

Galdar

Galdar is the powerful, clan-ruled kingdom in the north-east of Faes-Gar.
It's:

Culturally similar to a mash of Scotland / Ireland / Norse highlands
Politically ruled by five great clans under a High King
Religiously dominated (on the surface) by the worship of Càthair
Geographically rough: highlands, mountains, forests, and cold seas

Key structural idea:

The High King must have a daughter.
That daughter must marry into another clan, and the next High King comes from that new clan.
When a new clan takes the crown, the capital city moves to that clan's seat.
The movement of the Stone of Destiny / Holy Stone of Galdar physically marks this shift.
Galdar's only land border is with Calav (Dreamhar); all other sides are sea.

Geography & Regions

Climate & Biome

Temperate-cold, European-like climate
Highlands, rolling hills, bogs, mixed forests
Long, dark winters and bright but short summers
Major Natural Features

mountain/highland zones

Northern Mountain Range: The Karnek-Vor Range

Towering, icy peaks forming the northern border of Galdar. Known for its treacherous passes and perpetual snow cover. Rich in ice-capped mines, producing iron, copper, and rare gemstones. Home to Clan Fioch's lumber camps, where hardy trees survive the cold. In local folklore, the mountains are believed to house ancient spirits that protect the land from northern invaders.

Southern Mountain Range: The Druim Kalakh Range

Dense, rocky terrain stretching along the southern coast. Volcanic activity in the western part, where hot springs and geothermal vents are common. Southern slopes are fertile, used by Clan Dunlan for farming and livestock grazing. The Kalakh Caves are known for deep crystal deposits, explored by Clan Mèinnean.

Central Highlands: The Banree Range

A smaller, rolling range that cuts from a coastal outcropping to the interior. Known for moss-covered cliffs and hidden valleys. Houses several ancient ruins from pre-clan settlements. The highlands act as a natural barrier between clans, fostering regional identities.

Water Bodies

Northern Sea: Svar-Skal

An icy, turbulent sea filled with jagged icebergs and frigid winds. Vital for Clan Dunlans fishing industry. Sea monsters and massive ice crabs are rumored to roam the waters.

Western Sea: Svar Faes

Coastal waters with rugged cliffs and narrow beaches. Treacherous due to frequent storms and violent tides. Home to several small fishing villages and hidden pirate coves.

Inland Lakes and Rivers:

Loch Varnar: A deep, dark lake in the central highlands, believed to hold ancient spirits.

The Rushing River: Flows from the Banree Range, cutting through the capital, Staig.

Wax Firth (Southern): Fertile marshlands fed by mountain runoff, used for crop irrigation.

Weane Firth (Northern): A colder estuary where freshwater meets saltwater, attracting rare fish species.

Forested Areas:

The Great Forest of Creutairean

Vast, dense woodlands in the northeastern region, controlled by Clan Fioch. The trees are massive and ancient, with roots intertwining through the entire forest. Sacred groves dedicated to Talmh are hidden within.

Locals believe the forest itself is alive and sentient, guiding those who respect it.

The Whispering Woods

Located at the base of the Karnek-Vor Range. Named for the constant rustling of leaves, even on windless days. Said to be haunted by restless spirits of ancient warriors. Clan Fergal often holds rites of passage here.

Unique Geographic Landmarks:

The Stone of Destiny

Located in the capital, Staig, within the Hall of Kings. The stone itself is a large, smooth monolith marked with ancient runes. The area around it feels heavy with history, and the air is thick with arcane energy.

The Peninsula of Fallen Hope

Formed after the destruction of Clan Dorcha's stronghold. Now a crater lake with a jagged island at its center, surrounded by dense fog and unnatural wildlife. Rumored to be haunted, with monstrous creatures from the Shadowfell occasionally spotted.

The Vigil Cliffs

Towering rock faces along the western coast, said to be where Talmh himself watched over the world. Popular pilgrimage site for those seeking wisdom or spiritual clarity.

The Iron Ridges

A line of metal-rich hills to the east, dominated by Clan Maynen's mines. Known for strange magnetic properties, affecting compasses and navigation tools.

Climate:

Harsh and cold, with long winters and brief, cool summers. Snow covers the Karnek-Vor Range year-round, while the southern coast experiences occasional warm spells from volcanic activity. Fog and mist are common, particularly in the highlands and near the coastline.

Impact on Culture:

The challenging terrain has fostered a culture of resilience and pragmatism. Clans are often isolated by geography, leading to regional variations in language, customs, and beliefs. The natural beauty and danger of the land are celebrated in poetry, songs, and storytelling.

Political Structure

Core System

Galdar is a clan-based monarchy:

Five ruling clans, each controlling a region & major city.

One of them currently holds the crown – that clan's chief is the High King/Queen.

When the High King dies (or is replaced) and succession conditions are met, the Stone of Destiny chooses the next ruler, and the capital physically moves to that clan's seat.

Succession Rule (your canon)

The High King must have a daughter.

That daughter marries into another clan.

The next High King will come from that clan, and the Stone relocates.

If the High King has no daughter, succession is decided by a clan gathering.

This creates:

Political marriages, hostage-style alliances, and pressure to produce heirs.

Constant jockeying between clans for influence over the royal daughter.

The Five Clans of Galdar

Clan Fergal - Staig

1. Clan Fergal – Staig (current royal clan)

Seat/Capital (currently): Staig

Commodities:

Whisky & spirits
Exotic fruits (imported & greenhouse grown)
Entertainment, festivals, games

Politics:

Strongly traditionalist
Pro-monarchy, deeply tied to religion
Anti-merchant guild – any guild activity here is forced underground

Culture:

“Kind but fierce” – seen as righteous, spiritual leaders
Host the great Vargagh (monthly market) when they hold the capital.

Current High King:

From Clan Fergal; based in Staig.
Pragmatic and level-headed, maintaining relative stability inside Galdar and with neighbours.(Outward).
corupted by the stone and desperately trying to find the prohasized children.

Clan Maynen – An-Frùain

Seat: An-Frùain

Commodities:

Mining – gold, metals, precious gems

Politics:

Historically loyal to the monarchy
Recently drifting toward merchant guild influence for more profit

Culture:

Very wealth-focused; success measured in what you dig up
Seen as opportunistic, willing to shift alliances for coin

Clan Dunlan – Vachar

Seat: Vachar

Commodities:

Farming, grain, livestock

Coastal fishing

Politics:

Loyal to the High King as long as their people are safe and fed
Very wary of wars or tax hikes

Culture:

Simple, hardworking, honest folk
Reputation for fair dealing and hospitality

Clan Chronomare – Val-Mohr

Seat: Val-Mohr

Commodities:

Silks, carpets, cotton
Grapes & wine

Politics:

Outwardly: cultured, supportive of trade
Secretly: anti-monarchy, actively looking for ways to weaken or abolish the High King system
Strongly pro-merchant guild, use guilds for smuggling, illegal trade, gambling, etc.

Culture:

Bywords for gluttony, overindulgence, excess
Clan chiefs draped in finery, legendary for feasts and hedonism

Clan Fiodh – Schyth (the forest clan)

Seat: Schyth (pron. Skeeth)

Key Asset: Great Forest of Creutairean, to the north

Commodities:

Lumber & timber products
Resins, rare woods, maybe druidic reagents

Politics:

Strongly pro-monarchy
Anti-merchant guilds – want trade kept under traditional clan control

Culture:

Bold, self-sufficient, stubborn
Prefer old ways – oaths, clan duty, nature spirits

Cultural Traditions & Daily Life

The Vargagh *“Heart of the Kingdom”*

A monthly market, held only in the current capital city.

Large-scale trade is ONLY legal at the Vargagh – merchants from all clans and foreign nations must travel to the capital to do serious business.

This:

Centralises wealth & influence around the High King
Forces rival clans to show up and be seen
Makes the Vargagh a prime place for intrigue, assassins, spies, political deals and secret cult meetings.

Moving Capital

Because the Stone of Destiny physically defines the capital, when the High King changes clan, the whole apparatus of power shifts:

The royal court, priesthood, major guild representation, even foreign embassies uproot and follow.

This keeps regional balances constantly in flux and gives you great excuses for:

Abandoned palaces
Half-finished grand projects in old capitals
Bitter local memories (“We were the capital once, damn it”).

Barbarians & Outlands

Beyond formal clan lands lie barbarian tribes and fringe settlements.

Encounters with unaligned northern tribes

Old shrines to pre-Càthair gods

Oathstone-scarred places where magic goes wrong

Religion in Galdar

What Most People Believe (Official Faith)

The dominant religion is the Church of Càthair, who have successfully re-written northern myth.

Càthair – presented as the righteous sky-god / high deity, patron of order, kingship, and “holy light”.

Talamh – presented as “Talamh the Twisted”, a creature of darkness who:

Sows doubt and division

Seeks to destroy trust between clans

Wants to overthrow the High King and plunge Galdar into chaos

Core teachings:

Only the High King, blessed by Càthair, can banish Talamh’s influence.

The Holy Stone of Galdar / Stone of Destiny is said to be Càthair’s gift, proving the High King’s rule is divinely ordained.

Heretical sects (who call on “old powers” or “hidden gods”) are portrayed as servants of Talamh.

This is the state religion level – what most priests preach and what most villagers think is the truth.

The Hidden Truth (for you, the DM)

You’ve established a deeper cosmology:

Talamh was originally Talamh the Steadfast Root, the unifier who brought four clandoms together and was a true, good deity.

Clan Drocha were the gifted sorcerer nation of the north. Chosen of Talamh. The creation of the stone of destiny caused the religion to be decimated, allowing the church of Càthair to rewrite the tablets and become the dominant religion, down casting the religion of Talamh.

When the church of Càthair took over, they couldn’t fully alter divine bonds, so instead they corrupted history:

Rewriting Talamh as a twisted, demonic figure

Claiming Càthair created the five clans and the Stone system.

The Stone of Destiny / Holy Stone of Galdar

This artefact really does grant power, but it’s corrupted.

Powers granted to the High King:

Dominance Over the Clans

An invisible pressure of will – those under Galdar’s bloodline feel compelled to submit or obey.

Not absolute mind control, but hugely persuasive.

Enhanced Strength & Endurance

Supernatural physical power; the High King is terrifying in combat.

“Banishment of the Twisted One” - Functions like a corrupted Detect Good and Evil / Purge effect.

The king can “cleanse” people, which actually overwrites their free will with a brutal charm effect. Also

stripping that person of any magic they may possess.
Repels the Unworthy - Anyone who isn't the current or next chosen High King touching the Stone is blasted back and harmed (you set this at e.g. 1d10 force dmg).

Corruption of the High King

The High King does not age as long as he has no daughter.
Once he has a daughter, he starts to wither and age rapidly, even as:

His zealotry increases
Paranoia grows
He's driven toward brutality (massacres, invasions, purges).
Whispers of Càthair in his mind push him to ever more "righteous" violence.
The system ensures:

He is compelled to seek a daughter (to continue the cycle).
His final years are often marked by holy war, crackdowns, or atrocities.
This is perfect villain fuel if/when you want a future High King to go fully off the rails.

Heretical Sects

Some sects labelled "heretical" are actually following the older pantheons

They might be:

Trying to summon or restore the original pantheon
Seen by the Church as doomsday cultists
To the common folk, they're evil sorcerers stirring "Talamh's corruption"; in truth, they may be the only ones who remember the real history.

International Relations

From multiple extracts: Galdar's relations are volatile, depending heavily on who currently holds the crown.

With Dreamhar (Calav, Clada, Creig)
Trade is strong – especially via Calav over the eastern border.

Tensions exist because:

Dreamhar has guild-ruled cities and pirates, while Galdar is very monarch-and-clan driven.
Rumours about magic suppression / Oathstones in the north muddy the waters.

Galdar will:

Respect Dreamhar when a pragmatic High King rules (like now).
Potentially launch raids, enforce high tariffs, or threaten war if a more aggressive clan gains the crown.

With Valtheris

Relations are unstable but currently okay thanks to the pragmatic High King.
If a hard-line clan like Chronomare or a profit-hungry Maynen -backed king ascended, you could easily get:

Border skirmishes

Trade embargoes

Attempts to weaponise religion (“Valtheris is faithless / corrupt!”)