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The Dragon And The Bear (Ars Magica)



Synopsis

A Serpent in the East "These Russians too many princes. Now in Great Bulgar, we are sensible folk. Terribly sensible. We have only one prince, our Khan, you see? He gives us our law all the same law good Muslim law too. And he leads us in battle, and he sets the taxes lightly, oh yes. Now isn't that sensible? These Russians too many princes." Welcome to Russia and the lands of the Novgorod Tribunal. These principalities sprawl over an enormous expanse of Mythic Europe, encompassing Novgorod itself, Suzdalia, Smolensk, Polotsk, Volinia, Kiev, Chernigov, Ryazan, Pereyasavl, Galicia, and Pinsk-Turov, as well as the Kingdom of Poland. Forest, swamp, steppe, and tundra the Novgorod Tribunal encompasses all of these, and holds the magi who live in it under its authority. And yet for such a vast breadth of land, few magi dwell in this tribunal. Far more numerous are the Volkhvy the religious leaders of the slavs, who wield their own mighty power. The Dragon and the Bear includes a complete history of Russia and Poland through the thirteenth century. It offers full rules for Volkhv characters, including the entirely new system of magic used by these pagan elders. It delves into slavic deities the Old Ones and investigates slavic Faerie. It details the Hermetic landscape, fully describing four Hermetic covenants and supplying a wealth of ideas for a covenant of player characters. Finally, it examines the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, and suggests how they may affect your saga . . . even if it's not set in the Novgorod tribunal!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ars Magica is a truly great system. It is inherently set in Western Europe around 1220 AD. But what of Eastern Europe? There were people there as well, obviously, and your character might wish to

travel there. Pity the poor storyguide who had to run to the books trying to understand Kievan Russia. That is until now. This book, like Lion of the North, dispells many myths concerning the Kievan states at this time. This is not a unified land. It has been converted, yes, but in many ways superficially. Peoples attitudes are, well, different. This book gives you background on social structures, civic organization, politics, the Old Ways, faeries, and even arms & armour. On top of this, for better or for worse, it lets you glimpse the coming of the Golden Horde, as the mongols will soon overrun this territory (wisely the game suggests setting your time-period rather earlier than the usual 1220 AD, for otherwise you would have a short campaign). The Order of Hermes is a stranger in this place, thus making it easier for players to plead blessed ignorance. The locals understand this and will pity you for your ignorance. They will send you to the local druzhina for assistance, to a volkhv if you seem wise, or call down the boyars if you get out of line. At least the storyguide will know what all this means now. If you want an interesting campaign using Ars Magica, buy this book and prepare for a world of wonder. Dozvedanya!

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