow me to explain. Having run adventure paths in the past, one problem I've always come across was the fact I never could get a sense of the 'bigger picture'. This booklet is meant to give Game Master's all the overview information they need to run the campaign path; including history, description of each adventure, a presumed timeline, and information on several of the major factions presented within the campaign path. Basically, the goal is that as a DM you can read this booklet and know the premise of each adventure, how each adventure leads into one another, and where the campaign path will take the players.

Beyond the history and background information, this book also contains several new feats, spells, and equipment used by NPC's throughout the campaign path. While not all new stats will be presented in this manual, the goal is to include feats that may see repeated use, and to conserve space in future adventures.

How Do I Sell It?

Sometimes being a Game Master is like being a salesman; you need to be able to sell your players on the game. Beyond the act of presiding over a game, you need to get your players interested in a campaign before the dice ever hit the table. So what are some of the selling points to the *Twin Empire* campaign path? Here are a few examples:

- Reenact a scene from history, as you chase down would be assassins on the roof of a church.
- Battle on the edge of a cliff during a tropical storm.
- Save an imprisoned nation from the clutches of an ancient cult.
- Sneak into the heart of an enemy city as specialist diviners mass to find you.
- Take part in a naval engagement between a nation of magic and a nation of technology.
- Fight your way to the source of the conflict through a temple that lives and breathes.

Beyond the imagery those examples should put in player minds, there is a caveat. Instead of a six adventure path, the *Twin Empires* is setup as a 5 adventure long path with a 'Pilot' taking place before the 5 adventures. Taking from the pages of such popular shows as *Battlestar Galactica*, the goal of the Pilot is to introduce characters to the world and give them a chance to get immersed in the setting. If the players and Game Master agrees, then they can continue down the full adventure path, otherwise the pilot acts as a self-contained adventure.

Twin Empires: Game Master's Guide

Two nations stand on the brink of war; the mighty magical empire of Lamore, and the technological republics of Valaheim. The *Twin Empires* campaign begins with a pilot adventure and then stretches over the course of five full adventures. Throughout the path, players will see the growing conflict of the two nations and should go from level 1 all the way up to 15.

The Opening Plot

The campaign begins four weeks following an assassination attempt on Representative Helbrecht's life. Helbrecht is the formal leader of the Valaheim Republics and the assassination attempt is blamed on insurgents belonging to the nation of Lamore. The attempt on Helbrecht's life sparks outrage amongst the citizens of Valaheim, and as tensions mount the nation assumes a more warlike posture.

It took three weeks for Valaheim insurgents within Lamore to strike back for the attempt on Helbrecht. Assaulting a secretive meeting of Lamore Magisters, the insurgent Eduard was able to escape with a powerful magical rune known as a Protomark. The mark grafted itself onto Eduard's flesh and the Valaheim agent was forced to escape on a docked sail barge bound for the string of islands known as the Chain of Tears; an archipelago that separates Lamore and Valaheim.

Disaster struck when the ship Eduard had stowed aboard was attacked by Lamore warship. Forced to abandon the vessel, Eduard was tossed overboard until he eventually came ashore to the island of Tyra. With no strength left, Eduard collapsed on the beach of the island near death.

Meanwhile, the fleets of Lamore led by the determined admiral Persiad scour the Chain of Tears in hope of finding the lost Protomark. Unknown to all but the highest ranking leaders of Lamore the Protomark is in truth part of a key required to activate a powerful super weapon under construction by the magically powered nation.

The Adventures

Consisting of 1 'pilot adventure' and 5 standard adventures, the *Twin Empires* campaign path is broken into six parts.

Mark of the Hunted (Pilot)

Level 1-3

Unintentionally stumbling upon a dying soldier of Valaheim, the heroes have a powerful mark forced upon them. As the army of Lamore arrives in search of something they have lost, and the Dread Orc pirates of the *Broken Virgin* launch an assault of their own, the heroes must do all in their power to protect their homeland while trying to unravel the mystery of the Protomark.

Trial by Gaslight (Adventure 1)

Level 3-6

Setting sail for Estrovis; capital of Valaheim, the heroes become the interest of various political factions within. The situation is made worse when Lamore agents are discovered within the city in search of an assassin who survived the attempt on Representative Helbrecht's life.

Pale Princess (Adventure 2)

Level 6-9

Sent abroad to the continent of Celemus; known to some as the continent of terror, the heroes meet the prophetic leader of the nation. With the cryptic words given to them by the Princess, the heroes become embroiled in a struggle between the determined citizens of the shattered land and a secretive cult. At the center of the conflict resides the truth behind the Protomark.

The Infinite Prophecy (Adventure 3)

Level 9-11

With a basic understanding of the Protomark and how to destroy it, the heroes must travel to the nation which has been hunting them since their adventure began. Within the Lamore port city of Neudolos, the heroes must avoid the massed military might of the nation, but how can they do so with the most powerful diviners in the world arrayed against them?

Weeping of the Chain (Adventure 4)

Level 11-13

As the Lamore and Valaheim naval fleets engage in a titanic battle, the cult of Fhazu has laid siege to Tyra. Hoping to complete an

ancient ritual, the disciples of Fhazu intend to unleash a powerful shockwave of energy that would destroy the forces of fleets and the island itself. Only the heroes can stop the cult before they execute their mad plans.

Shatterer of Worlds (Adventure 5)

Level 13-15

Reason has turned to madness in the final adventure as Lamore sends its super weapon against the fortress monastery of cult of Fhazu. Intercepting the weapon as it traverses the desolate plains of Celemus, the heroes must destroy it before the weapon can be taken over by fanatical Valaheim partisans. Finally the heroes must enter the fortress of Fhazu and destroy the cult once and for all.

Complete Overview

The Cult of Fhazu

A thousand years ago, a great alliance of all races fought a costly war against four evil beings; the Protoviles. The last of these great evils; the tyrant Fhazu, entrenched himself within his fortress on the continent of Celemus. There the Ascended (now gods) and their followers laid siege for many years. In the end Merreck the most merciless of the Ascended strode forward and battled the hideous true form of Fhazu. The battle ended with the ruination of the entire continent and the chaining of Fhazu.

Trapped in chains of pure magical energy crafted from the very life of lands that were destroyed in his defeat, Fhazu was placed in the center of a grand crater. With Celemus now a barren landscape, only the staunchest members of the nation of Valta remained, rebuilding their capital city of Karidia from the only resource available; the bones of the fallen. Taking the eternal vigil of Fhazu as their appointed task, the people of Valta stood long watch over the terrible writhing form of the chained Protovile.

Centuries ago the nation of Lamore annexed a small portion of Celemus for their own needs. Not wishing to have their magical experiments viewed by outsiders, the Lamore forces massacred any Valta scouts they encountered. When confronted about their actions, Lamore hastily justified them with the promise to take over the vigil of Fhazu. Contracting the greatest architect the nation knew; Lamore constructed a

vast fortress to watch over the broken body of the Protovile.

Shortly after the completion of the great fortress, all contact was lost with the soldiers inside. Further attempts to enforce the fortress were met with failure. Seeing it as an omen, Lamore was content with simply sending the occasional scouting party to verify the tower was still standing and that no great army massed near it. To Lamore, Fhazu was no longer a threat, and the vigil no longer their concern.

The Lamore Skyscapes

As time progressed, Lamore began construction of its floating citadels; the Skyscapes. After their first successful construction, a second Skyscape meant for military purposes was constructed in Lamore's hidden Celemus base. Dubbed Skyscape II, this veritable military fortress was ready to be used for future conquest. On its maiden voyage, disaster struck Skyscape II and the entire ship was lost in the ocean near the city of Neudolos. Even the highest ranking military officials within Lamore have no idea what happened to their military Skyscape, and no word ever reached Valaheim of its construction.

In truth, the second Skyscape fell to the machinations of the cult of Fhazu. After the construction of Lamore's fortress, Fhazu was able to reach out to the minds of those within and drive many of them mad and into his service. Some of these agents feigned escaping the fortress and established themselves as agents within the Lamore Empire. Through these agents Fhazu destroyed Lamore's first attempt at a 'superweapon', as the Protovile was not established enough within Lamore to govern its control.

The years went on and Lamore continued their attempts at refining the Skyscape project. Eventually it was decided that a key would be needed to operate the powerful weapon, thus the first Protomarks were created. It was decided that a weapon such as the Skyscape would need a key that no other force could reproduce, so in their arrogance Lamore decided to siphon some of the magical energies Fhazu leaked from his prison. This magical energy was then put inside a powerful mark that could be grafted onto flesh. The cult of Fhazu was quite pleased with this decision as they

could now control the Skyscapes with relative ease.

The Oncoming War

Within the past decade Lamore has nearly completed construction on their latest weapon of war; Skyscape IV. Built in tandem with Skyscape III, the fourth in the series is a weapon of war, an improved design on Skyscape II. The third Skyscape was built as a public cover-up for the military model, allowing extra parts to be siphoned off as needed. While Skyscape III has recently been unveiled to the world, the fourth floating fortress remains hidden as final construction is underway.

Historically the actions of Lamore have been aggressive, but in recent years the leadership of the magical nation has been much more passive. Only the appointment of Valaheim's Representative Helbrecht has put Lamore on a larger war footing. Helbrecht's anti-Lamore sentiment has created a fervor amongst the populace of both nations, and Lamore intends to defend its borders should Valaheim become aggressive.

As the campaign begins, an assassination attempt has been made to take Helbrecht's life. Blamed on Lamore, this action becomes the catalyst for war between the two nations. After the assassination attempt, Valaheim prepares its navy for an immediate strike on Lamore, while sending word to its spies and insurgents to pave the way for their assault.

The Lost Mark

With Valaheim posed to launch a pre-emptive strike on their nation, Lamore accelerates the construction on Skyscape IV, ready to graft the key to the would-be pilot of the flying fortress. Taking place in the port city of Neudolos, the graft needed to be applied in a place with the proper convergence of magical ley lines and energies. This served Lamore's interests well, as once the graft was assigned the pilot would immediately depart to the construction site on Celemus.

Fate intervened when a group of Valaheim insurgents got wind of the meeting. Unsure as to the specifics of it, the insurgents only knew that a large concentration of powerful Lamore magisters was meeting in some kind of ritual. Seeking to interrupt the ritual, the Valaheim insurgents were successful in their efforts,

however inadvertently the graft was applied to one of them in the confusion. In a combination of skill, alchemical items, and luck, the newly grafted Valaheim patriot escaped in the aftermath of the raid.

Realizing the importance of the graft he had obtained, the insurgent made immediate preparations to leave Lamore and return to Valaheim. Taking refuge on a reputed pirate ship the insurgent thought he was home free, before the Lamore fleet caught up with him. In the ensuing naval battle, the insurgent was thrown overboard and gravely wounded. His fate was left up to the unrelenting currents around the Chain of Tears.

This is where the campaign path begins...

Factions

Throughout the course of the *Twin Empires* campaign path, players will come into contact with various factions. Each faction has their own unique goals and allegiances. Presented below is a description of the major factions within the adventure path.

Lamore

Most of the factions loyal to Lamore are a subset of the eight magical schools that dominate the empire. Each faction is completely loyal to their nation, though the methods they show their loyalty greatly differ.

Foretellers

The scrying eye of Lamore, the Foretellers represent a special cadre of diviners who are often assigned to military units. Maintaining independence from military structure, Foretellers act as personal advisers to officers within the Lamore Empire. Full divisions within the Lamore Military are often staffed by several Foretellers who act together to assure military dominance in campaigns.

As an organization, the Foretellers believe in a legend known as the Infinite Prophecy. The Infinite Prophecy is believed to be the ability for a diviner to see all possibilities and all outcomes of events both past and present. Originally divined by the first Foreteller, the actual manifestation of the Infinite Prophecy is widely debated. Some believe the Prophecy is a powerful artifact, while some insist it's a long lost spell. Whatever it is, the Infinite Prophecy is the eventual goal of all Foretellers and they revere it as most clerics would place their faith in a chosen deity.

Necro-Knights

Acting as a special unit within the Lamore Empire's long military arm, the Necro-Knights are effectively terror troops. Garbed in armor typically too bulky for standard spell casters, the Necro-Knights wade into combat alongside cadres of animated undead. Commanding the undead, the Necro-Knights utilize their servitors to the fullest potential creating a type of bond between the animated creatures and their master.

The undead used by the Necro-Knights in combat are normally animated after battles by assistants known as Mortifactors. Rarely seen

in actual combat, the Mortifactors spend much of their time animating bodies for use in combat, or perfecting new spells for the Necro-Knights. Every Mortifactor is indentured to a single Necro-Knight, and through this the Mortifactor is able to lease his own undead thralls to the Knight. As long as the Necro-Knight is within a certain distance of his associated Mortifactor, the Knight is able to control nearly double the amount of undead a regular magic user could.

Valaheim

Within the mighty technological bastion of Valaheim, several power groups have established themselves. Steeped in the rich history of the constituent nations, each of these groups is affiliated with the Republic in one form or another.

Divine Fencers

Devotees of Fyris; the god of wanderers and champion of good, the Divine Fencers are regarded as one of the more prestigious establishments in Valaheim. Typically depicted as lightly armored, Divine Fencers often are seen wielding a shortsword or rapier. In the more industrious areas of Valaheim, the Divine Fencers arm themselves with one of the many varieties of hand crossbows that exist.

Considered autonomous, the Divine Fencers are contracted to defend important members of the Valaheim government. Currently Representative Helbrecht is protected by Harald Rohrbeck; considered by many to be the best fencer in the lands. Rohrbeck has sworn a lifelong oath to serve and protect Helbrecht, an allegiance that shows the charismatic savvy possessed by the Representative.

Colonites

The leftovers from ages past, the Colonites represent a simpler way of life within the domain of Valaheim. Following the war against the Protoviles, men and women returned home from the long-lasting war tired and craving rest. Discarding technological and magical discoveries made during the war, many desired a more peaceful means of existence. Creating small scattered colonies within the nation of Valaheim, these groups of anti-technology and anti-magic became known as the Colonites.

Typically led by a council of elder members, colonies are often viewed as eccentric and radical in their beliefs. In truth most Colonites

are accepting people who desire nothing more than to live out their lives in peace. Many outsiders often join the Colonites as a way to escape society. The recent hostilities between Lamore and Valaheim have made many enter outlying groups of Colonites in hopes of avoiding what seems to be an inevitable conflict.

Other

Beyond the laws of nations are other organizations with their own plans.

Order of Moordenar

A secretive order of assassins who believe that no individual is untouchable; the Moordenar's roots are shrouded in mystery. The order employs both technological and magical means against their targets, though the exact method of death can be determined by the client (for an added fee).

Neutral from all factions, the Moordenar ally themselves with none. Organizations rarely employ the order for fear that one day the assassins may use knowledge gained while in their employ to kill their own members. Those that do employ the Moordenar enjoy nothing but the most efficient of service... as long as payment is prompt.

Disciples of the Citadel

Known to its inhabitants as the Citadel, the fortress built over the chained form of Fhazu is home to this insidious cult. Of all cults dedicated to Fhazu, the Disciples of the Citadel are clearly the closest, and thus hear the whispers of their master most clearly.

With hands reaching as far as Lamore and Valaheim, the Disciples work in secret to restore Fhazu to his former glory. Seeking to destabilize both nations; the Disciples plan on freeing Fhazu in the aftermath of the terrible war that would follow. With no great power nearby to stop him, Fhazu would quickly engulf all the nearby lands and raise a great army once again to challenge the reign of mortals.

Timeline

Presented below is a timeline for the *Twin Empires* campaign path. This can easily be altered, but it is assumed most campaigns will be based off of this timeline.

February

Prologue

An attempt is made on Valaheim's Representative. The assassination attempt is blamed on Lamore prompting an escalation of force between the two nations. In response Lamore expedites the construction of Skyscape IV.

March

Pilot - Mark of the Hunted

Valaheim insurgents assault a Lamore meeting of Magisters. Following the battle one insurgent escapes bearing the intended key for Skyscape IV. Coming ashore on the island of Tyra, the insurgent passes on the Protomark to one of the party members before his death. Lamore arrives at the island and is repelled by the party of the island.

April

Adventure 1 – Trial by Gaslight

Lamore dispatches forces to Valaheim in search of the Protomark. Valaheim discovers that the surviving assassin is still alive and begins a manhunt for him. Lamore dispatches the Foretellers to Neudolos in anticipation on an oncoming war.

May

Adventure 2 – Pale Princess

The nation of Valta is freed from the influence of the cult of Fhazu. The Princess of Valta foresees a terrible disaster amongst the Chain of Tears. Lamore nears completion on Skyscape IV. Representative Helbrecht stirs the fear of his people to mass their navy against Lamore.

June

Adventure 3 – The Infinite Prophecy

The head of the Foretellers arrives in Neudolos. Another Protomark is crafted by Lamore and construction is finished on Skyscape IV. The Valaheim fleet sails to assault Lamore.

July

Adventure 4 – Weeping of Tears

Amongst the Chain of Tears, the naval fleets of Lamore and Valaheim engage in battle. Lamore uses Skyscape IV against the Valaheim fleet.

The cult of Fhazu attempts to complete a destructive ritual on the island of Tyra. Skyscape IV is damaged and forced to pull back to Neudolos.

August

Adventure 5 – Shatterer of Worlds

Irrationally seeking revenge against the cult, Lamore launches the repaired Skyscape IV to attack the Citadel. Fearing his imminent removal Representative Helbrecht dispatches his most loyal soldiers to seize Skyscape IV and redirect it to attack Lamore. Fhazu takes mortal form within the Citadel.

Rules Material

Presented below is a full list of all new rules material used in the *Twin Empire* campaign path. This includes standard equipment, magical items, spells, and feats that will show up on NPC's throughout the adventure. Additional rules may be presented in the individual adventures.

Feats

Augment Undead

Undead created by you are far more resilient than most.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (necromancy)

Benefit: Any undead you create with a spell gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength and an additional +1 natural armor bonus.

Mortithrall

You have a particular affinity with creating and commanding undead. With this affinity you can lend your undead minions to others within a certain range.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast 3rd level arcane spells, Wizard school specialization in Necromancy.

Benefit: You gain the ability to cast *Animate Dead* as a 3rd level arcane spell instead of 4th level. Any number of undead you command may be voluntarily put under the command of any willing person you chose. These undead do not count towards the limit of the person commanding them, but still count towards your limit. Undead may only be commanded this way if you are within 1 mile per level of the person commanding them.

Normal: *Animate Dead* is normally a 4th level spell for arcane casters. Created undead normally may only be commanded by the person who originally animated them.

Necrotic Conduit

In the midst of combat you can imbue nearby undead minions with your spellcasting abilities.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast *Lesser Animate Dead* or *Animate Dead*.

Benefit: You may cast up to a 3rd level arcane spell as a full round action. At the end of the action instead of casting the spell nominate any controlled undead within 30ft of you. During the selected undead's round it may cast the spell as though it were casting the spell. All spellcasting calculations (damage, caster level, range, etc,

etc) are still based on the original caster, only the location of the spell is changed.

Special: Undead controlled via the Mortithrall feat may be selected as conduits.

Necrotic Casting [Combat]

When engaged in battle with undead minions, you may use them to assist in your spellcasting, thus giving you further time to concentrate on your spells.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast *Lesser Animate Dead* or *Animate Dead*. Arcane Armor Training

Benefit: During combat as a free action you may command any controlled undead within 10 feet of you to assist with your spell casting as a standard action. If the controlled undead is successful in the action you may reduce your arcane spell failure chance by 10% for any spells you cast next round.

Designer Notes

Pet Feats

Both of the Necrotic feats presented above are the first in a line of 'Pet Feats'; feats that create a stronger bond between the pet and master. These feats are meant to improve the threat of undead at higher levels as well as give the Necro-Knight a combat caster style of play.

Eyes Unseen

You are adept at remaining unseen when scrying on others.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (divination), Caster Level 8th

Benefit: When one of your scrying sensors would be detected by a *Detect Scrying* spell you may make a will save to avoid detection. If you fail the check your sensor is becomes visible, but do not roll an opposed caster check.

Normal: Normally *Detect Scrying* automatically detects all sensors in the area. Also, once a sensor is detected you would normally role an opposed caster level check to see if the person detecting can get an image of you and a sense of your location.

Thoughts Unheard

When using scrying magic on enemies you have the chance to catch some of their thoughts.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (divination), Caster Level 8th

Benefit: When casting the *Scrying* spell you may add *Detect Thoughts* to the list of spells you

may cast while operating the sensor. Standard success chances apply.

Normal: *Detect Thoughts* is not a spell normally allowed to be used through a scrying sensor.

Spells

Lesser Animate Dead

School necromancy [evil];

Level cleric 1, sorcerer/wizard 2

Casting

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (an onyx gem worth at least 25 gp per Hit Die of the undead)

Effect

Range touch

Targets one or more corpses touched

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

Description

This spell turns the bones or bodies of dead creatures into undead skeletons or zombies that follow your spoken commands.

The undead can follow you, or they can remain in an area and attack any creature (or just a specific kind of creature) entering the place. They remain animated until they are destroyed. A destroyed skeleton or zombie can't be animated again.

Regardless of the type of undead you create with the spell, you can't create more HD of undead than your caster level with a single casting of *lesser animate dead*. The *desecrate* spell doubles this limit.

The undead you create remain under your control indefinitely. No matter how many times you use this spell, however, you can control only 2 HD worth of undead per caster level. If you exceed this number, all newly created creatures fall under your control, and any excess undead from previous castings become uncontrolled. You choose which creatures are released. The number of undead controlled this way counts towards other spells such as *animate dead*. If you are a cleric, any undead you might command by virtue of your power to command or rebuke undead do not count towards this limit.

Skeletons: A skeleton can be created only from a mostly intact corpse or skeleton. The corpse must have bones. If a skeleton is made from a corpse, the flesh falls from the bones.

Zombies: A zombie can be created only from a mostly intact corpse. The corpse must be that of a creature with a true anatomy.

Ghoul Armor

School necromancy;

Level sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a bloodied piece of leather)

Effect

Range personal

Targets you

Duration 1 hour/level or until discharged

Description

Harnessing both the powers of raw magic and unlife, you create a temporary shield of necromantic power around you. While this spell is in effect, you gain temporary hit points equal to 1d10+1 per caster level (maximum +10).

As long as a single point of these temporary hit points remain, you are given a +2 deflection bonus to AC.