

ARDUIN

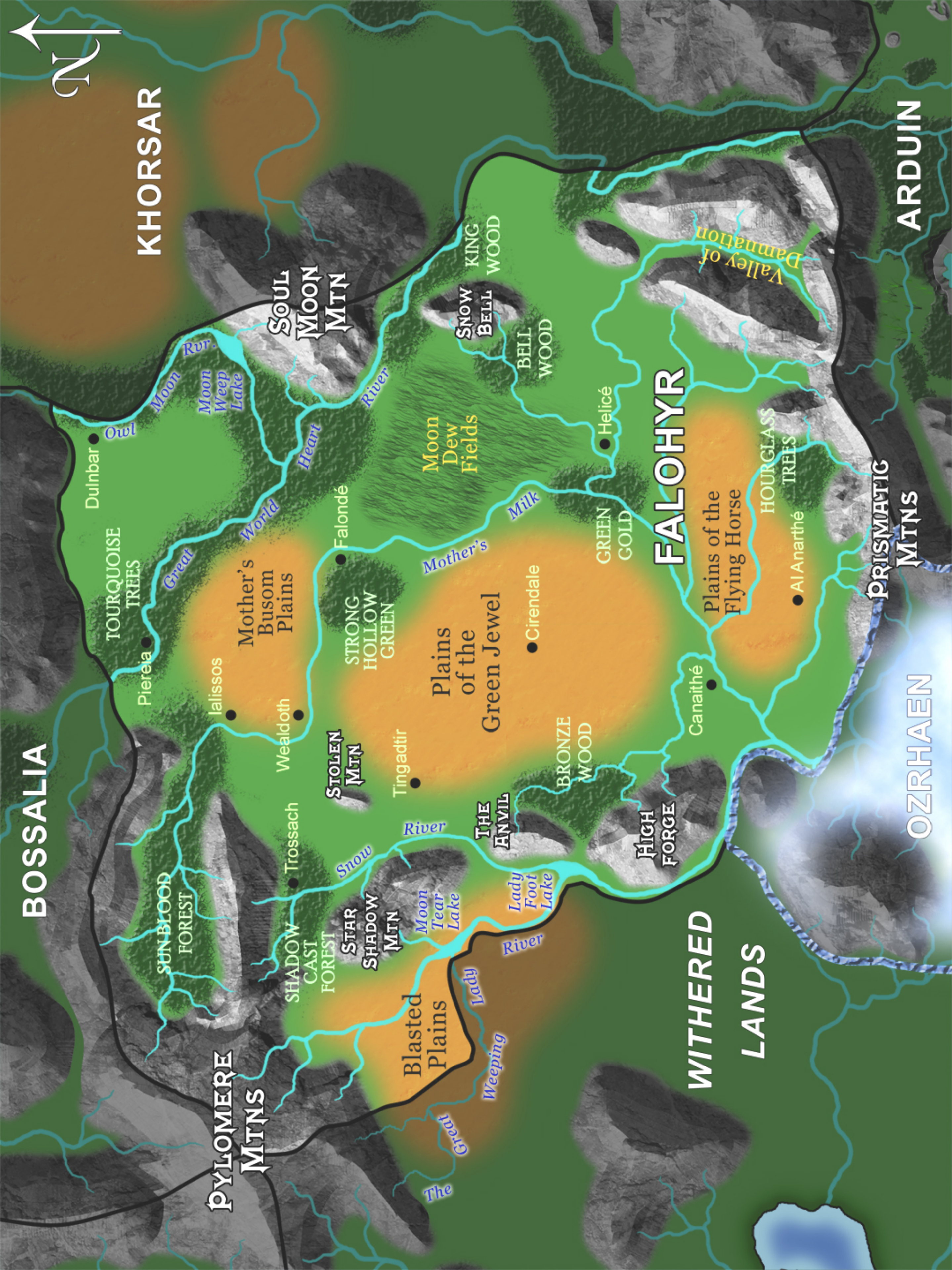
ETERNAL



Falohyr

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BOSSALIA

KHORSAR

ARDUIN

OZRHAEN

PYLOMERE
MTNS

SOUL
MOON
MTN

PRISMATIC
MTNS

FALOHYR

WITHERED
LANDS

Dulnbar

TOURQOISE
TREES

Piereia

Ialissos

Mother's
Busom
Plains

Wealdoth

Trossach

SUNBLOOD
FOREST

SHADOW
CAST
FOREST

STAR
SHADOW
MTN

Tingadtir

STOLEN
MTN

STRONG
HOLLOW
GREEN

Plains
of the
Green Jewel

Cirendale

Moon
Dew
Fields

Mother's
Milk

Falondé

SNOW
KING
BELL
WOOD

BELL
WOOD

GREEN
GOLD

Helicé

Valley of
Damnation

Plains of the
Flying Horse

HOURLASS
TREES

AlAnarthé

THE
ANVIL

Lady
Foot
Lake

BRONZE
WOOD

HIGH
FORGE

Blasted
Plains

The
Great
Weeping

Lady
River

Snow
River

Moon
Tear
Lake

Moon
Rvr.
Moon
Weep
Lake

Heart
River

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ARDUIN® ETERNAL

Country of Falohyr

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FALOHYR

Location: E4 – F4, E5 – F5

Capitol: Falondé

Population: 7,000,000

Demographics: Human 60%, Amazon 4%, Dwarf 6%, Elf 19%, Hobbit 1%, Kobbitt 2%, Orc 2%, Gnome 2%, Goblin 1%, Centaur 1%, Other 2%

Government: Feudal Monarchy [stable]

Tech: Low

Magik: High

Psychic: Medium

Spirit: Medium

Religion: Amarydion, Xuanth, Emerald Star Cult, Eru

Symbol or Heraldry: Rampant double queued Gryphon, one claw open and facing up at mid abdomen, the other at head height facing down, between which are 3 stars in a bow shape bending away from the Gryphon

Allies: Vorgoé

Enemies: Bossalia, Khorsar (inactive)

QUICK DESCRIPTION

A vibrant monarchy built strong by feudal lords and kept in check by the play of power against power.

SOCIETY

The lands of Falohyr are known far and wide as the heartland of Khoara, and the ancient and glorious Falondé its heart. The monarch seated on the Gryphon Throne rules the land with a feudal hold over the numerous landed nobles. This factor more than any other grips the lives of Falohyrians, noble or not, and dictates their path in the pursuit of life and destiny. All know the name of the crowned king and speak it with reverence and dignity. Even the harshest criminal honors the king, though they break his laws in the same breath. Somewhere in their mind they reconcile the act, just as nobles swear allegiance only to plot the crown's overthrow. Its part of their love affair with destiny and the struggle against it. Speaking of destiny, if a word could ever define a people, then destiny would suffice for Falohyrians, as they are great believers in the ordainment of fate. While the Earth Mother holds hearts with strong fear and devotion, the traditions of the past still hold sway. The belief in the weaving of the skein of one's life is strong, and Falohyrians know the futility in struggling against one's fate with a finality that reaches into their bones. Their belief plays in many aspects of their lives, but not the least of which is their status in life. Falohyrians will accept without struggle their birthright, good or bad as it may be, but do not lay down the fight to struggle against it as well.

Belief in destiny takes many forms, and Falohyrians have split along all the different lines of thought behind each. In this disparity of views, there are two major divisions of thought ruling them all. One is, "Fate preordains a person's lot in life, and whatever is given is in the weave". The other is a polar opposite: "One must decry such acceptance of one's lot, struggle against the skein of life that is woven for indeed, a will and path is founded but the weave of that journey is unknown to any but the gods. Only through search and struggle can an individual find the path set before his or her feet in the tapestry

of life". Regardless of which path they see as defined by fate, Falohyrians tend to value their strength and wits above all things, and see weakness as something to be eradicated. This makes others see Falohyrians as aggressive, arrogant, and, at times, quick to temper. In truth they are just as patient or quick to act as any other. Its the mindset they hold in regards to fate and its weave that guides their lot in life.

The lifeblood of the country is the nobility. They are present at every level and in every organization of any nature within the country. Many of them are nonhuman, blessed with long lives, and they use this fact to influence generations. Nobility, though, is not necessarily an easy road. It holds requirements, stiff ones, that one of noble blood must live up to or lose their treasured status.

The requirement by the crown for all nobles to have lands commensurate with their titles has spurred younger sons for generations to push against the borders and each other to carve away lands. Positioned between the two mountain chains (the Prismatic and Heaven Wall) as well as the Withered Lands, there are few outlets for enthusiastic nobles desiring to expand their domains or for those who struggle to attain noble status. This puts them in direct conflict with the neighboring states, and the kingdom is on uneven footing with one or another, if not both at any given time.

A powerful fact of Falohyrian life is the omnipresent religion of the Earth Mother, Amarydion. Her priestesses play a mediating influence on the lives of Falohyrians, often quelling the flames of war and avarice – usually to suit their own devices. More than once they have equally raised banners to chastise the neighboring counties as well, from Arduin to Khorsar each has felt the bite of her call to arms. Aside from their kingdom-wide influence in politics, the religion of the Earth Mother is highly regarded by the commoners of the land, and features heavily in their lives, especially those who dwell in rural areas.

The Elven nobles have taken to power once again in Falohyr after a 300 yearlong period of disinterest. They are said to be the cause of current events in the kingdom, though nearly as many call it a lie. Their origins and impact on the country stems from the Nexus Wars, when many Elves moved into the land. In fact, at one point, an Elven king sat on the Gryphon Throne until removed by a council of nobles. This was a bloody time in history for Falohyr, and the act shattered the power of the Elven nobles in the land. Yet, over time and with great patience, they have reemerged and grown strong once again. The Gryphon King watches them carefully, as do many of the other noble coalitions, to see what moves may come from their growing strength. They fear many things, not the least of which is a traitorous selling out to Arduin, taking with them the Prismatic Mountain range region of Falohyr where the majority of the Elven Coalition lands are found.

Falohyr has numerous walled cities and keeps, and a prime stretch of fertile growing land and pasturage that is the breadbasket of their trade and wealth. Falohyrian cities are counterpoised between two styles of building, one tradition and another newer, and due to the influence of the Amarydion religion. The first built beautiful tall buildings, usually with clean lines but garnished with statuary, gargoyles, murals, and frescoes. Structures are parsimonious with space, utilizing everything, and including the spaces between to define streets, alleyways, and the removal of waste. This is the traditional way of building carried forward from the past, and it used all materials to form its structures as long as it was pleasing. The newer way, influenced by religion, has changed the focus of construction from economy of building to a greater celebration of form and engineering, centered on the worship of the Earth Mother in all forms. Her temples form the centers of many cities, often dislocating the domiciles of nobles. Immense open plazas hold open-air temples of large blocks, thick with vegetation and trees. Surrounding them are the public buildings of the

government, homes of the wealthy and noble, and the courtyards for the traditional game of vridkrea. Whether the center of a city is the temples dedicated to the Earth Mother or the residences of nobles, the upper and middle-class citizens build their homes around the city center, and the lower class raise buildings on the periphery. When building in stone, Falohyrians only use sculpted rock and a type of cement between the stone to form bonds. Their buildings are quite durable, and they will use this same cement to form thin coatings over structures to give them a smooth appearance, often painting them afterward with pleasing colors. Falohyrian fortresses follow the same building structure as the cities, though they have a specifically engineered border tower design they employ. These towers are built in a twisting, ascending turn of triple tiers, with a lower reinforced door, a sharp outer edge, and rising outer balcony, excellent for deploying large amounts of missile fire or roiling floods to beat back attackers. These twisting outer balconies are perforated to allow fluids to course down, raining fluids (usually hot oil) on attackers.

Food and dishes in Falohyr are heavy in the agricultural goods that are the richness of their land. Glazed pottery is used to stock most goods for long-term storage. Falohyrians delight in brining, pickling, salting, and candying foods of all kinds. Falohyr produces a spectrum of jams and jellies, and have a national infatuation for such preserves.

Falohyrian dress has much in common with Morvaenian dress, and the universal fitted tunic, trouser, and hood are as common in Falohyr as it is in Morvaen. Beyond the basic tunic, men and women alike wear full length cloaks caught at the throat or over the shoulder, and women favor long bands of cloth wrapped around the body to compliment open or tight shirts and vests. In the south around the Prismatic Mountains, women have taken to wearing a form of mini toga over the upper body, using the folds to indicate marital status and fertility. This is a new fashion introduced by trade, but few others have taken hold against the traditional garb.

WELL KNOWN CUSTOMS

Falohyrians have a very strong sense of nationalism that will come before blood feuds should invaders or outsiders threaten the land of their fathers. Patriotism is a powerful meme as is a near worship of the king and some of the older noble families. Falohyrians also display a strong commitment to their family and their noble rulers, often extending into the noble families as well, treating them as their own kin. Some Falohyrians will take this to an extreme level, sometimes living through the actions of nobles as if their lives have no meaning or value to them.

While not matriarchal, a vast respect for females and Amazons exist. Falohyr is where woman are seen as pretty much equals without qualm or question, something surrounding kingdoms without the same respect tend to deride them about.

Fertility is an important thing for Falohyrians, and they take the rituals to bless the fields, wish upon the newly wedded, and similar ceremonies quite seriously. During the Spring Equinox on the 13th of Torvaen, the Falohyrians separate from the norm, and do not celebrate the Rise of the Green Man and the burning of his effigy. Instead, in the morning, they plant seed and prepare the fields, meeting at daybreak to eat and drink, especially Green Beer and Oak and Ear Ale. Then as the night slowly descends, they go out into the fields with the opposite sex to 'pray' for fertility, both for each other and the newly planted fields.

Vridkrea is the national sport and pastime in Falohyr. Every city and settlement of any size has a permanent courtyard for vridkrea, and smaller hamlets and villages have somewhere they use as a temporary one. These courtyards are totally open to the sky, and surrounded by unbroken tiers of seats. Sound is transmitted well in these raised (sometimes sunken) courtyards, and a whisper is easily decipherable across the length of the area. Vridkrea is played in 2 ways, depending on whether the game is a death game (which is much more rare these days) or not. The rules are the same: differing teams

attempt to move a hard ball (usually made from layered resin or cured leather with a spongy, treated Bloatwood pulp inside) into an opposing teams part of the court, and strike 1 of 3 markers set for this purpose. This is more difficult than it appears, as they cannot use their hands, feet, or shins. In Death Games, everything else is legal, including hindering or damaging opponents, which is a common sight in this type of game, and sometime weapons are even granted to players. Other games are different, and a leather and wood breastplate is the only legal way to advance the ball towards the other team, something that requires a good amount of finesse, agility, and commensurate skill. A good chunk of the game is the ability to attack the other teams' markers as well as defend your own. While any number of teams can play, there is only one ball in play at a time. Once a team loses its 3 markers, they are eliminated from play.

Falohyr is the worldwide center for the religion of Amarydion. Falohyr is her bastion in the world, and her priests play an important and powerful role in all aspects of its governing and laws. Amarydion tenets hold to strong and swift justice, and this feeling has become one with the concordance of law in Falohyr. Another Amarydion influence is the cremation of the dead. Traditionally, Falohyrians buried their dead in small family crypts or stone mausoleums, cleaning them out every few generations to make room for the newer dead. The older generations were then ceremoniously incinerated and returned to the earth. Amarydion influence has hastened this process; now the dead are summarily cremated, and their ashes sprinkled over the fields.

MYTHS AND QUIRKY THINGS

In Falohyr, serious crimes end up with a being sent off to the mines, especially foreigners, orcs, urukks and like blooded beings to work in the gold mines of the Prismatic Mountains. Most of those recruited die within a few years, broken by the hard labor, poor living conditions, and terrible treatment received from the mines slave-masters. At any given time there are approximately 25,000 to 30,000 slaves working the mines. The enormous amount of gold extracted from the mines has helped make Falohyr a very wealthy kingdom.

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

Falohyrian is the tongue of the land, and often taken by many others as the tongue of trade. The Colleges in Falohyr are excellent and famed for their scholars and philosophers; they are perhaps best known for their 'discovery' of the Nexus Gates in Arduin many years ago. While not power brokers, they are still quite powerful edifices, and have strong influence in local affairs. Generally, they stand neutral, except the College of Religion, which is actively involved in the affairs of the people and politics in Falohyr. The dominance of the Earth Mother has led to repression of all other religions not allied with her. This has resulted in much infighting and plotting by the repressed religions to try to upset the balance of power.

Artistically, Falohyr produces a spectrum of impressive embroidery and other textile work, as well as excellent non realistic expression in etch work and statuary. Their glazed pottery is in demand continent wide, and frequently seen in countries across Khaas, especially those that deal in transportation and travel. Falohyr makes special travel jars well able to withstand the rigors of horseback or the jostling of wagons.

The Colleges and Guilds have a very strong hold in Falohyr, and play the game of politics well. They are steeply involved with politics at one level or another, mixing with the noblemen and the king to gain advantage and influence. Falohyr's location in the heart of the continent provides it with several natural borders in the north and south that provide protection, and allows it to concentrate on expanding its influence and grip on other lands, namely those of Bossalia and Khorsar.

MILITARY

Falohyr depends greatly on the tough infantry of its land, trained to high perfection in the use of spear and shield, especially in formations and against mounted opponents. Bloodied many times by past fighting with the Khorsar, they are expert at fighting against cavalry and mobile missile using foes. They are proven mountain fighters as well, and have operated with great facility in the mountain vales and slopes of the Heaven Wall Mountains against Bossalian Mountain Men units. Supporting the heart of their military are units of axe, bow, and two-handed sword wielding infantry. Most of these units are used to great effect against unmounted opponents, and Falohyrians have even evolved special units utilizing weighted ropes, bows, and sickle picks against Bossalian aerial cavalry.

COMMERCE

Well known for its 'Green Beer', Falohyr trades in a vast array of commercial items, as the fertile land provides agricultural, bovine, equine, and like bounties. Imports vary greatly, and Falohyr has the pick of the many goods that flow through her lands from other countries.

Falohyrians build good roads of stone overlaid with gravel. They maintain them diligently; they are the lifeblood of trade, and serve manifold other uses for their nation. The larger cities have causeways for main routes, and these 2 to 3 foot raised roads are the main thoroughfares for traffic. Some of these, like the causeways in Falondé, are 15 feet wide, and are covered with multicolored gravel from the Prismatic Mountains or stone from foreign lands for decoration and beauty.

LANDMARKS OF NOTE

Lost Caverns of the Ruby Sun – More legend than anything, these are said to lay somewhere in the east or southeast of Falohyr, perhaps in the mountains near the border of Ozrhaen or farther towards the great Star Fang Mountain in the Withered Lands. A fragment of a song places them where "serpents form in the madness winds and grains of sands grind each other into diamonds tumbling in the river of time on its meandering through the ages".

Prismatic Mountains – Few indeed can say they do not know these beautiful mountains as they display a dazzling array of colors to the traveler's eye. A well-known border marking between Arduin and Falohyr, many travelers have considered their lives complete only upon seeing this painted mountain chain. The legends attributed to them are many, but perhaps the most familiar are the ascent of Haran Adamantine Eye, also called 'the Sagnar'. He trekked to the top of many of the peaks in this chromatic hued mountain range in order to find the Five Blessed Metals of Konreadeth. His tale is popular, especially in Dwarven homes, and more than one prospective adventurer ready to take the world by the throat has thought about following in the footsteps of his famous trek. Who knows, perhaps they too will gain the Flames of Indriaa for their right hand and the Cold Kiss of Juindhör for their left.

Sedanta – The world beyond a nexus that lies near the Hallowed Wood of Killiele on the Old Moss Face in Falohyr. This portal opens on a regular basis, cycling open for 3 to 5 days every month. It leads to a world reminiscent of ancient Ireland on Earth. The Sedanta view Khaasians depending on their race and reactions range from hostility to hospitality.

Seven Fang Gate – A nexus and a world, one named after the gate that leads to it from Khaas. It sits on the edge of the Witherlands near the Heaven Wall Mountains in Falohyr, a giant construction of seven huge fangs forms the boundary to the stationary nexus that leads to another world. This world is a dreary, gravity heavy place, pelted constantly with fuming acid rain. Giant herbivores roam that land and feed on the lush vegetation (its unaffected by the rain).

Valley of the Walking Stones – Perched on the edge of Falohyr's border with the near barren Wasted Lands and the frost covered heights of the Heaven Wall Mountains is a small valley shrouded in a warm foggy embrace. Vegetation is thick and thriving around and in the valley though the warm wet arms of the fog hide most from sight. It's a vivid green contrast to the land surrounding, which is brown, faded and dying. While thick and verdant, it no animals mark the air with calls or scuttle through the thick foliage. Indeed, the bounty of green does not rise higher than a Throon. Within, shrouded by mist, giant stones festooned with vegetation (three times a Throon and more) float and bob, moving in time to hidden music. They are especially active around the equinoxes and solstices.

REGIONAL HISTORY

Falohyr is an old nation, with a sense of destiny extending back into the crumbling pages of history. The land was not always known by the name Falohyr, but it has always played a part, by design or fate, in the tapestry of events surrounding Khaora. Its place in the heartlands of Khaora has always been a fertile one, drawing settlers to its earthen riches like Dwarves to Mithril. Accounting every nation that has owned this land and called it 'their land' is beyond the scope allowed here. However, standing head and shoulders above them all is the Faalithi. The Faalithi burned across the lands from the tall, wintry Heaven Wall Mountains to the eye inspiring stretch of the Prismatic Mountains. The Faalithi ire towards life is narrated only in legends, and they were recounted as tough enough to fell Ogres with one blow, strong enough to wrestle down Star Giants, and fearless enough to castrate Shadow Demons with a dull knife. While the course of time embellishes the truest of legends, there are many grains of truth about the tales of the Faalithi. Some say they were hellish minions of the Kthoi turned loose after their downfall. Others bespeak them as demons clothed in flesh and given life in chaos: born, they say, to rive law and shred order. The Rhingalorean Dwarves feared them, and reserved for them a hate that perseveres even after their demise. This hatred is found in the Dwarven languages, both the older and newer Dwarven tongue, as well as the occasional ancient artifact filled with potent power and hate driven sentience to annihilate all that is Faalithi. The Old Dwarven name for the Faalithi is 'Barakkik Khradmithi', or 'The Hell Spawn', but the newer Dwarven tongue has bastardized these hate filled words into the derivative pronunciation, 'Barak Khadmi' or 'Doomfarer'. The High Elves of the Heaven Walls knew them also, and fought them with flame, ice, the rumble of thunder, and the power inherent in the lofty heights of their mountain fortresses. The Faalithi were as tenacious in climbing the steep heights to siege and slay in the Elven fastnesses as they were to delve below and hunt the Dwarves and underworld races in their stone holds; and the Elves held them with a contempt reserved for the truly abominable. The 'Eldeth Dresithik', or 'Death that Walks Without Sound', is their name for these enemies, and the shout of glad tidings at the word of their demise rocked the Heaven Wall Mountains from pinnacle to pinnacle with its power.

That the Faalithi met their match somewhere in the world is certain: who or what those beings are is not. History only portrays that once they claimed the extent of the heart of the continent from mountain to mountain, burning the land with the fire of their lives, and the next moment there was silence in the vacuum of their disappearance. Little time was given to considering this wondrous thing as a great war started on Archaela, one that very soon

grew to encompass the entire world. In the great diasporas during the aftermath of destruction on the fifth continent, the land that would be Falohyr gathered peoples to its bosom, and nurtured a new race. This time the country was known as Thaulie; and the country was young when the Shadow of the One fell across the land, and it withered in the chill of that shade.

A place so rich never lies fallow for long, and in this fertile land rose another race of strong Nordic Human descent, driven from their home in the north by the excesses of the previous war. Changing their previous culture from a nomadic one based on hunting, they took to agriculture with a passion, growing wealth on the riches of the land. Legends say they named their land Falohyr after a great leader of the Nordic men. Others scoff at such nonsense, and point to the numerous legends about the discovery of an ancient beryl palace, undamaged by time, and the crown found within bearing the inscription, 'whosoever should would wear this crown will rule the nation of Falohyr'. As young King Theodarkenmarl was the first king of Falohyr and his palace in razed Eimalaurel was made of beryl, the latter legend may have more truth.

Beyond its early history, Falohyr is best known for the part it played in the beginning of the Nexus Wars. Its sages are attributed with 'discovering' the existence of the nexus in the Elven kingdom of Arduin. This proclamation prompted the beginning of the 10,000 year long period of wars, battles, and conflicts around the Elven nation, which only finally ended after the signing of the Accords of Arduin. Falohyr was among the grasping nations, which attempted to take the helm of control for the land of Arduin and the riches of its nexus gates. They failed, though they came closer than many to succeeding. When the Emperor King of Viruelandia sued for peace, they were weary of the battles, and were among the first to come to the peace table. Their willingness to lay down the sword gave more than one other nation pause to consider as well. This had much to do with 2 important facts. First, the Amarydion 'Earth Mother' religion had grown to power in the land, and sought peace. Secondly, many Elves that did not make the exodus to Höhenaré had fled to Falohyr. Their voices eventually found power in the land and rose up against the ravaging wars tearing the region and grinding civilization.

Falohyr also played an important, if neutral, part the flooding of Khorsar by the gods. They did not join in the land grab by many of Khorsar's neighbors. Khorsar did not forget this act, and peace has resulted because of it.