

WORLD OF GOR

GOEAN ROLEPLAYING
WORLD ENCYCLOPAEDIA



World OF GOR

Authorised and based on the Gorean books of John Norman

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Weep, Free Maiden.

Remember your pride and weep.

Remember your laughter and weep.

Remember you were my enemy and weep.

Now you are my helpless captive.

Remember you stood against me.

Now you lie at my feet.

I have bound you with yellow cords.

I have placed you on the scarlet rug.

Thus by the laws of Tharna do I claim you.

Remember you were free.

Know now you are my slave.

Weep, Slave Girl.

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Introduction

This book is intended as a companion volume to the *Tales of Gor Role-playing Game* and as a resource for playing that game. It provides additional information to help fill out and understand the world of Gor.

It is also intended to be a fan resource and reference for those who love the world of John Norman's books and who wish to draw upon them in their own games, stories, fan-fiction and when re-reading the novels.

MY GOR

I was gifted the first twenty-four books of *John Norman's Chronicles of Gor* when a friend of mine went away to university. I was still at school at the time, in my final year, voraciously reading any and all science fiction and fantasy I could find (at the rate of up to six books a day on weekends).

To receive over twenty books, completely new to me, out of the blue was an enormous gift and I threw myself into reading them, one after another until they were all done.

Here was a series of books with much of the same fantastical imagination as Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Barsoom* series or the Hyborian fantasies of *Robert E. Howard*, but drawing on the same imagery of Greek and Roman heroism I'd learned at school and had seen in the films of *Ray Harryhausen*.

Where *Burroughs* and *Howard* coyly turned aside at the last minute, however, trapped by the relative prudishness of their times (for all the livid covers and descriptions of a more liberated – and naked – society), *Norman's* hero did not.

The fate of the handmaidens and slave girls that Tarl Cabot encountered was never in question, but then nor was the fate of the oiled, male silk slaves under the aloof, free women of Gor's cities.

Tarl Cabot's struggles adapting to the fierce Gorean world were in many ways a reflection of adolescence for me, and for many others.

Fiction helped many of us to understand and accept the more adult and cutthroat world we were entering via the ravages of puberty. For many others – in the days before the Internet – the Gorean world was also their first exposure to the aesthetic of BDSM and D/S, their first hint that this was something normal, or that it was a kink shared by others. The importance of that, to so many, along with his book *Imaginative Sex* cannot be underestimated.

Despite the great success of the Gorean cycle, selling between six and twelve million copies and *Tarnsman of Gor* being reprinted twenty-two times, the Gorean series was interrupted in 1988 when it was dropped by its publisher, allegedly for political reasons. There were, as a result, thirteen years between *Magicians of Gor* in 1988 and *Witness of Gor* in 2001 and another seven years after that until *Prize of Gor* in 2008. 'Political correctness' in the late eighties and through the nineties made such sexually explicit and controversial fantasy difficult to know what to do with and the 'Social Justice Warrior' mindset of today causes similar problems.

Fortunately the Internet rose during the same period and fans of *Norman's* work began to form their own communities online. Forums and chat rooms sprang up by the dozen, Internet Relay Chat played host to dozens of Gorean role-play rooms, people sold, resold and naughtily transcribed the books as they went out of print, and created online resources for these communities as they arose.

As the Internet advanced, so did the complexity of these resources and as graphical role-play became possible it spread there, to the point where – in 2009 – it was estimated that there were some fifty-thousand Gorean role-players on *Second Life* alone as well as being some of the first role-play groups to arrive in *The Palace* and *IMVU* back when those started.

The Internet would also come to the rescue of the series, in time.

The advent of cheap print on demand and e-books has meant that the series has managed to continue and the entire back catalog has become available to purchase once again, via the company *E-Reads* (and *Open Road Media*, and *Orion's Gateway* imprint) breathing new life into the series and bringing new revelations and new stories to its fans.

In all this time, however, there has never been an official Gorean role-playing game. Everything that exists online is unofficial and organized by fans, strange for a series of fantasy books whose publishing peak coincided with the boom period of the popularity of *Dungeons & Dragons* and other role-playing games.

High time it had one.



Scribe of Gor

As I sit now, in this once familiar study, writing these words; everything seems strangely off. I feel heavier, the air feels dirtier, the noise of traffic makes me startle and reach for a dagger on my belt that isn't there. I've acquired some sort of air or swagger compared to those around me and I seem to take up more space than I used to. People recoil in fear and sneer at an academic who holds his head so high and my, frank, stares are making people rather uncomfortable.

Two years I spent on the Counter-Earth, recording my experiences and observations. Two years of toil, danger and terrifying horror. Two years of excitement, love and wonder.

Never in my wildest dreams had I thought that anything like what I have experienced could be true or that a world so different to our own, so alive, could exist. Nor could I believe that strange forces from the antichthon could be at work on our own world, yet now I know better; a state of affairs to both my cost, and to my benefit.

I was contacted in the January of 2012, in my home, by a man calling himself Geoffrey Marlowe, though he spoke with a strange accent and looked more Greek to me rather than being of my own, mongrel, British blood. He had not contacted me beforehand, he simply turned up – unannounced – and asked to talk to me. He told me that he had a business proposition to present to me on the behalf of a Mr Harrison Smith and a Mr Matthew Cabot, the commissioning of a travelogue of sorts.

As a 'back' writer, barely scrimping by day by day and without a university degree to my name I was hungry for the cash, but also honest enough to tell them the truth. That I lacked the qualifications necessary to complete such a task and that my expertise was in electronic publishing and fiction, rather than the kind of tourist information or guidebook they seemed to be asking me to write.

My honesty, it seems, was part of my appeal to them and over the following few months we negotiated my contract, I received an advance (in cash) and then traveled to what was claimed to be Mr Marlowe's estate in a remote part of the Western Isles of Scotland.

A drab place to begin what was supposed to be an exotic travelogue, even though the islands had long held a special place in my heart. They were far from most people, wild and free, and gloriously empty.

It was there that the truth was revealed to me, much to my horror.

Marlowe claimed to be an agent of something called 'Priest Kings' but acting on a personal errand for Matthew Cabot. He spun me a tale of conspiracies and aliens, of another world that I would visit and he told me my fee would be doubled from what had been negotiated. An amount large enough to make me stop scoffing and to tolerate his eccentricity – something that we English are very good at doing, so long as the eccentric is wealthy.

Still, I didn't believe him.

I continued not to believe him until out of the night a silver ship descended from the sky and landed in that remote and boggy place. Even then I didn't truly believe my own eyes, not until I saw the plastic tubes - like coffins - being loaded aboard and Marlowe of Harfax tossed my traveling bags into a peat bog and dragged my stunned person aboard the ship.

Two years on the Counter-Earth, Philolaus' fever dream, amongst gods and monsters, 'true men' and 'true women' only to be brought back to this grubby, petty little world. It was too much to stand.

This introduction is the last thing I type before the files are sent to Harrison's office for the old man to approve. When this is done I plan to return to Lewis, to find that estate – so far from the roads – and to wait for them to return. For I am no longer a man of Earth and there is no longer any place for me here, at least none I can tolerate or live with.

Jowan of Ko-Ro-Ba

Scribe of Gor

22nd of April 2014

3rd Day of the First Hand of the Second Month of Year 56 of the Administration of Matthew Cabot, 10,164 Contasta Ar

RACE AND SEX

The Gorean world is one in which sex plays a central role and in which gender is hugely important. This contrasts hugely with the direction in which fiction and games have been going for some years now and to the eyes of 2017 can offend and upset in a way that it did not to the eyes of 1966. To those lacking context or familiarity it would be all too easy to dismiss the Gorean world as one of racism, imperialist fantasy and misogyny.

Primarily one should always keep in mind that the Gorean world is a fantasy world and, as such, should be treated as fantasy. It is escapism, whimsy and a way of exploring alternate worlds and ideas from the safety of your own mind.

Millions of people around the world enjoy the fantasy of domination and submission into which Gor fits, and it says nothing of their own personal beliefs about the political and social relationships of men and women outside the bedroom - and nor does enjoying a guilty pleasure like Gor.

On race it is, again, all too easy to see the word 'savage' (in particular) and to react with a visceral, culturally inculcated, disgust.

The term 'Red Savages' for example, originates within the Gorean world to describe the transplanted Native American culture found there. Within a Gorean context considering a warrior people to be 'savage' is almost a compliment and if the books involving that culture are read they are - if anything - greatly admiring of the Native American people and treat them as full equals, experts and even has them besting our hero.

The same is true of the other transplanted cultures found throughout the books

No disclaimer can ever affect the settled and decided attitudes of those who seek or choose to be offended, but they can - at least - offer a certain amount of pre-emptive explanation.

POSTMORTEM STUDIOS

Postmortem Studios is the personal publishing imprint of award winning writer and game designer James 'Grim' Desborough. Since opening in 2001, Postmortem Studios has built a reputation based on black humor, innovative concepts and tackling challenging and difficult subject matter. Postmortem Studios' back catalogue can be found on PDF at rpgnow.com or in print on demand via Lulu.com.

You can also support James' work via subscription at [Patreon](https://www.patreon.com/Grimachu), under 'Grimachu' and can keep up with releases and discussion at: postmortemstudios.wordpress.com

GOR'S GENRE

The genre of Gor can be broadly described as science-fantasy since, despite the presence of aliens, space ships, immortality and strange technologies, it primarily takes place at the level of fantasy. Gor also shares a great many things in common with the classic 'Planetary Romance' novels and the barbarian fantasies of the pulp era.

What made Gor even more risqué and controversial than the pulps that inspired it – and were considered a bad influence in their day – were Gor's more explicit inclusion of sex and especially dominance and submission, beating *Fifty Shades of Grey* to the punch by fifty years and thirty novels.

Gor draws on diverse sources from the pulps, adventure stories, science fiction, fantasy and 'spicy tales', but it also draws from human history and most especially, and foundationally, classical Greece and the Roman Empire upon which much of 'civilized Gor' derives aspects of its culture.

From this heady mix you have engaging and rewarding adventures on an alien world, shaping the fates of cities, civilizations and even planets – all from the point of a sword.

THE NOVELS

At time of writing there are thirty-four novels in the Gorean cycle, traversing almost all of known Gor and beyond. Most of these chart the adventures of Tarl Cabot, a flame-haired man of Earth and lost scion of Gor, coming to that planet and finding himself.

They chart events across Gor for much of the period in which the novels have been written and are an excellent way to understand the plots, schemes and adventures that centre around the Counter-Earth.

1. Tarnsman of Gor (1966)

Tarl Cabot has always believed himself to be a citizen of Earth. He has no inkling that his destiny is far greater than the small planet he has inhabited for the first twenty-odd years of his life. One frosty winter night in the New England woods, he finds himself transported to the planet of Gor, also known as Counter-Earth, where everything is dramatically different from anything he has ever experienced. It emerges that Tarl is to be trained as a Tarnsman, one of the most honored positions in the rigid, caste-bound Gorean society. He is disciplined by the best teachers and warriors that Gor has to offer . . . but to what end?

2. Outlaw of Gor (1967)

Tarl Cabot finds himself transported back to Counter-Earth from the sedate life he has known as a history professor on Earth. He is glad to be back in his role as a dominant warrior and again in the arms of his true love. Yet Tarl finds that his name on Gor has been tainted, his city defiled, and all those he loves made outcasts. He is no longer in the position of a proud warrior, but an outlaw for whom the simplest answers must come at a high price. He wonders why the Priest-Kings have called him back to Gor, and whether it is only to render him powerless.

3. Priest-Kings of Gor (1968)

Tarl Cabot is the intrepid tarnsman of the planet Gor, a harsh society with a rigid caste system that enacts the most brutal form of Social Darwinism. In this volume, Tarl must search for the truth behind the disappearance of his beautiful wife, Talena. Have the ruthless Priest-Kings destroyed her? Tarl vows to find the answer for himself, journeying to the mountain stronghold of the kings, knowing full well that no one who has dared approach the Priest-Kings has ever returned alive . . .

4. Nomads of Gor (1969)

Join celebrated tarnsman Tarl Cabot in his latest adventure on the parallel planet of Gor, with its exotic lifestyle and social norms. Tarl has dedicated his life to ensuring that the Priest-Kings survive the harsh lands of Gor, but a savage tribe that closely guards its secrets has halted his quest. To continue it, Tarl must unravel the mysteries of this strange, private band of nomads called the Wagon People at risk of his life. He is the only man alive who has not trembled in the presence of this mysterious tribe. Now he is embarking on the most perilous adventure of his sojourn on the counter-world of Gor. Will he be accepted by the tribe and learn the secrets they guard with their lives—or will he die trying?

5. Assassin of Gor (1970)

Welcome to Gor, a parallel Earth where social norms are exotic and the way of life is brutal. In the fifth book in the Gorean Saga, the deadly assassin Kuurus is intent on a bloody mission of vengeance. His adventure takes him from the caste of the pleasure-slaves, who are rigorously trained in the rules and techniques of sexual ecstasy, to the brutal arenas where humans participate in deadly hand-to-hand combat. He witnesses violence, conflict, and uncertainty, as the inhabitants of Counter-Earth are forced to confront their destinies . . . no matter how exalted or debased.

6. Raiders of Gor (1971)

Former Earthman Tarl Cabot finds himself in the most depraved city on Gor. Port Kar is a city of robbers, brigands, and men without allegiance to any cause or kingdom where the weak are quickly consumed by the strong. However, Tarl is able to flourish in the cutthroat environment of the city, for he is a powerful Tarnsman, used to having his way. He finds that there is much to learn in Port Kar, where the people are celebrated for their skill of training their voluptuous slaves into utter obedience.

7. Captive of Gor (1972)

In this installment of the Gorean Saga, beautiful and headstrong Elinor Brinton of Earth finds herself thrust into the savage world of Counter-Earth, also known as Gor. Brinton must relinquish her earthly position as a beautiful, wealthy, and powerful woman when she finds herself a part of the harsh Gorean society. She is powerless as a female pleasure slave in the camp of Targo the slave-merchant. Forced to learn the arts of providing pleasure to any man who buys her, Elinor is determined to escape. Nevertheless, she is sold for a high price, and her master is determined to get his money's worth . . .

8. Hunters of Gor (1974)

Former Earthman Tarl Cabot is now a powerful Tarnsman of the brutal and caste-bound planet of Gor, also known as Counter-Earth. He embarks on an adventure in the dangerous and mysterious wilderness of Gor, pitting his warrior's skills against those of treacherous outlaws, bandits, and fighters. Three different women are working to bring change to Tarl's far-from-peaceful life on Gor: Talena, his onetime queen and first love; Elizabeth, his brave fighting partner; and the Amazonian Verna, chief of the fierce and wild panther women. As Tarl journeys through the wilderness, the fates of these three remarkable women will finally be decided.

9. Marauders of Gor (1975)

Former Earthman Tarl Cabot is now a powerful Tarnsman of the brutal and caste-bound planet of Gor, also known as Counter-Earth. He embarks on an adventure in the dangerous and mysterious wilderness of Gor, pitting his warrior's skills against treacherous outlaws, bandits, and fighters. Three different women are working to bring change to Tarl's far-from-peaceful life on Gor: Talena, his onetime queen and first love; Elizabeth, his brave fighting partner; and the Amazonian Verna, chief of the fierce and wild panther women. As Tarl journeys through the wilderness, the fates of these three remarkable women will finally be decided.

10. Tribesmen of Gor (1976)

Tarl Cabot must prove his final loyalty to the harsh and caste-bound planet known as Counter-Earth. "Surrender Gor," reads a message sent from the Others, a mysterious people from the worlds of steel. Either the proud rulers of Gor must submit or be destroyed. Now Tarl is leaving the decadent city of Port Kar to wander in the wilds of Gor, taking up the sword to defend his rulers and enemies, the Priest-Kings. For he knows that the fate of his home planet, Earth, is inextricably tied to the fate of Gor.

11. Slave Girl of Gor (1977)

Taken as a possession, Judy Thornton, an Earth resident, is found meandering in the wilderness of the Earthlike planet of Gor. In keeping with the uncivilized culture of the Goreans, she is trained and used as a slave. What her masters don't know is that Judy is more than just a beautiful chattel. She has the power to obliterate Gor and all that is related to it. Determined to seize control of her, Priest Kings and Kur-Monster enter combat, neglecting the fact that the fate of Gor rests in the hands of the ethereal Judy.

12. Beasts of Gor (1978)

The fight for survival on the primitive, Earth-like world Gor continues with a ferocity that matches the rest of the series. On Gor, there are three different kinds of beings that are labeled beasts: the Kurii, a monster alien race that is preparing to invade Gor from space; Gorean warriors, who fight with viciousness almost primitive in its bloodlust; and then there are the slave girls of Gor, lowly beasts for men to treat as they see fit, be it as objects of labor or desire. Now all three come together as the Kurii fight to take over Gor with its first beachhead on the planet's polar ice cap. As all three kinds of beasts struggle together, an incredible adventure is told, one that begins in lands of burning heat and ends up in the bitter cold of the polar north among the savage red hunters of the polar ice pack.

13. Explorers of Gor (1979)

This enchanting escapade is the most important quest of Tarl Cabot's career. He must retrieve a potent shield ring from a strange explorer. It is imperative that the omnipotent Priest-Kings obtain this ring so that the Goreans do not challenge their enormous power. Throughout his expedition, Cabot learns of uncharted territories on Earth's cosmic counterpart. In the dense forests he discovers, Cabot must use his skills to endure the perils that await his arrival. Cabot will encounter Gor's barbarism in full force through enchantingly dangerous beasts, bloodthirsty men, and exotic kingdoms.

14. Fighting Slave of Gor (1980)

Emotionally lost, Jason Marshall finds himself thrust into a lengthy struggle to save his beloved from slavery on an Earthlike world called Gor. Kidnapped and helpless, Jason begins a life on Gor as a slave and becomes a prominent warrior. He must battle his way to freedom, if only to liberate his love from the clutches of the alien slave emporium. Will Jason overcome the numerous obstacles he encounters? Will he ever reunite with the girl he loves? Can he survive the trials and tribulations he must endure on Gor?

15. Rogue of Gor (1981)

Jason Marshall, an Earthman enslaved by the Goreans, is learning a valuable lesson in gender roles and must prove himself on the planet Gor. Determined to find the beautiful Earthwoman who was kidnapped with him, Jason is caught in the middle of a devastating war between Ar and the Salerians. Jason must prove himself a real man and survive the war in hopes of finally finding the girl of his dreams.

16. Guardsman of Gor (1981)

Thrust into a life full of woeful twists and turns, Jason Marshall has contended with the prehistoric customs and immeasurable power of the Goreans. His struggles on Gor, a planet resembling Earth, included escaping imprisonment, enslavement, and redeeming lost land. Jason has fought to regain control of his life. Having ascended to a position of power in the Gorean army, Jason must prevail in a battle that seems destined to destroy Gor. Jason has a lot riding on his success as a war leader: prestige, wealth, and an Earth girl of goddess-like beauty. Will Jason be able to win the war and avoid a fate worse than death?

17. Savages of Gor (1982)

Long ago in their intraspecific conflicts, a violent, technologically sophisticated life form, the Kurii, destroyed their native world. They now seek another. Between Earth and Gor, or the Counter-Earth, and the power of the imperialistic, predatory Kurii, now ensconced in the "Steel Worlds," a number of satellite colonies concealed amongst the debris of the asteroid belt, stands only the defensive might of the Priest-Kings of Gor. Tarl Cabot, once of Bristol, England, laboring on behalf of the Priest-Kings, once managed to foil a Kur attempt to set the stage for an invasion of Gor. But to pursue this mission, Cabot must enter and traverse the Barrens, the vast Eastern prairies of the primary Gorean continent, lands contested by tribes of warring savages, lands forbidden to strangers.

18. Blood Brothers of Gor (1982)

Half-Ear, or Zarendargar, a Kur general fallen from favor in the Steel Worlds, now sought by a death squad of his savage compeers, has determined to lure his pursuers into the Barrens, the vast prairies to the east of known Gor, populated by warring tribes known to Goreans as the Red Savages. He has arranged matters in such a way that he will be abetted in his stand against the death squad and its human allies by a human ally of his own, his former foe, Tarl Cabot. The ancestors of the Red Savages, like those of many other Goreans, were brought to Gor long ago in Voyages of Acquisition by the Priest-Kings. The Red Savages were settled in an area not unlike that of their former home, a sweeping, almost endless grassland, where they tend to continue their former ways of life—and war.

19. Kajira of Gor (1983)

In their contentions with Priest-Kings, Kurii, savage denizens of the Steel Worlds concealed within the asteroid belt, have frequently had recourse to human allies and subversion. In accord with such projects, Kurii have occasionally sought to place and support congenial administrations in key cities. One such city is Corcyrus. Corcyrus is ruled by a beautiful woman, the cruel, arrogant, much-hated Sheila, an agent of Kurii. It is thought to be advisable to find a double for Sheila, who, in case of military or political disaster, may serve as her proxy or substitute. For this role, an unwitting young Earth girl, Tiffany Collins is chosen and brought to Gor. Tiffany, fleeing for her life, finds herself alone, frightened, and friendless, a vulnerable Earth female, no more than a lovely, defenseless barbarian on the beautiful, perilous world of Gor.

20. Players of Gor (1984)

The games of Gor are diverse, as are their players. There are the games of planetary politics, in which worlds are contested. And those of cities and ubarates, of ponderous cavalries and fleets of lateen-rigged ships. And smaller games, bloody games, played on a square of sand, in which the counters and pieces are edged weapons. And, too, there is Kaissa, common on Gor, played with pieces of wood, on a board of a hundred squares. The major land power in the northern latitudes of known Gor has long been the imperium of mighty Ar. Against her hegemonies on the continent, plans by her major enemies, the maritime ubarates of Cos and Tyros, have been carefully drawn to involve attack from without and subversion from within. Cabot, once of Earth, is drawn into these intrigues.

21. Mercenaries of Gor (1985)

On Gor, there are numerous mercenary companies—some larger, some smaller—whose services may be purchased or bid upon for given periods of time. The allegiance of these companies is to their pay and their captains. The forces of Cos and Tyros, powerful maritime ubarates, and their allies have now beached upon the mainland and are utilizing the city of Torcodino as a repository for supplies, in preparation to march on a nigh-undefended and unprepared Ar. Should Ar fall, the disinterested tolerances and neutralities, and even the balance of power long sustained between Ar and the great maritime ubarates—things that made the existence of the independent companies possible—will vanish, a development threatening the very existence of the independent companies. But when Cabot arrives in Ar, it is a city rife with doubt, dissension, and treason. To whom shall the letters be delivered, and whom can he trust?

22. Dancer of Gor (1985)

Doreen Williamson is a quiet, shy librarian on Earth. Like many other young women, she is distrustful of her attractions, frightened of men, introverted in manner and sexually inhibited. She lives within a quiet, lonely, dissatisfying, sheltered, frustrated desperation, distant from her true self, her nature denied, her only friends books and her secret thoughts. In the realization and enactment of a profound fantasy, after acute self-conflict, she dares to study a form of dance in which she is at last free to move her body as a female, a form of dance in which she may revel in her beauty and womanhood, a form of dance historically commanded by masters of selected, suitable slaves: belly dance. She must then dance, for the first time, before men. In doing so, she discovers her own desirability and that she may be well bid upon.

23. Renegades of Gor (1986)

The maritime ubarate of Cos and her allies are mounting an attack on Ar on two fronts, from the South with a major invasion force and in the North with an expeditionary force besieging Ar's Station, Ar's base of power in the vast arable basin of Gor's mightiest river, the Vosk. Dietrich of Tarnburg, a mercenary, has seized Torcodino, with its stores of military supplies, to temporarily halt the march of Cos on Ar in order to buy Ar time to organize for her defense. Cabot has delivered letters from Dietrich to the regent of Ar, apprising him of the situation at Torcodino. Tarl escapes his imprisonment and ponders whether he should then flee Ar's Station, making his way to freedom through its miseries and desolations, its ruins and flames, or shall he remain, to defend her weakened, betrayed, starving defenders, those who had been his very captors?

24. Vagabonds of Gor (1987)

Cabot and his friend Marcus, of Ar's Station, who have been spying for Ar in the Cosian encampments, now seek the long-inert forces of Ar to report acquired intelligence to their commander, Saphronicus, who proves to be of the treasonous party of Ar. Cabot and Marcus are placed under arrest, as spies. Primary forces of Ar, largely inactive in recent months, are now to pursue Cosian forces withdrawing from Ar's Station, through the vast Vosk delta to the sea. The Cosian forces, however, have avoided the delta, and the delta campaign is a ruse to decimate the armed might of Ar, to use as a weapon the marshes and swamps of the delta itself, their treacherous, trackless wildernesses and wastes, the quicksand, the insects, the serpents and reptiles, the local populations, to deliver a final decisive blow to what was once the unchallenged splendor and power of Gor's finest infantry.

25. Magicians of Gor (1988)

After the disaster of the delta campaign, Ar is essentially defenseless. The forces of Cos and her allies are welcomed into the city as liberators. Ar's Station, which held out so valiantly against superior forces in the North, is denounced as traitorous. Veterans of the delta campaign are despised and ridiculed. Patriotism and manhood are denigrated. Lawlessness and propaganda are rampant. Marlenus, the great ubar, who might have organized and led a resistance, who might have rallied the city, is presumed dead, somewhere in the Voltai Mountains. Tarl is concerned with a warrior's vengeance upon sedition and treachery, and, in particular, with meeting one who stands high among the conspirators—a beautiful woman now enthroned as ubara, whose name is Talena.

26. Witness of Gor (2001)

Ar, defeated, shamed, and systematically looted, is occupied by Cosian forces. Perhaps Marlenus of Ar alone, the great ubar, could remind the men of their Home Stone and its meaning. But it is thought that he perished in the Voltai. Young women from Earth brought to Gor are commonly taken to the markets to be branded, collared, and sold as the delicious, lovely livestock they are. Such is the case of a young woman whom we shall call Janice, for that was her Gorean slave name. In the prison pits of piratical Treve there exists a chained prisoner who believes himself to be of the Gorean peasantry. The nature and even the existence of this prisoner, strangely enough, is a closely guarded secret. In order to better keep this secret, it is decided that his servant and warder had best not be a native Gorean.

27. Prize of Gor (2008)

Ellen is a beautiful young slave girl on the planet Gor. But she was not always so lovely. For nearly sixty years, she was a woman of Earth, but life had largely passed her by. Then, following a chance encounter at the opera with a strangely familiar young man, she finds herself transported from Earth to Gor. Here she discovers the true identity of her kidnapper and his sinister motives. She is given a strange drug that reverses the aging process, turning back time itself, and once again she is the beautiful young woman she remembers from years before, so long ago. Now her adventures really begin. Men challenge one another to own her. To the victor go the spoils, but who will that victor be?

28. Kur of Gor (2009)

The Kur race once had a planet of its own, but somehow it was rendered unviable, either destroyed or desolate, apparently by the KURS' own hands. So they searched for a new home and found not one but two suitable planets—planets they set their minds to conquering. But these planets, Earth and its sister planet Gor, the Counter-Earth, were not undefended. The Kur attempted their conquest four times, only to be beaten back by the mysterious Priest-Kings, rulers of Gor. As the Kurii lurk deep within an asteroid belt, awaiting the chance to seize their prize, their attention is drawn to a human, Tarl Cabot. Tarl was once an agent of Priest-Kings but is now their prisoner, held captive in a secret prison facility. But what is their interest in Tarl Cabot?

29. Swordsmen of Gor (2010)

Fresh from his exploits in the Steel Worlds, home of the Kurii, a savage alien race intent on conquering Gor, Tarl Cabot has been returned to an isolated beach, at coordinates apparently specified by the Priest-Kings, the masters of Gor and the enemy of the Kurii. His only companions are his beautiful new slave Cecily and Ramar, a ferocious sleen bred in the Steel Worlds to hunt and kill. But why has he been returned to such a remote spot? Did the Priest-Kings wish their former agent to serve them once more? Did the Kurii intend to use Cabot to further their own ends? The truth, as Tarl will learn, is darker and deeper than either of these possibilities.

30. Mariners of Gor (2011)

Many on Gor do not believe the great ship of Tersites, the lame, scorned, half-blind, half-mad shipwright, originally of Port Kar, exists. Surely it is a matter of no more than legend. In the previous book, however, *Swordsmen of Gor*, we learned that the great ship, commissioned by unusual warriors for a mysterious mission, was secretly built in the northern forests and brought down the Alexandra to Thassa, the sea, beginning her voyage to the "World's End," hazarding waters beyond the "farther islands," from which no ship had returned.

31. Conspirators of Gor (2012)

Picking up where the alien war between Kurii and the Priest-Kings left off, a young woman by the name Allison Ashton-Baker, involved in playing Gorean games on Earth, is transported to Ar to become a major witness of the unfolding events. We meet again with Lord Grendal, the result of a failed experiment to mix the genes of humans and Kurii; the Lady Bina, former pet of Agamemnon, who dreams of becoming Ubara of Ar; and Agamemnon himself, eleventh face of the Nameless One, the illustrious mastermind behind the Kurrian invasion. Packed with action, and, as usual, presented with a spicy dressing of cultural relativism and critical remarks on modernity and gender relations.

32. Smugglers of Gor (2012)

In what constitutes a prequel to *Mariners of Gor*, we learn that a mysterious cargo, suitably disguised, was covertly placed on the great ship, a cargo that might influence the outcome of the aforementioned gamble. One narrator is a young woman, once a Miss Margaret Alyssa Cameron, and the other is an individual whose name, for reasons that will become obvious, is withheld in the manuscript. It does seem clear, however, that the individual referred to was somehow instrumental in bringing the former Miss Cameron to the height of a large slave block in the coastal city of Brundisium, one of Gor's major ports.

33. Rebels of Gor (2013)

John Norman takes you on a journey to "World's End," a set of once-unknown islands far west of the continental mainland. Lying across vast, turbulent Thassa, these mysterious islands were reached for the first time during the historic voyage of the ship of Tersites. Now this remote locale has been chosen by two warring, technologically advanced species—the bestial, imperialistic, predatory Kurii, and the retiring, secretive Priest-Kings, the "gods of Gor." On this all-too-real "gaming board," a roll of the dice will determine the fortunes and fate of Gor—and perhaps that of Earth. Few realize the momentous nature of the conflict, seeing in it no more than a local war for territory and power. Those who grasp the dimensions of the game realize that the stakes are nothing less than the world itself.

34. Plunder of Gor (2016)

Explore the counterearth of Gor—where men enslave women and science fiction and fantasy combine—in the latest installment of the long-running Gorean Saga. A mysterious package lies unclaimed somewhere in the great port of Brundisium, and it is rumored that its contents could determine the fate of a world. Whether or not that is true, one thing is certain: Men and beasts will kill to claim it. Meanwhile, a young woman, now merchandise, has been brought to the slave markets of Gor after displeasing a stranger in her secretarial job back on Earth. Unbeknownst to her, she holds the key to finding the elusive package—and changing the course of history forever.



Abdul: Abdul was a cover identity for Ibn Saran, the Salt Ubar. With a separate reputation as a more common merchant of the Tahari the identity allowed

Acquisition Ship: Ships of both the Priest Kings and the Kurii ply empty space and the agents of both are at work on Earth. One of the ship types that travels to Earth for observation and slave acquisition is a black

him to travel far and wide, hiding his true importance and wealth in a similar manner to how his guards were - more literally - veiled, masked and hooded to prevent their identities being known.

Massively wealthy, Ibn Saran took a piece of virtually all the salt trade on Gor that stemmed from the Tahari, as well as from the trade of other minerals, chemicals and trade drawn from the Tahari salt-pits and oases. He aligned himself with the Kurii, helping to provoke a tribal war between different Tahari factions and to further secure his power and their favor— though this was thwarted by Tarl Cabot whom 'Abdul' had lured to the Tahari in the first place.

The salt pits of the deep desert, the backbone of the trade, are now in the control of the men who once worked them as slaves. The old order, and 'Abdul' are no more.

Observations on the Ships:

It seems likely that the ships of the Priest Kings and the Kurii are responsible for many of the more authentic UFO sightings to have occurred since the 1940s. The relative weakness of the Nest allowed more and closer probings by the Kurii during that period, but their recent defeats, and advances in Earth's science, may explain the lessening of UFO observations in more recent years.

The ship I boarded was a silver disc operated by agents of the Priest Kings with no workings that I, or any man aboard, could see. It was - apparently - worked by remote from the distant Sardar Desert on an entirely different world, via principles I do not understand.

One would have thought that the Sun and the sheer distance would have made this impractical, but it seems not.

disc, some thirty feet in diameter and eight feet thick.

It has circular apertures on its outside, is capable of becoming invisible to radar and to the visible spectrum via unknown technological means.

Adder: A mildly venomous snake found in the more northern climes of Gor. It is generally not dangerous but when stressed or attacked its repeated strikes and bites can be much more dangerous.

Observations on the Adder:

I am no biologist or zoologist but having seen adders on both worlds I think the name is more to do with the appearance and the relative mildness of its venom than any direct relationship. By all accounts it is a little more venomous than the Earth adder, but not so very much.

Administrators: Cities are ruled either by an Administrator, whose power is more moderate and subject to the oversight of a council of the high castes, or an Ubar, a military dictator who is only advised by the high castes.

Observations on the Administrators:

Administrators are thin on the ground in the major cities of Gor. Some forty or fifty years of near constant conflict and instability have made the role of Ubar much more necessary and secure than that of the administrator, whose accountability has often been his downfall.

Ko-Ro-Ba retains Matthew Cabot as its administrator from a mixture of defiance, pride and lingering Earthly sensibilities about democracy. This is part of the reason, along with their relative ease with technology, that I prefer to stay there when I can.

Merchant cities are ruled in a variety of ways, but usually the most well-regarded, wealthiest merchant that dwells there makes the rulings and oversees the settlement.

Administrators demonstrate their humility by wearing brown robes and tunics, replacing their normal caste colors to show their subordination to, and service of, the people.

Aemilianus: Aemilianus was the Captain of the Guard at Ar's Station during its siege by the forces of Cos.

Loyal to his home city to a fault, he held off Cos at Ar's Station heroically, despite the fact that no relief came to their aid until the Vosk League took matters into its own hands.

As with many of Ar's Station Aemilianus took the betrayal hard and despite the fact that Ar itself was betrayed that mistrust remains with him to this day.

Afterlife: Most High Caste Goreans are skeptical about the idea of an afterlife of any kind. Such beliefs are seen as a thing for peasants and those not initiated into the higher forms of knowledge.

Only the Initiates, amongst the grander castes, openly profess to believe in such a thing and they believe that it is only accessible through their rituals and abstinences, making it a privileged preserve of that caste.

Pagans in Torvaldsland and other parts of Gor have their own religious and spiritual beliefs about an afterlife and the Torvaldslanders in particular seem to believe in a heaven far different from that of the Initiates, one where death in battle and honour in life is what grants one access, rather than a life of abstinence, mathematics and diet.

Agamemnon: A human-chosen name to describe one of the Kurii. Agamemnon was 'The Eleventh Face of the Nameless' (the Nameless being the Kurii god). Agamemnon was the dictator-theocrat of a powerful Kurii steel world.

His body destroyed long ago, his brain had been removed from his meat prison and installed in a life-support box from which he was able to control a number of different, robotic bodies. These included a river tharlaron, a larl, a gigantic Kur, numerous audience chambers and a clawed, crab-like creature.

Observations on the Afterlife:

As on Earth, religion seems primarily to be 'excellent stuff for keeping the common people quiet', as Napoleon had it. The teachings of the Initiates underpin and reinforce the near-worship of the Priest Kings and the occasional flame-death reinforces the supernatural power of these unknown beings to the common man. It is, perhaps, cynical manipulation on the part of the higher castes but it does seem to work. Still, the higher castes, bar the Initiates, seem to be above this sort of thing and to concern themselves with this life and the here and now.

Observations on Agamemnon:

I am forced to rely on secondary reports for most of what I have to say about the affairs of Kurii and Priest Kings, some conveyed to me by agents of the Priest Kings, others – supposedly – from Tarl Cabot and still more from my friend who hails from Harfax. I did, however, meet Desmond of Harfax who claimed to be a direct witness to these events.

Agamemnon was overthrown in a human and rebel Kurii revolt, putting paid to his plans to unite factions in the steel worlds and take more direct action against the Priest Kings.

Surviving the revolt and fleeing to Gor he hid in a mountain chamber until he was found and, again, overthrown - this time by Grendel, Lady Bina and spies of the merchant caste.

Since then his brain-case has turned up in various locations and at the centre of multiple plots on Gorean soil, seeking to trade Kurii influence, power and even forbidden technology for domination amongst men.

The current location of his brain-case is unknown, but it is rumoured a new body is being constructed for him.

Aging: The aging process, considered a natural inevitability on Earth, is called 'The drying and withering disease' on Gor. It was not considered any more incurable or natural than any other illness there and got a great deal of attention from Gor's caste of physicians.

The results of this research, greatly assisted by the fact that technology in most other arenas is restricted, have been the stabilization serums which arrest the aging process when administered (typically in the mid twenties to thirties).

More recent advances in the technology can even restore lost youth, rewinding a person's age and stabilizing them in their new youth.

Akio: A daimyo serving under Shogun Yamada, Lord Akio had the appearance of an effete, foppish dandy with fine clothes and expensive tastes.

Beneath that appearance was a man of steel and ambition who attempted to have the shogun assassinated via an intermediary.

Observations on Aging:

I received these injections, amongst others, on board the ship of the Priest Kings, though I am perhaps a little older than most Goreans would have their age arrested at.

At times it still startles me to think that I am now, barring accident, immortal and time seems to stretch before me forever. It does a great deal to explain the unburied and relaxed day-to-day life of many Goreans.



He was incredibly skilled with the steel fan, able to sever a man's head with a single blow, and to throw the fan to strike at a considerable distance.

Almanius: A scribe and actor, Almanius brought some semblance of respectability to a disreputable profession with his well-regarded and studious books on the arts of acting.

His books describe many different positions, gestures, methods of delivery and tricks that are pored over by those actors that take their craft seriously.

Alars: The Alars are considered a troublesome people by most other cultures of Gor.

Nomadic wanderers, they often arrive in the areas of existing settlements and cities and disrupt the life of the locals in numerous ways. Alars have little regard for anything but strength and their herds.

Observations on the Alars:

The Alars resemble – in appearance at least – the tribes of the Gauls, though they are thought related to Torvaldslanders and favor the ax, much as the Torvaldslanders do.

Less grandiose than the Wagon People of the Plains of Turia they live a life more like that of Travelers or Gypsies on Earth; itinerant, unwelcome wanderers with their own strong culture and lifestyle, and contempt for the more settled peoples.

They have something of a deserved reputation for theft – and it is this theft and their use of the grazing land of others that gives them their bad reputation.

The Alars are a broad, squat people with blond hair that they frequently braid in elaborate and decorative fashion. The men have long, drooping mustaches and scars on their cheeks that mark them as coming from that culture to others.

Alar men wear furs and leather, their women wear long, woolen dresses. Women carry daggers at their belts while the men wield the heavy, double-bladed Alar sword and carry an oval shield. The Alars are also famous for their axe, which has a blade on one side and a hammer on the other. When mounted they use lances.

The Alars keep large herds of animals with their wagons and ride saddle tharlarion, which they also use as speedy, light cavalry.

A tough and defiant people, the Alars kill their deformed children and scar the cheeks of their male babies at birth, so that they feel pain and taste blood, even before they taste milk.

The Alars keep few slaves, their women are noted for being even more vicious and horrible to slave girls than free women in other cultures, to the point – frequently - of killing them.

Albus, Decius: A trade advisor to Marlenus, Ubar of Ar, Decius Albus succumbed to the temptations of working with the Kurii. Despite the foiling of those plans he retains designs on the Ubarate and remains a powerful and influential figure in Ar - though he is also out of favour with the Kurii.

Alexandra: A river in the northern forests. Not huge or well known but large enough for The Ship of Tersites to be launched from, barely.

The Alexandra, previously mostly used by foresters and loggers, has gained some notoriety and interest since then.

All-Comrades: A warrior society of the Red Savages. This group is also known as the 'Fighting Hearts' and is a part of the Kaiila tribe.

Observations on Allison

Staying in Harfax with Marlowe I was introduced to Desmond and his slave girl – the first time I had any meaningful interaction with a slave who had once been of Earth.

It was a disturbing experience but being able to converse in English was extremely useful to me, especially in extracting accurate information about the Kurii.

Her use was offered to me as a guest, but still being new to the world at the time I found the thought shocking. At the same time, it made it all seem suddenly and truly real to me.

Allison: Allison was once a sorority girl on Earth, attending an exclusive college. The college, a prestigious east coast school in the United States, harbored Gorean slavers disguised within the sorority house and governed by its 'House Mistress' one Mrs Rawlinson.

Selected from amongst the girls attending the college Allison was

brought into the sorority specifically to be enslaved and transported to Gor.

Allison's Gorean 'career' was quite varied, being made red silk and initially sold to a cheap eating house, before being sold on to a gambling hall where she was put to use convincing men to spend more freely. When the house was found to be cheating she was confiscated and sold on cheaply to Lady Bina and her guardian, 'Grendel'.

As part of Lady Bina and Grendel's entourage she went into the service of the Kur renegade, the deposed and disembodied leader Agamemnon who was lurking in a secret base in the Voltai Mountains.

There she was kept as a grooming slave for the Kurii before a revolt against Agamemnon broke out, leading to a final end to his power and his plans.

Following the revolt, Allison fell into the possession of Desmond of Harfax a 'metal worker' who was actually an espionage agent of the caste of merchants and most likely an agent of Priest Kings as well. She is now Desmond's personal slave, tending his home and accompanying him on some of his missions.

Alphabet: The Gorean alphabet includes twenty-eight characters. Most show a resemblance to Greek, Egyptian, Roman or Cretan letters as well as a few of oriental origin. Pronunciation varies according to the context.

The Caste of Scribes has been working to standardize the written word across Gor, with limited but growing success.

Gorean letters include, but are not limited to: Al-Ka, Altron, Ar, Ba-Ta, Delka, Eta, Homan, Ina, Kwah, Kef, Omnion, Nu, Shu, Sidge, Tau, Tun and Val.

Sidge resembles a cuneiform letter,

Tun and Val resemble demotic.

Many resemble a classic Roman alphabet while Shu looks oriental and Homan appears Cretan.

Gorean comes in both print and cursive forms and while many Goreans are illiterate, being able to write in print and not in cursive is something of a reason to be ashamed.

Amusements of Tharna: The Amusements of Tharna are gladiatorial combats, fought in the great arena of the City of Tharna.

The arena is an oval, a hundred yards across on the longest axis, bounded by twelve foot high walls painted in the colors of the high castes and that of the Ubara - or at least they were. The sand in the arena is primarily white mica, dotted with red lead. The sand grows hot when exposed to the sun. While the crowd are sheltered with awnings of red and yellow silk, the combatants must fight in the heat and the blinding light that both beats down from above and glares off the white sand.

It was once the rule that four times in a year the men of Tharna must attend or take part in the games themselves. Now, since the liberation of the men of Tharna, both are voluntary or given as punishments for criminals.

One of the key types of gladiatorial contest within the arena are the Battles of Oxen, where men fight with steel horned yokes. These are crude and bloody battles, exhausting and brutal, originally designed to humiliate men and make them seem brutish, clumsy and stupid, though now the winners of these bouts are celebrated as examples of strength and endurance.



Analysis Machine: A tool of the physicians the analysis machine can be used to test blood, and other samples for germs, toxins and signs of other ailments or problems.

Interpreting the results that display upon the machine is a skill, kept deliberately opaque by the physicians to prevent non-caste members using them.

Anango: For most of Gor Anango is considered the epitome of the exotic.

Far away from the great cities of the north, Anango is a merchant-administered trading island with a dense, jungle interior.

Anango is so far away from most of civilized Gor and so strange to the experience of most men that it is considered to be a plausible origin of strange and supernatural things, such as invisibility cloaks, magic swords and the mysterious 'Magicians of Anango' – who don't actually exist.

Anklets: Anklets are considered to be items of slave jewelry and as such are often belled or placed on in sets so that they can chime together.

Anklets can also be used as markers during raids or invasions, to mark a woman as having been captured by a particular warrior, or to note and mark a woman for capture by others.

Antichthon: An ancient Greek term for the 'counter-earth'.

Appanius: An incredibly wealthy agriculturalist, impresario and slaver Appanius is a great sponsor of the arts in Ar.

Before he was freed, Appanius owned the great acting slave Milo and used him as a seduction slave in order to capture free women in the midst of an affair with him – an act punishable by enslavement.

Appanius was in love with Milo himself, an emotional entanglement that led to jealousy, which in turn ended up virtually ruining him.

Appanius' slave operations are large in scale but he takes a personal interest in enslaving sought-after free women and in training male silk slaves to the pleasure of other men.

Applause: Goreans smack their shoulder with their hand to indicate applause, rather than clapping their hands together. This is a mirror of the action of beating a sword or spear against a shield.

In Torvaldsland and the frozen north, applause is more familiar to people of Earth but otherwise clapping is largely reserved for music.

Ar: The City of Ar, known as 'Glorious Ar' by many, is the greatest and the richest of Gor's cities – though Turia or Cos might dispute the claim. No other city has scaled such great heights – or fallen so far.

The wealthiest, most powerful and most populous of the great cities of civilized Gor, Ar long had designs on imperial conquest of the whole world, and under its great Ubar, Marlenus, made great strides towards succeeding in this goal.

Observations on Sexuality:

Homosexuality and bisexuality seem rare on Gor, even though it is not judged poorly or considered unnatural in any of the cultures I have visited.

The existence of training houses such as those of Appanius suggest a profitable – if not extensive – market for male silk slaves for men, and female silk slaves for women.

Given the influence of Greek and Roman culture upon civilized Gor this is, perhaps, not that surprising.

The caste of physicians would not share with me their understanding on this topic and seemed perplexed by my interest, as though it meant little to them. Offensive, perhaps, to those of Earth would be – however – that many of the slaves that serve homosexual masters and mistresses are not, themselves, homosexual, and vice versa.

Observations on Technology:

To happen upon a technological device such as an energy bulb or an analysis machine amongst the otherwise primitive environs of Gor is always jarring.

The technology laws of the Priest Kings are only a part of this; Goreans tend, on the whole, to prefer a more primitive or natural aesthetic to their lives. They prefer the light from a fire or the softness of furs, but they are not above using mechanisms when they require them.

Many of these, like the analysis machine, are more to do with the cunning artifice of intricate mechanism and an understanding of chemistry, rather than the physics and electronics that drive so many of Earth's discoveries.

It brought in many other cities, under the sway and control of Ar until they rebelled in the 'Horde of Pa-Kur' and were granted freedom at the end of that battle.

Since that peak, the city has fallen by degrees until its ultimate humiliation, occupation by the forces of Cos, betrayed from within and held by mercenaries in the employ of its greatest enemy. Though Ar is now, again, free having revolted against these forces it has a long road to climb back to its old glories.

Ar's walls are marble clad, built in two great defensive rings. The outer ring is some three-hundred feet tall while the inner wall towers a further hundred feet, to allow defenders to rain fire upon any force that might occupy the outer wall. These walls are broad enough to accommodate a wagon and have watch-towers every fifty feet along them, guarded at all hours.

The city also used to be protected by the 'Zone of Desolation', a broad swathe of burnt and salted Earth where no enemy could hope to find game or supplies. Despite having been discontinued some fifty years ago now, the zone is still somewhat desolate and thin on game.

The walls of the city are said to be impregnable and only cunning has truly seen them breached.

There is, or was, a secret way into the city through tunnels from the Dar Kosis pits, but few would dare the pits simply to gain access to the city.

Ar's cylinders are the tallest, none taller than the Cylinder of Justice, topped by a silver spike for the impaling of traitors.

Its baths are the finest. Its streets 'paved with gold' in the legends and envy of the other cities of Gor.

Ar's ways still dominate civilized Gor, even if the city lacks the power it once did.

In Ar high caste daughters are raised in safety and seclusion, in walled gardens.

This is to protect them from Ar's many enemies

who might take them for ransom or slavery. They are trained, there, to be political tokens, their fate to be companioned to wealthy or powerful men from other cities to maintain Ar's supremacy.

Famous places in Ar include:

- Alley of the Slave Brothels of Ludmilla (secretly, once, in the control of Talena)
- Aulus/Flute Street
- Avenue of the Central Cylinder (leading to the Ubar's palace and the government district)
- Avenue of Turia (a broad street lined with tur trees, decorated with fountains and home to exclusive shops)
- Belled Collar (a paga tavern owned by Busebus)
- Clive Street
- District of Metellus (an impoverished district)
- Emerald Street
- Fountain of Aiakos
- Harmadius Road
- Harmadius Street
- Jeweled Ankle Ring (a paga tavern)
- Kettle Market (a cheap market near the Peasant's Gate)
- Market of Cestias
- Perfumed Rope (a paga tavern)
- Plaza of Tarns
- Pleasure Silk (a paga tavern)
- Pottery of Epicrades and Delia
- Silver Cage (a paga tavern)
- Six Towers (a wealthy area in the shade of six high cylinders)
- Sleen Back Bridge
- Stadium of Blades (a gladiatorial stadium where low castes and slaves fight and wrestle)
- Street of Brands
- Street of Chance (home to gambling houses).
- Street of Coins
- Street of Pots (a potters area)
- Street of Stones
- Tarn Court (a wide, trellis-covered area)
- Tavern of Two Chains (a paga tavern)
- Teiban Street (leading to Teiban Market)
- Teiban Sul Market (a vegetable market)

Arcesilaus: A faction leader amongst the Kurii who replaced Agammemnon after the civil war on their shared Steel World.

Arcesilaus is the 'Twelfth Face of the Nameless One', entitled 'Theocrat of the World.' He is the dictator of that sphere and one whose agents still scour Gor for Agammemnon.

Ar's Station: A colony town built on the Vosk River by Ar, Ar's Station was built at the place where the Horde of Pa-Kur once met and gathered before laying siege to Ar.

Ar's Station was established four years after those events in 10,114 CA (in the reckoning of Ar) making it some fifty years old today.

Ar's Station was given a degree of autonomy by Ar, but the great city intervened to prevent Ar's Station from joining the Vosk League, preferring instead to exercise their power and authority over the river via the settlement.

Ar's Station is so important because of its location at the meeting point of the Viktel Aria and the Vosk River.

Despite Ar's intervention, Ar's Station has retained strong ties with the Vosk League which came to its aid when it was besieged by the forces of Cos.

Even Port Cos, a colony of that island state rose to defend Ar's Station in brotherhood.

The betrayal of the settlement by Ar caused great resentment in the survivors from Ar's Station and as the town has been rebuilt a thirst for independence has also grown.

Ar's Triumph Road: The Vosk road that follows the river next to Ar's Station. It is also known as the Viktel Aria.

Arashi: A rebel, a rascal and a bandit. Arashi

is a cunning and strong man, the leader of a band of bandits on the Pani islands.

He was doing very well out of the war between Temmu and Yamada, though even a bandit eventually had to pick a side, and Arashi chose Temmu.

His support for Temmu has legitimized his band and given him an opportunity to return to a more honorable profession.

Archer Blinds: Archer blinds are movable wooden screens that are used to protect crossbowmen and archers. These shields may be moved by archers themselves – working in small groups – or by the men-at-arms assigned to protect them.

Observations on Ar:

Ar is, without question, the greatest city of Gor. Even after the occupation and uprising in recent years the city still has a grandeur and weight of history to it which – as with the great cities of Earth – you don't have to be familiar with in order to absorb, simply by standing in it you get that sense.

The city also bustles with new energy, reborn by its defeat and driven by the indomitable will of its Ubar.

The city is – again – lean and hungry. Were I the leader of one of the other Gorean cities that would worry me far more than a secure and complacent Ar. Cos, in particular – and with good reason – arouses much of the ire of the people of Ar and some great revenge cannot lie too far into the future.

Still, Ar is not the power it once was and Cos weakened itself, critically, in its pursuit of conquest. As a result men as a whole are now weak on Gor and the Kurii must certainly be planning to exploit that weakness in some way.

Observations on Ar's Station:

Ar's Station is still, technically, a colony of Ar. Despite the revelations concerning the betrayal of Ar by Talena's cabal, resentment is still deep rooted there and the colony constantly asserts its independent ways against Ar.

It remains to be seen whether Marlenus will allow Ar's Station to go independent – perhaps as an ally – or whether he will insist they remain loyal. Ar would be hard pressed to challenge Ar's Station if the Vosk League stood with them, which, in this scribe's humble opinion, they would.



Architecture: Gorean architecture varies greatly by their caste and wealth, as well as the city and area they are building in.

If there is such a thing as a typical Gorean house it is a square building with four wings and room for a garden in a square in the middle of the house. The floors and walls are tiled and Goreans tend to be fond of vibrant colors and complex patterns.

Goreans have very few chairs, preferring to sit on cushions, mats and rugs on the floor. To the eyes of Earth a Gorean home can seem Spartan, even minimalist, but the few possessions they keep are colorful, durable, intricate and well made – or deeply meaningful.

Even the poorest Gorean, living in a hut, is extremely house proud and within his home it is said every man is an Ubar.

Women's rooms may be barred and better secured than the other rooms in the house to protect them, or their slaves, from being carried off, and to protect their valuables from theft.

Aretai: A desert tribe of the Tahari and vicious rivals to the Kavars. Their war cry is 'Aretai victorious!'

Argentum: Argentum is a walled city in the north of the Gorean continent.

Argentum is a sister city to Tharna and, like Tharna, is known for its silver mines over which it is in constant conflict with the city of Corcyrus – many of the mines being in contested territory between the two cities.

These conflicts – The Silver Wars – have died down since Sheila of Corcyrus was overthrown and Corcyrus rendered weak, but it is only a matter of time until old rivalries re-emerge.

Observations on Architecture:

The lower gravity of Gor, even though the difference is relatively slight, is enough to allow this world's great, flying creatures and for the construction of the high cylinders.

They can build higher, more easily and the existence of trained tarns, carrying loads, allows workers to work at high altitudes and in remote places.

One need only look to the ancient civilizations of Earth to see what can be done by people who are otherwise reckoned 'primitive', and the Goreans have had centuries to perfect crafting techniques - without machines.

Claudius is the current Ubar of Argentum, secure in his position thanks to his victories over Corcyrus but there are increasing calls for him to hand power over to an Administrator.

Armies: At its height Ar could field fifty-thousand men for battle and had them under arms, a professional army, ready to fight when they were needed.

Most cities' armies are a comparatively small, five-thousand men in size, and are supplemented by peasant levies and mercenaries.

Mercenary bands are typically between one and two-hundred men strong, though legendary mercenary captain Dietrich of Tarnburg is able to field five-thousand men due to his unusual success and his reputation. Mercenary bands also tend to specialize, their one to two-hundred men being known for their role in battle as in archers, tarnsmen, tharlaron cavalry or infantry.

Armor: Under the peculiar laws of the Priest Kings, armor is forbidden in battle - though the line between armor and clothing is somewhat nebulous.

The armor available to the warriors of Gor is limited by the codes to the shield and the helmet.

Thick furs and leathers skirt the line between clothing and armor, but afford some protection for those who wear them. Some helmets have hanging chain mail to protect the neck and sides of the face, but the traditional helm is similar in design to the helmets of the ancient Greeks.

Those who disobey the armor laws - as with those who disobey the weapon and technology laws - are burned by the flame death, unless they're killed by morally outraged Goreans first.

Armored Gatch: The armored gatch is a jungle animal, a form of marsupial creature not unlike the Earth pangolin in appearance.

Arrows: Arrows and bolts come in many varieties for the various Gorean bows and crossbows. There are pile heads, broad heads, barbed heads (favored by the Tuchuks) and great sheaf arrows for the peasant bow - a yard long, piled with metal and fletched with feathers from the Vosk gull.

Art: Goreans love arts of all kinds and many are amateur enthusiasts. Art is not seen solely as the preserve of the artisinal castes, but of everyone.

There are public readings, poetry, singing and most will try their hand at any art and be celebrated for it - unless they are truly bad, or barbaric.

Ashigaru: The name the Pani use for their regular soldiers, often pressed into service from the peasants.

Askari: In the Gorean interior a guard or soldier is known as an 'askari'. Bila Huruma's guards are Askari, armed with shields and the short, stabbing spear of his armies.



Asperiche: Asperiche is an independent, merchant-owned island on the Thassa, south of Teletus and Tabor. Asperiche is administered by merchants and maintained under merchant law.

Assassin's Sheathe: The assassin's sheathe, used for daggers and the gladius, is lined with soft fur and oiled to ensure a silent and speedy draw.

Aurora: Gor has its own polar aurora, though it is strange compared to that of Earth. Where Earth's is green, the machinery of

the Priest Kings seems responsible for Gor's more violet, red or orange hued aurora.

The Kurii were able to use the aurora to project images, conveying messages or instilling superstitious awe to keep men away from their polar installations.

Ax Glacier: A settlement in Torvaldsland, close to its northern border.

Ax Glacier's people hunt snow sleen and whales, and intermingle with the Red Hunters. Many of the people there have the eye-folds, dark hair

and short, sturdy bodies of the Red Hunters and one-way intermarriages (Red Hunters marrying into Torvaldsland families) are not uncommon.

Axe-Gauntlet of Skjern: A metal gauntlet with a heavy blade attached.

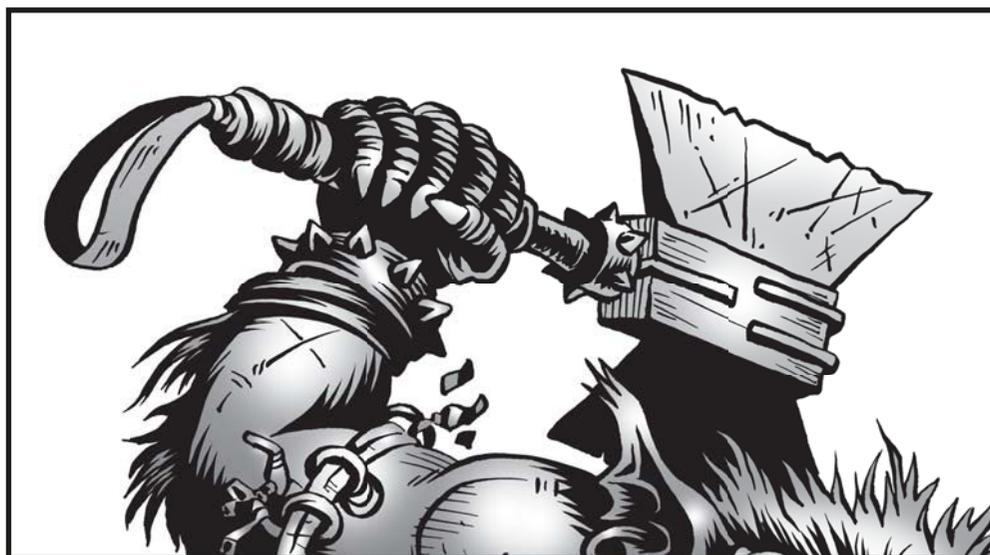
Axe: A common weapon in the north, where a double-headed axe is used and smaller axes are thrown. Axes are also popular as weapons in Turia and amongst the Alars who use a single-bladed axe with a hammer head on the reverse.

Observations on Ax Glacier:

The people of Ax Glacier reminded me, in many ways, of the native peoples found in the far north of Europe and Russia, of the Siberians or the Sami people of Finland.

Torvaldslander tendencies are stronger there – coming from the male side of the equation – but their aesthetic and appearance owes more to the Red Hunters - from the blood of the womenfolk.

They are also more approachable than the Red Hunters and we were able to train and supply ourselves. for our trips further north. amongst their settlements.



Ayari: A thief and trader operating in Schendi, Ayari originally hailed from a village in the Gorean interior.

Given as tribute to the great jungle Ubar, Bila Huruma, he worked on the great canal in a chain gang alongside Tarl Cabot. Ayari taught Tarl some of the basics of the inland tongue.

Ayari's gift for languages, his cunning and his loyalty eventually lead to him becoming the Wazir – advisor and second – to Bila Huruma.



Bag Fish: A type of fish eaten in the Pani islands, named for its overall shape. The fish has air-sacs which allow it to puff up like a bag when threatened.

Ballistae: In effect giant crossbows. Ballistae can fire sheafs of arrows, long bolts akin to spears, grappling hooks and many other weapons.

They are typically used in sieges or on board ships as weapons to be used against other vessels and their crews. Smaller ones can be moved around by their crews while larger ones must be carried on carts, installed in place on the ground or mounted on rotating platforms on the decks of ships.

Baram: The Sheikh of Bezhad and vizier to Haroun, the High Pasha of the Kassars, bearded and fond of white robes.

Barbarian: Many of the different peoples of Gor regard each other as barbarians, especially if they do not habitually speak Gorean.

Universally, however, those of Earth are considered barbarians by every people of Gor and in a deeper sense than a Gorean would use to speak of another native of the Counter-Earth.

Goreans are mystified and horrified by what they hear of Earth, its people and its civilization much as many on Earth would feel the same way about those of Gor.

When a Gorean speaks of a 'barbarian' in reference to someone from Earth it is with a mixture of amusement, disgust and well-guarded pity.

Observations on Barbarisms:

To come from Earth, with all its great technological achievements and history and to be considered a barbarian seems an insult, and it is. In some ways though, it is a valid insult.

Goreans live according to what they consider to be the nature of the 'human animal' but which - to us - seems a violent, brutish, primitive life.

The brutality of Gorean society seems, to us, to be in contrast with their advances in longevity and medical care. They have progression in science, without progression in societal interactions and tolerance. Their reliance upon and use of the institution of slavery, also, seems primitive to us and their treatment of women abominable.

To them, however, we seem the barbarians. We have destroyed much of our planet, wiped out whole species, polluted our water and air, reproduced out of all thought of self-preservation and denied and repressed our sexuality and our animal natures. They see us as individually, and societally, insane.

Looking at the vibrancy of Gorean society and the fulfillment in the eyes of both men and women - even slaves - it can be hard to argue with them.



Bargemen: A low caste found most particularly on the Cartius River where they tow cargo and passengers for a fee.

Their barges are drawn by tame tharlarion or sailed, each having its own advantages and disadvantages.

The bargemen are divided into many rival clans and while these rivalries are typically good natured they can spill over into violence over choice contracts, passenger fees or old rivalries. Not unlike related wings of crime families.

Barges: Barges are found all over Gor, carrying goods on canals and rivers from settlement to settlement. They may be poled, rowed, sailed or drawn by trained tharlarion.

Barges are especially known in both Port Kar – which has canals instead of streets – and the Cartius River where the bargemen clans are strongest.

Some are small and narrow for moving between the watery 'streets' of canal districts, others are huge, broad and flat bottomed, drawn by teams of tharlarion to haul enormous amounts of cargo.

Barrens: The so-called Barrens are only barren compared to the lushness of other areas of Gor such as the Northern Forests or the steaming jungles of the interior. The Barrens are actually a rolling ocean of grassland that lays east of the Thentis Mountains.

The name is used as a warning against intrusion, rather than a description of any particular lack of fecundity. If they were settled they would be some of the richest farmland on Gor, but settlement is impossible.

It is not a pleasant land, even if it is not truly barren. The Barrens have less rainfall than many other parts of Gor and experience extremes of temperature and weather that can change at the flip of a coin.



Border towns lie along the edge of the Barrens, flirting with deeper settlement and occasionally trading with expeditions or those who call the Barrens home. Despite this, no real inroads into the Barrens have been made in generations.

These settlements are as likely to be raided for goods and slaves as they are to be traded with, and their relative lack of wealth means they can only afford to hire lower cost, disreputable mercenaries to protect them. A situation that can sometimes be worse than nothing.

Massive herds of kailiauk sweep across the plains with the weather and the seasons, the largest herds are named (Boswell, Bento, Hogarthe) and consist of two to three million beasts in one stampeding mass.

The herds and the Barrens are controlled by the 'Red Savages', tribes of men who follow the kailiauk herds and raid the border settlements – as well as each other.

Particularly contested over are flint beds, which they use to make arrows, tomahawks and spear heads when they cannot steal or trade for metal.

Baths: Most Goreans love to be clean, especially those of civilized areas. The Pani, men of the Tahari and men of the cities are particularly noted for taking both great pleasure and a great amount of time indulging in their baths.

Bath houses are often luxurious and well appointed.

Ubars and Administrators often supply funding to public baths as a way to please the people and win over their hearts and minds, as do merchant houses seeking to curry favor or display their wealth.

As well as the heated pool – attended by bath slaves – there are areas where the bather can be oiled and scraped with a strigil, massaged and to otherwise partake in pleasures of the flesh and of cleanliness.

Bath girls are typically short-haired and protected with waterproof leather turbans.

A coin gets you the service of a bath girl all day until you leave the baths. Some bath girls play 'catch me' before that money can be spent and since they swim like eels, catching a girl can be tricky indeed and a contest well worth winning.

On the walls of the baths, men often scratch the names of bath and tavern girls, rating them by how good they think they are and what their best skills are.

Free women take their baths in separate areas, separate buildings or – more commonly – in

their own quarters attended by their own slaves.

Bazi: Bazi is a coastal city to the southern part of the Gorean continent. It produces a great deal of spice and – most famously – Bazi tea, which is drunk with some ritual across all of Gor.

Tea and spice are Bazi's chief exports, mostly sold to the islands and from there to the rest of the continent.

Observations on Baths:

If you have visited the city of Bath, in England, the Roman baths there are the merest, ruined echo of the baths to be found on Gor.

Other than palaces and grand civic buildings, no construction has so much attention or money lavished upon it than a city's baths.

Those of Ar are the grandest, the most elaborate and the most celebrated, and I was breath-taken by the splendor and the care to be found there.

It was in the baths of Ar that I finally succumbed to the pleasurable attentions of a Gorean slave girl by the name of Elsa. Something about the opulence of the baths and the playfulness of the bath girls made it seem acceptable, finally.

Bazi was also the site of an outbreak of a dangerous plague 'the Bazi Plague' that disrupted trade for some two years while the city was cut off.

Bazi is a free port, governed under merchant law and a favorite open port for those seeking to load and unload cargo without too much attention – most especially the tea.

Schendi and Bazi are often spoken of in the same breath, both being far southern ports and both being wide open to trade.

Beaked Turtles:

Very large, hook-beaked turtles ply the Vosk River, looking for prey and sunning themselves along the banks. The beak is vicious, the turtle heavily armored and a powerful swimmer. The turtles are able to take men in the water by surprise, if they are riled or disturbed, and a snap of their beak can dock a man fingers, toes, or even a limb.

Bees: Bees are found all over Gor, fulfilling the same function – along with other insects – that they do on Earth, pollinating flowers.

Gorean bees are also farmed and tended for their honey, an easy source of sweetness and sugar. The honey is especially farmed in the north, where sugar bearing plants are hard to grow and where honey is used to brew mead.

Beggars: Any Gorean city or town has a few beggars, those men and women unlucky enough to have been crippled by birth, war or misfortune.

Some tavern keepers gather up beggars and force them to work for them, even wounding them deliberately so that they can earn more income.

Goreans do not generally favor beggars and regard being petitioned for money as a grave insult. Charity is normally organized by caste, clan or family and within those bounds it is generous and effective.

If there were any honour in slaying such a weak and hopeless opponent, beggars might not exist.

Observations on Bazi:

I did not make it to Bazi but the merchant ports are generally much of a muchness. They are almost all multicultural trading ports with little or no identity of their own.

The name 'Bazi' seemed to me to refer to Chinese astrology but the transplanted eastern cultures are not found in Southern Gor which owes more to Arabic and African cultures than those of China or Japan (the Pani).

I would speculate that the peoples supplying Bazi with trade are a transplanted subcontinental culture from the seventeenth century. This is all pure speculation however. It is noteworthy that women of South Asian descent turn up regularly in Gor's slave markets and not all of them are brought from Earth.

Bejar: A dark-skinned captain of Port Kar, Bejar is a responsible, decent and sensible fellow – for a pirate. He is – nonetheless – a loyal captain of Kar.

Belisarius: A corpulent merchant in white and gold silks who works on the behalf of the Kurii, representing their desires in Cos. His wealth and influence were instrumental in the prosecution of Cos' war against Ar which may have been

another Kurii plot to destabilize the society of men on that world.

Besnit: A market town that plays host to a slaver's camp. Besnit is an easy place to offload a slave or pick one up cheaply before they make it to a proper market and accumulate value.

Beverley Henderson: An Earth girl, enslaved and brought to Gor at the same time as Jason Marshall. Beverley began as a prim intellectual of twenty-two and a graduate in English Literature. She is a small, beautiful woman who was very much a product of the feminism of her time.

On Gor she was renamed Veminia and served as a slave girl in many capacities before being reunited with Jason, whom she now gladly serves.

Bila Huruma: The great Black Ubar of the interior, Bila Huruma united the six Ubarates of the southern Ushindi and claimed tribute from the northern shore of that great river.

In his glory and arrogance he sought to unite the Ushindi and Ngao rivers with a canal, allowing movement deeper and deeper into the interior.

Bila Huruma created his empire by forming a disciplined army to replace the tribal, fragmented warrior culture that previously existed in the Ubarates. He runs his imperial Ubarate in an organized manner with governors, courts, spies and fleet-footed messengers.

His army, and his power were muchly broken in a foolish expedition up the Ua and he was forced to scale back his ambitions.

His Empire is now much freer and less dictatorial, with limited freedoms extended to the former Ubarates. The canal, however, and the imperial ambitions remain, though his interest is contained within the jungles, for now,

disengaged from the conflicts of civilized Gor.

Bina, Lady: Once a Kurii grooming slave, Lady Bina has risen very far indeed since her days on the steel worlds where she was little more than a pet.

Thanks to the infatuation of the Kur halfbreed 'Grendel' she was taught to speak and then to read and write. During the revolt against Agamemnon she began to regard herself as important, not without justification as Grendel was a leader amongst the rebels and his infatuation with her leant her his power.

Insisting that she be free, following the events of the revolt, she and Grendel came to Gor and with his protection she has been able to move with relative impunity despite her peculiar attitude, ambition and naivety.

Power hungry beyond reason and in contact with what remains of Agamemnon's network,

she may yet prove to be a danger to much of Gor through her insane desire to be Ubara of the whole world.

Observations on Ms Henderson:

One might think that a woman of Earth, brought to Gor, would resist and die rather than conform to their ways or submit to slavery. However, Beverley is typical of my experience with former Earth women now found in Gor's chains.

Perhaps it is the selection process that the Gorean slavers engage in, perhaps something deeper, perhaps conditioning in the training or a form of Stockholm Syndrome but only the newest of Earth slave women seem to resent and hate their position on Gor. Others – like Beverley – who at first resisted, find happiness with a master.

Then again, the Kurii seem to prefer to employ Earth women in their projects, free and vicious, often breathtakingly cruel.

Observations on Bila Huruma:

When we arrived in the court of Bila Huruma to learn about the interior for my scrolls, we were welcomed well. I had been described as a geographer more than a scribe and Bila Huruma was seemingly well disposed towards my 'caste' and 'subcaste'. We were permitted to travel some way along the now completed canal but there are still ongoing problems with hostile tribes, making it unsafe to travel without guards for very far.

Huruma is clearly proud of it, despite the problems and intends to fight jungle wars to secure the canal and to sell exotic goods from far upriver through Schendi to the rest of Gor.

Huruma might be a true power on Gor if not for his isolation in the interior. His intensity and determination frightens me and impresses his court, and his men who will follow him to the death, and have.

Grendel's acquisition of his opposite female number - Eve - may weaken Bina's hold over him, and thus her power.

Binding Fibre: Slavers, warriors and many other men carry binding fiber.

Binding fibres are strong thongs and straps suitable for the binding of slaves, captives and other prey.

Bint: The bint is a vicious, fanged, carnivorous marsh eel that swarms in the shallow, brackish water and can devour a body in very little time.

Escape is to get out of the water, immediately. Probably while someone else is being eaten.

Black Court, The: Also called the 'Court of Assassins', the Black Courts are where members of the caste of assassins wait for clients to come forward to hire them.

Assassins do not take every contract, they listen to the case and decide for themselves if they wish to take coin. Once they have taken money for a life, the engagement must end with the target's death, or theirs, though the target need not die by their own hand.

Most settlements of any reasonable size have a Black Court which may be a grand building or a small hideaway where the assassins can be discretely sought out.

These 'courts' are kept dark and sheltered.

Assassins train to better use the darkness by living within it, surrounded by blackness until it becomes their ally, their life, their state of being.

Black Eel: The black eel is a long, slippery creature, dark against the black mud of the jungle rivers. It pursues and eats smaller fish and eels.

Black Lightning: In the legends of the Red Savages, Black Lightning is The Medicine Tarn, a prideful bird that loves its feathers and will go to great lengths to get them back.

While Black Lightning is nothing more than a legend, Tarl Cabot's sable mount – Ubar of the Skies – was mistaken for him by the Red Savages and considered to be magical.

Observations on Blackwine:

I was never a fan of coffee, or tea, but it seems everyone we visited wanted to show off their wealth with Bazji tea, blackwine or the sweet mint tea of the Tahari.

It would have been rude to refuse and so I found I had to drink gallons of the foul stuff – especially the mint tea – in order to ingratiate myself with the locals. A man could be a merchant prince here with a couple of tubs of cheap, instant coffee.



Black Squirrels: Large, dark-furred rodents, the black squirrels run and jump from tree to tree in the jungles, usually high above the jungle floor – save when descending to recover seeds and nuts from the jungle floor.

Blackwine: Blackwine is a relatively rare commodity found only in the Mountains of Thentis or imported during slaving visits to Earth.

Thentis does not officially trade the beans, but some of them find their way into circulation anyway in diplomatic deals or through the black market.

In Ar a supply of the beans can go for as much as a silver tarn disk.

As with Bazi tea there is ritual around the serving of blackwine and it can be served 'first slave', which means with cream and sugar, or 'second slave', which is without.

Bladed Chain: A length of metal chain punctuated with spikes and blades, this is an uncommon weapon, but popular in the gladiatorial arenas.

Blindfold: Gorean blindfolds come in many forms but the one most commonly used, professionally, is made from layered circles of black felt tied over the eyes and drawn tightly to completely prevent sight.

Sometimes a blindfold is combined with a hood to be completely sure a slave cannot see and cannot easily twist or turn to get a peek.

Blown kisses: When a Gorean blows a kiss they draw it from their face, stroking and releasing it as though throwing it after its target.

Blue Grunt: A small, freshwater breed of the more common sea grunt. Close to mating time the blue grunts move in voracious shoals that will attack a man in their hunger, but they are easy to spot and avoid. They're also easy to catch at this time.

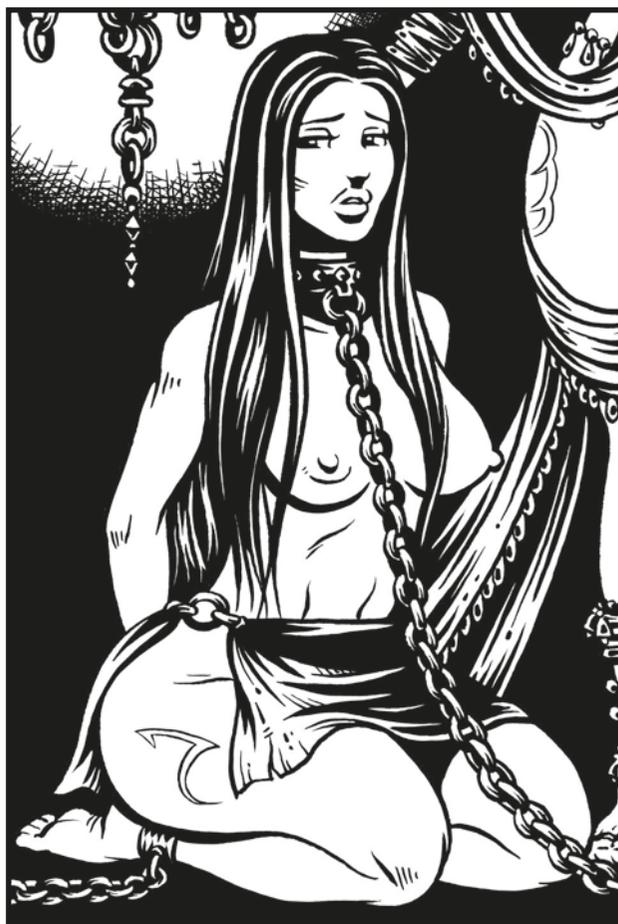
Blue Metal: A high-tech material used by the Priest Kings, this metal is thin, virtually impregnable and laced with their technology allowing them to destroy it on a whim.

Blue metal can be as tough as granite rock or as flexible as paper and fashioned into almost any form.

Boabissia: An Alar woman who strove to be as strong and capable as any of the Alar men. She dressed as a man, wore her dagger openly and took a male name – Tenseric.

She had been adopted from a raided caravan as a baby and the coin around her neck – that she presumed to be a token of some wealthy house - showed her to be, in fact, a long lost slave. Her pride punctured she became more feminine.

Body Chain: A body chain is a decorative, slight, close-linked chain used to bind a slave and to make a pretty show of them.



Despite being decorative, the body chain is a practical chain, strong enough to thwart a slave's strength.

Bola: A weighted set of tied thongs with three weights upon it. The bola is a weapon of the wagon people, used to bring down and capture prey and people. The weights can – if one is not careful – break a limb.

Bondage Knot: Slaves use many different means to try and solicit a Master's attention. One of these means is to tie a knot in their hair, a wordless indication to her Master that she begs use.

These knots can be crude and simple, or complex and ornate - the better to grab a Master's eye.

Bondswoman: Bondswomen are the slaves of Torvaldlanders. Their brand is a half-circle with – at its right tip – a diagonal line, indicating a soft belly, held beneath the sword.

Their collars are riveted, rather than locked and they are dressed in simple kirtles.

Bondsmen are not divided into different categories, all are worked hard, all are put to pleasure. Pride is taken in all of these aspects.

Booths: Gorean festivals are often supported by booths, which are color coded according to what they offer. Some offer feats of magic or acting, puppet shows, food or drink.

Purple booths are run by the slavers for the testing and examination of slaves before purchase or for renting during the festival.

Boots Tarsk-Bit: Merchant, troubadour, vagabond, thief, magician, confidence trickster and entrepreneur.

Boots Tarsk-Bit (last known to be going by the name Renato the Great) is the head of a troupe of wandering actors and chancers who travel from city to city trying to make their fortune – or at least keep their head above water.

A paunchy man with a wily streak and a penchant for overblown tales of woe.

Boots is – beneath it all – a good and kindly man despite his fast-talking, penny-pinching and sly nature.

Border Forts: Along the edge of the barrens, intended to protect the towns and villages, are the border forts. These are in many ways similar to merchant compounds and often double as them.

They have twin walls and are protected from aerial attack by tarn wire.

A couple of hundred men and everything they need to support them are typically housed inside but they are vulnerable to fire and concerted assault, ill-equipped for a siege.

Bosk Horn: A loud and abrupt sounding horn that is used to sound the alarm in wagon camps.

Bosk Whip: A large, one-bladed, leather-switch used to encourage the bosk to move. It serves a similar purpose with slaves, to encourage them to comply, rather than to punish them.

Observations on Boots Tarsk-Bit:

I spent a short amount of time with Boots and his company. A few coins goes a long way to making Boots into a much more amenable fellow willing to put up with a wandering scribe and his guard – though I'm not sure you can trust a word he says.

The humor and camaraderie of his traveling wagon was much to my liking and for a Gorean he was very cosmopolitan and very forthcoming about the state of the world. However, he had a penchant for embellishing the facts which made much of what he told me next to useless.

To the delight of his actors I was interested in studying their texts on acting, facial expressions, gestures and techniques. They suggested to me that perhaps the caste of scribes might take an interest in preserving these works for posterity and began to talk – at length – about their own contributions to the art. I promised to speak to my caste (even though I am not truly a member) and I am likely to have caused trouble for a true scribe further down the line.



Bosk: Bosk are huge, shambling, wide-horned and shaggy beasts with a humped neck, a wide head and tiny, fierce red eyes. Their long horns point forward and their tips can be dangerously sharp if not filed down.

There are several different breeds of bosk, most notably the snow bosk which is even larger, shaggier, smellier and slower witted than the wagon bosk, but also smaller varieties domesticated and used for milk and meat.

While rich in meat and other uses (the wagon people use them for everything from meat to glue and spear tips) they are also fierce tempered and hard to control.

The wagon-people call them the 'mother of wagons' and regard them as one of the most important things in the world. Anyone who kills a bosk without need is strangled to death. Killing a pregnant cow gets the killer staked out in front of the wagons and marched over.

Observations on Bosk:

The bosk are enormous beasts, intimidating on their own but even more so in the great herds of the Plains of Turia.

Resembling buffalo in many regards they are much, much bigger than any buffalo I ever saw. Perhaps they are descended somehow from the aurochs of Earthly history or related to the gaur.

The high oxygen, low gravity and abundant food seems to have allowed them to grow even bigger here. Even the smallest adult cow stands as tall as a man and must weigh over three thousand pounds while the bulls are much larger.

Bounty Hunters:

Bounty hunters are warriors and rogues who make money from seeking out the rewards offered for the death or capture of certain people. These bounties can be laid on enemies, criminals, runaway slaves or anyone else for virtually any reason.

The bounty hunter does not care about anything bar being paid, but they are much less effective – and much less expensive – than assassins. Many bounty hunters are incredibly tenacious and will follow their target any distance to capture them.

Bounty hunters are cheaper than assassins, but typically their job is to capture rather than to kill. Nobody wishes to cross the black caste, not even a bounty hunter.

Brak Bush: The leaves of the brak bush, when chewed, have a purgative effect.

Wreathes of these leaves are used to celebrate En'Kara in Ar, and these decorations supposedly discourage bad luck from entering the house.

Brand: Slaves are marked by a brand to designate their status and even if freed, they will be forever marked and always remember that they were once slave.

Torvaldslanders use a crescent and line as the design for their brand. Tuchuks use a four-horned brand like an 'H'. The most common brand found on Gor is the 'K' for kajira, though other variations exist and many different designs of 'K' are found. The dina, a flower-like brand is considered pretty and is perhaps the second most common while some slavers constantly invent new brands to try and attract collectors.

The brand is typically made on the thigh, though it can be made anywhere on a slave's body. Other typical branding positions are the hip, abdomen and close to the breast.

Male slaves are rarely branded but, when they are it is most commonly with a simple block letter 'K' compared to the more cursive and lower case 'k' or 's' (for sa-fora) for the slave girls.



Branding has an intense psychological effect upon a slave and the brand is often the first thing a master looks for when they check a new slave, ensuring that they're legitimate.

Bread: The typical Gorean loaf is large, golden, round baked and made from sa-tarna grain.

Breastfeeding: Done in private, unless a slave is used as a wet-nurse, women of Gor breastfeed their children longer than is normal on Earth.

This typically lasts for a year, while Tahari women offer the teat for up to eighteen months.

Bred Animals: Gorean breeders, guided by the science of the physicians, are capable of expertly breeding animals to their purposes.

These animals are typically larger, more

vicious and more intelligent than their wild counterparts and this is especially true of larl and sleen.

Observations on Brands:

The brand is exciting only in the way any part of a woman is exciting to a Gorean. To me it was a shock to see such a mark on the flesh of a girl, as painful as it must have been to have it done to them.

To us such a mark is a terrible crime to inflict on someone but at the same time it is unusual and even exciting.

Earrings have a similar effect upon Gorean men, though we are not so bothered by them.

Bred Slaves: Goreans have no particular compunction about eugenics, at least when it comes to slaves. Slave houses have operated for thousands of years and some have developed particular bloodlines of bred slaves whose very genetic nature makes them enslaved at a biological and instinctual level.

Bred slaves are most often chosen for their passion and beauty, though they never know their partners since they are bred while hooded.

As well as the bred passion slaves there are exotics, slaves bred for particular physical characteristics that may be sought by collectors or of particular interest to a type of master.

Breeding Festivals:

In rural areas outside the cities, occasional breeding festivals are held where slaves are brought from the surrounding towns and villages to be cross-bred.

Children born to a slave are considered slaves themselves and will be raised to the position, never knowing any other way of life.

Brine Pits: Deep in the Tahari there are bitterly salty lakes, hidden and protected, not shown on any map.

They are covered in crusts of salt that break and cut a man's flesh.

The pits are worked by slaves and prisoners, condemned from across the Tahari settlements. Many men die on the marches to the brine pits and only some ten percent typically make it as far as working in them, before perishing from cuts, thirst or in the teeth of salt sharks.

Red and white salt are mined out of the ground and gathered from the watery pits where somehow, life still clings on – most dangerously in the form of salt sharks.

Observations on Breeding:

Animals on Gor are already large and powerful compared to those of Earth. Comparable to the dinosaurs or the gigantic mammals of the Pleistocene. The lower gravity is a part of this. The larger amount of oxygen another. Competition and the predator/prey arms race is likely another cause but then, when you consider that Goreans are breeding these already horrific animals it becomes truly scary.

I saw a vart bigger than any eagle, riding on the back of a mercenary tharlarion, urts as big as ponies and other disturbing creatures on my stay, made not by abominable nature, but by men wanting to 'improve' upon nature or at least to tame it.

The Goreans have never suffered the attentions of a Hitler and so, to them, guided evolution or breeding for selected traits conjures no ghosts of mass murders or death camps.

Rather they see slaves as livestock and have no more compunction about breeding slaves than they would cattle or goats.

Race, also, has little meaning to them and is not regarded as a sign of inferiority or superiority.

These salt pits are the last remnants of an inland sea, sludgy and deep beneath the surface now.

In closed pits, where you have to descend into the ground, rafts are used along with perforated cones to gather the salt crystals that form in the slush and against the walls of the caverns.

Bronze: A traditional metal, bronze is still used for spear heads and to reinforce or place buckles on shields.

Brundisium: A coastal city under the sway of Cos, Brundisium is one of Gor's largest ports, with a particular

reputation for dealing in fantastical and unusual beasts.

The most important man there is no Ubar or Administrator, but rather the harbor master, Demetrian.

Brundisium has recently become the main port for the Pani as they begin to come to the continent to trade.

This has increased its fortunes, which had suffered greatly after Cos was ejected from Ar.

Brundisium has eleven towers and many docks. It caters to sailors with a large number of paga dens and other entertainments.

It also houses a particularly significant Black Court, home to a powerful cadre of assassins.

Places of note in Brundisium:

- Black Court
- Diamond Collar (paga den)
- Dina (paga den)
- Dock Street
- Jewels of Brundisium (slave market and paga tavern)
- Joys of Turia (brothel)
- Sea Sleen Tavern
- Tavern of Chang
- Tavern of Hendow
- Tavern of the Slave Whip

Builder's Glass: In Pani lands this tool is called the long-glass. A builder's glass is a powerful telescope much prized by commanders and ship captains, as well as builders.





Cabot, Tarl: Tarl Cabot, also known by the names Tarl of Bristol, Kuurus the Assassin, Tarl Red Hair and Bosk of Port Kar, is a man whose deeds have had a tremendous impact on

the worlds of Gor and Earth, though he is little acknowledged, save by those few who are in the know.

The name Cabot is shortened from the Italian surname Caboto, one associated with sailors and explorers. His ancestors were traders of Bristol, in England, an important port town in its time and an understandable site upon which his ancestors might have settled.

Tarl's first name was given to him by his father, who vanished when he was very young. His mother died when he was six, leaving him an orphan. Large for his age and cursed with flaming red hair and a pale complexion, Tarl was always an outsider and being an orphan only made it worse. Raised without love by his emotionally distant aunt and bullied constantly through school, he learned to stand by himself and to overcome everything that was thrown at him. Once he learned this toughness and endurance, he thrived.

Entering Oxford University and graduating with a passable education in the classics, Tarl went onto teach English history in the United States abetted by his 'exotic' English accent, making up for his relative lack of specific knowledge. He made few friends there, fencing with the PE instructors and going on walks and hikes to spend time alone and clear his head.

These hikes culminated in a long walk in the White Mountains close to Christmas one year. It was during this hike that he found a glowing blue-metal envelope with his name upon it, secluded in the mountains. The envelope had, written within it, a letter in antiquated script and a red metal ring with the single letter 'C' for Cabot, a seal ring.

The letter was signed with the name of his long lost father, Matthew Cabot.

Once read, the envelope burst into flame, incinerating his backpack and bedroll and leaving no trace whatsoever of the strange metal. His compass began to spin crazily and strange fumes made him giddy. He ran in fear but ended up circling back to the camp site where a silver ship descended from the sky and took him on board, unconscious.

Tarl awakened on Gor, noting the strangely pure air and the slightly lower level of gravity. It was here that his Gorean life began. Welcomed by his father – now the ruler of the city of Ko-Ro-Ba - he was trained and educated in the ways of Gor, its fighting, language and history and he was brought into the caste of warriors and taught their codes, ways and sense of honor.

Always so alone on Earth, here he made fast friends and felt more at home. As a test, and as a trained tarnsman, he was given the task of stealing the home stone of Ar, a city long Ko-Ro-Ba's enemy, as well as slaying Talena, the daughter of its Ubar – Marlenus.

There was still too much of the Earth man in Tarl though, he lacked the discipline and ruthlessness of a true man of Gor and as a consequence could not bring himself to kill Talena. She used his weakness to throw him from the tarn saddle into the swamps below. Disgraced and isolated he had to travel with Talena – thrown by the tarn that would not accept her as a rider – to try and recover his honor and the lost home stone.

As a result of his actions Ar was weakened and the caste of initiates staged a coup, forcing Marlenus to flee the city with a few loyal men.

The city was also coming under siege from the Horde of Pa-Kur, an alliance of fifty settlementss aligned against Ar's imperial ambitions.

In a perverse turn of events Tarl – who had fallen for Talena during their journey together - allied with Marlenus and brought an end to the siege, companioned Talena and returned with her to Ko-Ro-Ba.

Unfortunately for him, the Priest Kings whisked him away back to Earth, though this was only the beginning of his Gorean adventures.

Returned to Gor after some seven months Tarl discovered that Ko-Ro-Ba had been destroyed by the Priest Kings, its people scattered, its stones broken apart, cursed to never stand together again. He was left with no choice but the pursuit of the Priest Kings in their alleged home, deep in the Sardar.

Since then Tarl has remained on Gor and has been instrumental in many events on that world.

In Tharna Tarl instigated a rebellion in the mines that overthrew the Tatrix and brought low the arrogant free women of that city.

In the Sardar he entered the Nest and became an agent and ally of the Priest Kings, fighting in the Nest War and preserving the life of the last male Priest King, overthrowing the ambitious and cruel Priest King, Sarm.

In the south Tarl ingratiated himself with the Wagon People, the Tuchuks, fighting with them against mercenaries, finding and protecting the last female Priest King egg and countering the operations of the Kurii in Turia, under cover of the merchant Saphrar.

In Ar he uncovered, exposed and defeated a plot by the Kurii and the slaver Cernus to take control of the city. Fighting alongside Marlenus he liberated Ar before being cast out of that city for his past offenses against its home stone and Marlenus' daughter Talena.

Traveling to Port Kar he fell slave to the rencers but earned his freedom in battle and finished his journey to that city of thieves and pirates, dishonored and taking the name he wore as a slave – Bosk.

Killing a captain he took his ships and his place, joining Port Kar's council and its rebellion against the city's quarreling 'Ubars'.

He gave that city its home stone and fought well in the battle of the 25th of Se'Kara, helping to defeat the combined fleets of Cos and Tyros that threatened that city.

In the great Northern Forests he pursued rumors that Talena had been captured and was in the hands of the Band of Verna, a cunning band of Panther Girls. To his horror he found that Talena had been disowned by her father, who was also hunting the forests for Verna to take his revenge.

Talena was bait for Marlenus, not for Tarl, though it was Tarl who was cut by a poisoned blade and, paralyzed, brought to the lowest shame of all – being crippled. He freed Talena to return to Ar and all but faded from public view.

Later, with the poison seemingly in remission Tarl journeyed to Torvaldsland and befriended Ivar Forkbeard, a notorious raider there.

While in the north under the name 'Tarl Red Hair' he aided the Forkbeard and joined the Torvaldslanders in standing against an invasion of the native Kurii and their allies from the north.

In the great desert of the Tahari, Tarl thwarted another plan of the Kurii. A lost rocket or missile hidden deep in the desert was planned to be used to threaten the Priest Kings, an artifact – perhaps – of a previous attack.

To defend their operation the Kurii had also co-opted the Salt Ubar and a band of bandits, using both to set the main tribes of the Tahari against one another. Tarl destroyed the missile and freed the slaves and prisoners of the salt pits, ruining the Salt Ubar and setting back the Kur once again.

In the far north Tarl freed the entrapped Herd of Tancred, which had been sealed behind a great wall and slaughtered in enormous numbers.

Further north he befriended the Red Hunters of the ice and, with them, defeated a Kurii force hidden in an artificial iceberg under the generalship of 'Half-Ear'. The Many marches of hibernating Kurii were killed when that base was destroyed, rather than allowing it to fall into the hands of men or Priest Kings.

In the jungles of the interior Tarl sought the great explorer and once agent of Priest Kings, Shaba, who had become obsessed with finding the source of the Ua River, deep in the jungles.

Shaba had disappeared with an important Kurii artifact and Tarl followed in hopes of recovering it, traveling far to the south to land at Schendi and make his way to the interior and the Empire of Bila Huruma.

Trailing Shaba and fleeing Huruma's forces they found the source of the river, a great lake now named for Shaba, and the false artefact that he had supposedly stolen destroyed the Kurii, rather than the Nest, for which it was intended.

In the Barrens Tarl followed a lead that the Kur general Half-Ear had survived and was pursued by his own people. The Kur general's image on a story skin and a shield originating from those Barrens.

Captured and enslaved by the Red Savages Tarl ingratiated himself, slowly, with them and won his own freedom, seeking out Half-Ear to satisfy honour by warning and protecting him.

The Kur agents in pursuit of Half-Ear had corrupted tribes and hired mercenaries to seek him out and slay him, prompting a war between the tribes, but Half-Ear and Tarl's adopted tribe prevailed in the end and Half-Ear's death sentence for failure was rescinded, returning him to the Steel Worlds, restored to a place of honour.

Having aided Half-Ear, Tarl's loyalty to the Priest Kings was brought into question and agents were sent to kill him, forcing him to flee the city.

Traveling in the company of Boots Tarsk-Bit and his group of performers Tarl came into possession of codes written as kaissa notations and their keys, relating to a treacherous plot in Ar operated by Talena and Flaminius. This was part of the plan of Cos and Tyros to muster in Brundisium before they invaded Ar with their mercenary armies.

Tarl was too late to warn Ar and the forces of Cos began their invasion. Tarl tried to get ahead of them to warn Ar and its allies but could not get them to believe him and was treated as a spy.

Despite this he fought to defend Ar's Station, helping the men there remember their honor and fight until the Vosk League, finally, came to their relief and evacuated the people of Ar's Station. The settlement fell into the hands of the Cosians, despite tremendous effort to resist them.

As a result of this defeat, in Ar, Ar's Station was spoken of as traitors. Ar's soldiers had not come to its relief in part because of whispering campaigns leading up to this. Instead of bolstering Ar's Station the great army of Ar had been lured. secretly ordered, into the Vosk delta to be taken apart and destroyed, rendering Ar helpless. Tarl was able to guide and save some of Ar's soldiers, but the army, as a force, was ended.

In Ar, with Marlenus missing and Cos on the march, the city was vulnerable and panicked.

Talena's standing had been restored due to the ease with which she soothed the nerves of the city's people. The administrator was deposed, blamed for Ar's ills and treated as a criminal, and spies and traitors were everywhere, bought with gold and promises.

So corrupt were things in Ar that swords and mercenaries were not even being hired to the city's defense.

By the time Cos' forces arrived the city had already surrendered and once mighty Ar welcomed the Cosians as 'liberators', even beginning the demolition of their own city wall.

Disguised and hiring on as guardsmen within the city, Tarl and his friends worked to undermine the occupation. They created the sign of the 'Delta Brigade' as – at first – an invented symbol of rebellion and of the veterans who survived the treachery in the swamps of the Vosk. Soon though, it was taken up as a real cause, by real veterans and rebels, with a life of its own.

In the midst of this upheaval Tarl was removed from Gor and imprisoned on the Prison Moon by the Priest Kings, still suspicious of his actions and seeking a reckoning and understanding.

He was liberated, most strangely of all, by the Kur who attacked the moon in an act of unprecedented daring and took him to the Steel Worlds. They wanted Tarl as an intermediary between men, Kur and Priest Kings as a way to further their goals by different means.

Rather than join them, Tarl turned against Agamemnon, leader of the Steel World and joined a rebellion of men and Kur against his increasingly erratic rule.

This war tore the factions of the cylinder apart but created a new understanding between men and Kur – at least on that, singular, steel world. It also gave Tarl a much better understanding of the enemy that he was facing. An enemy far closer in character to humans than the Priest Kings were.

Returned to Gor and apparently having regained the trust of the Priest Kings, Tarl was set in place to make a difference in a new land; the islands of the Pani far to the west of the Gorean continent.

Sought out in order to train a tarn cavalry for Pani refugees he traveled with them back to their islands on an experimental ship of enormous size, created by the mad shipwright Tersites.

There he used his knowledge and the force of his tarns to thwart yet another game between the Kur and Priest Kings in the kaissa of worlds, a test conflict on a far flung island. There he also recovered Talena, intended as a way to bait and control him, and returned to the shores of the mainland with her.

Doubtless there are yet more adventures ahead of him.

Observations on Tarl Cabot:

One can scarcely credit Tarl Cabot with all that has been said of him. As a man of Earth, whatever his bloodline, you would think he would be weak compared to the men of Gor – as I feel I am every day - yet despite the contempt shown towards the men of Earth, Tarl Cabot has accomplished much.

I have not met the man directly but have pieced this story together from legends, interviews with Samos of Port Kar and documents passed to me by other agents of the Priest Kings. Perhaps the Priest Kings have some science we do not understand that lets them identify key and important figures and to use them as 'historical leverage'.

Other figures in Gor's past such as the founders of Ar and Torvaldsland have similar legends and one is forced to consider, in this light, that they might be true.



Cafes: In Tor and the other cities of the Tahari desert and its borders there are cafes which either replace or compliment the existence of paga taverns and serve much the same purposes within Gorean society. These cafes serve black wine when they can get it, bazi tea, mint tea, water, food and the pleasures of the slaves who serve there.

Cafes tend to have slightly more refined names than paga taverns, examples of which include 'The Veminium', 'The Pomegranate' and 'The Pleasure Garden'. Tahari culture is not as keen on the consumption of alcohol as the rest of Gor and the cafes have spread in order to accommodate their desires. They are also more richly decorated and sumptuous than most paga taverns, with pretensions to refinement and culture, despite their sensual nature.

Calendar: Civilized Gor maintains a calendar made up of twelve, twenty-five day months each separated by a five day period called the passage hand.

The last month of the year is separated from the first month of the year by another five days called the waiting hand.

There are no unified months, though every city respects and acknowledges the Sardar fairs.

Calisthenes: A scribe in the employ of the Registry Office in Brundisium, Calisthenes is better known as the author of 'the Tale of Callias and the Ship of Tersites'.

With the increasing influence and presence of the Pani in Gor's coastal cities, this story and history has become very popular with those wishing to learn more about the mysterious men of the far islands.

Callias: A sailor and mercenary who accompanied Tarl Cabot on the Ship of Tersites, Callias was one of the men to survive and return to the Gorean mainland following the campaign in the Pani lands. Once a first spear of Cos, the leader of ten men, Callias was disgraced when Ar rose against the occupation.

Reduced to manual labor by his dishonor, Callias was forced to take work rowing on the benches of ships. While working on a Cosian patrol ship their vessel ran into the Ship of Tersites and was destroyed, with Callias taken prisoner and held aboard. He earned his place on board as a crewman in a duel, showing his honor by staying his hand, which impressed the Pani's sense of honour.

Callias further proved his mettle in battling mutineers and the many other problems that beset the voyage, as well as in the fighting that first threatened the new army when it arrived on Pani shores.

His final act of loyalty was to preserve the Ship of Tersites, which the Pani intended to burn in order to make the soldiers stay.

He sailed free with a small crew rather than seeing it destroyed and returned to the mainland with stories that few would believe.

Settling in Brundisium in hopes of hearing more from the far shores of the Pani, Callias got by on his stories and his sword arm until Pani vessels arrived, confirming his story and returning to him his lost slave Alcinoe, along with enough pearls to reward him for his actions and make him a wealthy man.

Now Callias is a wealthy, famous and much sought after man, his dealings with the Pani make him a useful negotiator for merchants, his experience a salve for the worries of powerful men who want to understand the Pani.

Callimachus: A warrior and a drunkard who dwells in Port Victoria on the Vosk River.

Callimachus was once a captain of the guard in Port Cos but left that city and washed up in Port Victoria in disgrace. Nonetheless, a once-competent captain and a member of the warrior caste he is still a deadly, skilled fighter and tactician when he is sober or his honor is remembered.

Callimachus is also a good teacher of the sword, having trained Jason Marshall in its employ, making him a competent sword in good order.

Camisk: A camisk is a slave garment, a piece of cloth around eighteen inches wide and worn a little like a poncho, over the head and draped down, somewhat above the knees and tied with a cord around the waist.

There are variations on this design, the 'common camisk', and these include the 'Turian camisk' which is more of a 'T' shape, bound at the neck, behind the back and at the waist. In donning the Turian camisk a slave ties it around the back of her neck and lets the bar fall before her, pulling it to the sides and tying it behind her back. The further part of the bar is drawn back between her legs and drawn up in back, snugly while the beveled edges are brought forward, around the hips and tied at the waist.

Capacian Baths: The Capacian Baths are the grandest bath house in Ar and are known across civilized Gor as the final word in luxury and pampering.

They have various pools, are grandly decorated and contain many planters of grasses, ferns and other, more exotic, plants.

Pools include the 'Pool of the Tropics', the 'Pool of Ar's Glories', the 'Pool of the Northern Forests', the 'Pool of the Splendor of the Hinrabians' and the 'Pool of Blue Flowers'.

Each is decorated appropriately to its name and rich families can sponsor different pools or pay for additional construction to elevate their name.

Like gladiatorial combat, the rich baths are used to placate and please Ar's public and to distract them from the city's troubles and, in other cities, their bath houses do the same.

Capture net: A circular net, eight to ten feet across, light, made of slender, silken rope tied into a diamond mesh. It is weighted to be thrown and designed to capture women.

Capture Scent: A tincture that can knock a person out with a single sniff. It takes around five seconds to render a normal, healthy person unconscious for an hour or more.

Capture: The culture of capturing slaves and brides – by force – from other cities is woven into Gorean society. It is a factor in limiting Gorean empires and reinforcing their city-state basis (needing other cities to raid). It is also a major motivating factor for soldiers who might seek to gain a slave in war and it is a rite of induction into the ranks of a city's tarnsmen, capturing a woman from a rival city to prove one's worth.

Caravanserai of Hogarth: An important stopping point for caravans headed to or from Ar, the Caravanserai of Hogarth has fields to situate a thousand caravans with all the amenities they could want - along with shops and stalls to cater to their greater needs.

Cards: Gorean cards used different decks for different games. The most common deck has 100 cards and is used for the most games but there are many different decks, each suited to its own game.

The standard Gorean deck has five suits, named for the five high castes of Gor:

- Initiates (white)
- Builders (yellow)
- Scribes (blue)
- Physicians (green)
- Warriors (red)

Each suit consists of twelve cards, colored by their caste:

- Tarn (60)
- Larl (30)
- Sleen (20)
- Panther (15)
- Tarsk (12)
- Tharlaron (10)
- Urt (6)
- Verr (5)
- Vulo (4)
- Jard (3)
- Vart (2)
- Ost (1)

Carnaria: These are refuse pits, found outside the cities, at a reasonable distance, where night soil and other detritus is dumped and eventually covered over and buried. A new, enormous, pit is dug when the old one is filled and this becomes the new site.

Carnival: In many cities, the end of the Waiting Hand heralds the beginning of carnival. Men and women wear masks. People share paga in the streets. Magicians, clowns and other performers take their acts out to the public and are generously paid as part of the holiday tradition.

Wild, outrageous and strange costumes or masks are also commonplace and free women play games of 'favours'.

They vye to show their beauty and charm compared to their sisters by handing out ten scraps of silk to handsome men before their friends accomplish the same deed. Many enslavements and liaisons take place under the cover of the carnival and the day after may be one of regret - or joy.

Carnivorous Eels:
Mostly native to the Vosk delta, but present elsewhere throughout Gor, carnivorous eels swarm in some sections of the Vosk Delta where they present a hazard to rencers and hunters.

Needle-toothed and dangerous in numbers they can also make a meal for those willing to risk a hand in the water to bait them.

Carrying Baskets:
Carrying baskets are large woven baskets, not dissimilar to those hung beneath balloons on Earth, carried by tarns - or teams of tarns flying in formation. They're used to transport slaves and cargo that need to be moved safely and quickly over long distances.

Caste of Assassins:
Not considered a high caste, or even a caste at all in Ar, Semris and some other cities, the assassins are the equal in wealth of almost any caste. The equal of the warriors in fierce reputation. These two things allow the caste of assassins

to wield great influence and they are even paid stipends by the wealthy as protection against being killed.

To enter the caste is to kill. Assassins train in pairs and as the final test must slay the one they trained with to prove their mettle. As they progress through the ranks - The Nine Steps

of Blood - so their fees increase and their reputation also.

Assassins take coin to end a life and are not scrupulous or honourable, save in their own twisted way, about how they do it. Unlike a warrior an assassin is as content with a bolt in the back or a poisoned goblet as they are the clash of blades.

Once money has been taken for a kill the assassin cannot be dissuaded. They mark their forehead with the mark of a black daggers and hunt their prey relentlessly. Failure, save by death of the assassin, is rare.

The caste of assassins operates out of hidden and secret training halls called 'Black Courts'. There they train and sleep and maintain their slaves (clad in black tunics and black enamelled collars) waiting to be courted by the wealthy.

Nobody is born into the caste, all must train and kill and earn their place amongst the black caste.



It is a brutal meritocracy in which one gives up all but gold and blood.

No women are made assassins. No assassin ever takes a free companion. They live to kill, curbing their emotions and attachments to leave them free to be utterly ruthless.

Once the caste was something more honourable, a tool of justice when all other courses were exhausted. Now they are much more mercenary but some remember more honourable days.

Caste of Charcoal Makers: Clad in black and brown, the low caste of charcoal makers inhabit camps within Gor's woods and forests where they turn wood into charcoal before providing it to the cities.

The secrets they know let them make specialist charcoals from different woods for long, slow burning or fast burning with high heat, an important aid in heating Gorean homes or producing consistent heat for the metal workers.

Caste of Cloth Workers: The caste of cloth workers is a low caste but one that is influential and important in its own way. The cloth workers are the final arbiters of fashion and through their sub-castes also control weaving, rug making and most other textiles work. Their own attire is, unusually, highly variable and generally worn as a means to show off the skill, talent and subtlety their caste is capable of.

Caste of Foresters: One of the low castes, the foresters wear clothing of green and brown – mottled in these colours when they are working the forests for camouflage.

Foresters hunt, cut wood, scout the forests for danger and are very skilled at tracking, survival and archery.

Caste of Goat Keepers: A low caste, the Caste of Goat Keepers tends their livestock with a remarkable degree of expertise and mark their caste with the wearing of a goatskin.

They know the best grazing places, the best ways to breed their animals and much of their husbandry and veterinary care.



Caste of Initiates: The white-clad caste of initiates is concerned with the spiritual wellbeing and health of the Gorean people and consider themselves to be separate and above the law of the cities in a similar, but more arrogant, way to the caste of merchants.

They maintain temples in which they pursue their rituals, studies, prayers and esoteric activities. Areas of these temples are marked off with white rails to indicate that only initiates may go beyond.

Initiates eschew meat for a vegetarian diet, also avoiding beans, and spend a great deal of time studying mathematics and archaic Gorean.

There are monasteries and temples everywhere, no more than a day apart, so that a traveling initiate always has somewhere to stay.

Initiate temples are large, roofed buildings whose public areas often lack walls. Some are spartan and ascetic while others are opulent and rich, much depends on the local tradition and the tastes of the high initiate for that city. There is no, true, unified tradition and each city has its own practices.

Initiates maintain their own courts and laws in tension with civil authorities but their sway over the lower castes and superstitious fear of the Priest Kings prevent anyone truly challenging their authority.

Women may not become initiates and generally the only non-initiates with access to the inner temples are castrated slaves trained to sing in choirs.

Initiates consider it blasphemy to draw or even represent a Priest King in art, though they will sing of them and make sacrifices, directing their prayers to the Sardar.

The initiates crave power in the cities and over Gor as a whole but never seem to know quite what to do with it when they get it.

In the very upper echelons of the Initiates some know the truth of the Priest Kings and act according to their direction, but most are ignorant and truly believe the nonsense that the caste teaches them in place of the truth.

Amongst their odder behaviors are their distrust of scribes, their scrupulously white clothing, their claims to be truly immortal and their use of knotted prayer strings. The initiate symbol for the Priest Kings is the perfect, unbroken

circle which appears on their altars and is made gestural with the point of the finger.

The high initiate of Ar claims to be the high initiate of all Gor though this claim is honored by no other city.

Caste of Leather-Workers: A sub-caste of the artisans, the leather workers make

leather goods of all kinds as well as piercing slaves for earrings. Different sub sub-castes specialize in different aspects of leather working such as making saddles.



Observations on the Initiates:

Tarl's words on the initiates, much of which I replicate here, are very scathing and critical – with good reason given his experience.

It was my instinct to think that the low castes are being exploited by the initiates but, while this is true, the high castes seem to feel this is acceptable if it keeps the lower castes happy.

This still offends my sensibilities and that of many other scribes and builders but there seems no clear way to change the society and Goreans do not want change. Not in this, any more than they would any other part of their way.

Caste of Merchants: The merchant caste is a low caste that regards itself as a high caste and has many high aspirations. Merchants have access to high caste knowledge but lack the direct political power of the formal high castes. What power they do have comes from gold and, with plenty of it to throw around merchants are able to buy a considerable amount of influence, or even to purchase their way into a high caste.

More than any other group on Gor the merchants have an 'international' aspect, alongside their city and caste loyalties. Merchant law, along with their many islands and stockades, give the merchants a presence almost everywhere, along with eyes and ears that provide them with a huge amount of information. The merchants even have their own espionage agents looking out for their interests.

Their organisation, as a neutral party, of the Sardar Fairs also allows them access to a great amount of information and the ability to make standardisations in coinage and trade law – so much as this is possible.

The caste of merchants likes to show off its wealth ostentatiously, often in terms of their girth along with jeweled rings and necklaces. Their caste colors are yellow and white – referred to as gold and white - while the sub-caste of slavers marks their clothing with blue and yellow chevrons.

Few merchants are trained in combat and they are the caste most likely to carry poisoned weapons, even poisoned teeth-caps. This is not against their codes, but samples of rules from the codes of the merchants do include:

- *'See that you are paid,'*
- *'Better to lose a man than one tenth of a tarn-disc'.*
- *'Bend the truth, but deal honestly.'*

Caste of Metal Workers: The metal workers

guard the secrets of alloy making and metal working, produce metal for every purpose and brand livestock and slaves.

Metal workers wear robes of black and gray and crop their hair close to avoid danger in their workshops. Even the free women who are a part of the caste do this as a mark of caste pride.

Caste of Musicians: A sub-caste of the caste of entertainers the musicians are one of the more common castes within that grouping.

Musicians sing and learn to play their instruments well, earning their coin by performing in taverns, for the wealthy or by

wandering from city to city and busking.

By strong tradition, musicians are never enslaved and so it is one of the few professions in which a woman can be guaranteed to retain her freedom, should she be admitted to the caste and not leave it or be dishonoured.



Caste of Peasants: Clad in brown the Caste of Peasants are, perhaps, the lowest of the low castes being concerned with agriculture, farming and living from the land.

Nonetheless the caste are proud of their role, regarding themselves as 'the ox upon which the home stone rests', a vital part of Gorean society.

A hardy and tough people the peasants can be surprisingly dangerous as masters of the peasant bow and the iron-shod staff, as well as being of such strong constitution and well-exercised might that they can carry themselves in a fist fight. More disciplined, they might even rival the warriors as soldiers and are drawn on as a levy to fill out a city's army when needed. Their lack of drilling, practice and organization means they remain inferior to the warrior caste.

Peasants are incredibly strict with their slaves and peasant women loathe them. Slaves are put to work as much as any other farm animal, even being used to pull ploughs.

Peasant honor is also strict, if simple, mostly concerned with punishment for theft of the meagre – but important – property that they own. Sometimes honour is all they have.

Caste of Physicians: The green-robed Caste of Physicians are one of the high castes, though somewhat aloof and separate from politics.

It is through their genius, year on year, that they have cured most diseases, developed salves and treatments for most wounds and have even managed to arrest and reverse aging itself.

They have members who perform many other tasks as well such as the buying and selling of herbs and other ingredients, the growing of them and the tending of animals.

The physicians who tend to animals also tend to slaves that fall sick or are injured, as well as helping trace bloodlines and oversee slave matings. Even – rarely – using artificial implantation and insemination.

Held in high regard, the physicians have not been as constricted by the law of the Priest Kings as many other castes have been and as such their progress has been remarkable, garnering much of the support and investment that might otherwise have gone into weapons.

Some physicians turn their skills and minds to darker arts, creating complex poisons, paralytics and other toxins that bypass current treatments, though this is – strictly speaking – against their codes and such caste members are renegades.



Female members of the caste of physicians wear bracelets that mark how many children they have had as a point of both pride and to show they are entitled to practice the skills of the caste (once they are wearing three). Not all physicians need be doctors however, there are many other roles within the caste.

Caste of Players: The caste of players are masters of kaissa who have devoted their lives to the game in every regard. They wear red and yellow checked clothing and carry their board on their shoulders to mark their membership.

Like musicians and entertainers the caste of players are protected from enslavement and given free passage between cities. They make their money by playing games for coin and from the winnings the Sardar fairs can provide. Others are ruined by the game and their obsession with it. These poor souls are reduced to poverty and madness.

Kaissa is an obsession to many Goreans and most can play a creditable game, but the players are the masters of the art. Great masters of Kaissa are champions of their cities, given stipends and slaves and put forth for the honor of their home stone. Sometimes these matches take place in lieu of battle and with all the pomp and honor of gladiators.

Caste of Pot Makers: A sub-caste of the artisans, the caste of pot makers are experts in ceramics of all kinds and wear brown and green to mark their caste and status.

Caste of Saddle-Makers: A sub-caste of the leather-workers, specializing in the making of saddles.

Caste of Scribes: Dressed in blue robes and devoted to the study of pure knowledge, the caste of scribes are writers, historians, researchers, librarians, geographers, explorers, clerks, record keepers, copiers and savants.

Deeply distrustful of the initiates and frequently clashing with them over their sacred mathematics and view of the world, the scribes are endlessly frustrated by that caste's conservatism and interference.

Information, innovation and standardization is exchanged between scribes who see themselves as an intellectual community as well as being loyal to their cities.

Caste of Singers: A sub-caste of the entertainers and musicians, the poets and singers are not accorded the same level of respect and protection as these others sub castes.

The profession is treated in many places with skepticism, as foolishness. Singers were even outlawed in Tharna as part of the oppression of its Tatrix.



Sometimes a singer is blinded, deliberately. Sullius Maximus thinks it improves the voice and this view is respected by many.

Caste of Slavers: A sub-caste of the caste of merchants, the slavers almost regard themselves as a separate caste entirely.

Cunning, dangerous and skilled with weapons they are experts at transporting, training and finding Gor's most precious and prized commodity.

Slavers loathe the fall of a city as it floods the markets, driving down prices.

In these times they may buy up large quantities at low prices and wait to trickle them out in sales to make the most money.

They try to anticipate and create fashions in the presentation of slave, clothing, piercings and the rest – also to make more money.

Slavers are, in many ways, the defining caste of civilized Gor, loved and loathed in equal measure by the people.

Caste of Tarn Keepers: A low caste, but a rare, secretive, and valuable one, the tarn keepers hold the secrets of domesticating and training tarns.

Training a tarn requires a great deal of cruelty and strength towards the birds which are willful and vicious at the best of times and may turn at a moment's notice.

Caste of the Growers of Rence: A low but prideful caste, the rence growers are not even considered a caste by most, and they live in remote, parochial communities – village rafts – deep in the dangerous Vosk delta. They grow tend and prepare rence in great bundles to be sold and turned into cheap paper.

They used to be raided by Port Kar but with the adoption of the peasant bow by the rencers a more cordial relationship has developed at the points of arrows. Rencers have many cunning tactics such as communicating by imitating marsh gants or putting their heads underwater and sending messages by tapping rocks - the sound being heard under the water but not above it.

Rencer women are strongly independent and bitterly resent and hate slaves, as do many peasant castes.

Caste of Thieves: Existing, at least officially, only within Port Kar (which has remarkably lax opinions on thievery for Gor) the caste of thieves is marked not by robes but by a small three-pronged brand on their cheek, administered by the authorities when and if they were caught. Sometimes by members of their own caste do this when they break their caste codes, or as a point of pride to welcome them.

Quite powerful within Port Kar, the caste protects its territories from amateurs and extorts business owners by offering not to steal from them, for a fee.

The caste of thieves kills non-caste thieves, divides the city into territories, accepts protection money and - by the laws of Port Kar - are free if they can escape retribution within an ahn.

Thieves in general are not considered a caste on Gor and are not much loved or tolerated. On a first offense an ear will be notched. On a second offense they lose their right hand. On a

third their other hand and both feet. Some will try to escape to Port Kar after a first or second offense in order to preserve their lives.

Caste of Vintners: A low caste, but one with many famous members known for their creations across civilized Gor.

The vintners dress in white with green embellishments in the shape of plants.

Whilst the caste has its secrets, so does each clan, each city and each vintner. Each vies with the other to make their produce the best it possibly can be in friendly – and unfriendly - rivalry.



Caste of Warriors: Anyone can fight, but the caste of warriors devote their lives to it and little else. As soldiers they are elite fighters, trained in a wide variety of weapons and tactics and held to a complex code of behavior and honor.

Warriors dread a non-violent death such as poison or the bite of an ost and it is a terrible dishonour to them to be enslaved.

Warriors are unwilling to stain their swords with the blood of a woman, see archers as contemptible and so long as they retain their honor will die before selling their weapons to survive.

Examples of their codes include:

- *'Chivalry and loyalty to chiefs and Home Stone'.*
- *'Give up power when the time of war has passed'.*
- *'Stand and be slain, never retreat'.*
- *'Never fall slave'.*



The warriors wear scarlet, the color of blood, to designate their caste.

Caste of Wood Carriers: The caste of wood carriers, also called 'woodsmen' is a sub caste of the caste of foresters. They gather and dry wood for burning and transport it into the villages and cities as well as supplying the caste of charcoal makers.

Caste System: Civilized Gor exists within a well developed and life-shaping caste structure. Everyone is born into a caste and, for the most part, will not change caste during their life. It is

possible to, by companionship, apprenticeship or being accepted and initiated into the new caste, but most grow up proud of their caste and eager to take on its duties.

Children are considered to be of their father's caste while female companions can retain their own caste or join their companion's caste.

While every caste has its secrets and its pride, regarding itself as essential, there are still divisions between the high castes and the low castes.

Rulers – administrators and Ubars – always come from the high castes and are advised by a council drawn from the high castes, though the Ubar need pay them no heed. Indeed, if a low caste ruler should ever rise, superstition tells that the city will fall to ruin.

Castes look after their own, providing caste sanctuary, contributing to caste

based charities and taking part in entertainments and competitions determined by caste.

Not all members born to a caste are necessarily talented enough to take up the main job associated with that caste. The physicians, for example, can only make the subtleties of their advanced medicine known to the most intelligent of those who enter the caste.

Others may find work delivering medical products, working to grind ingredients or acting as couriers, taking scrolls of recipes and discoveries from one city to another.

Male children are trained in the workings of the caste from birth, alongside the rest of their education, while women are not typically trained in the skills of the caste until they have given birth to two children (this is especially true of the physicians). Despite this, many women run households, small businesses or make businesses of hobbies. They also often act as the 'front' of the caste, representatives of the rest of their caste in negotiations.

Outlaws and slaves lose their caste rights, though a freed slave may be able to reclaim them.

Castes, High: The high castes of civilized Gor's society are the warriors, builders, scribes, initiates and physicians.

Cat's Cradle: Cat's Cradle, the game played with thread or string woven about the player's hands, is a popular pastime for children and women in the North of civilized Gor and up into Torvaldsland.

It goes by many different names and has many variations but is still recognizably the same game.

Catapults: Large siege engines are in use on Gor but typically only employed in full scale wars against cities rather than in the skirmishes that are the more typical norm.

Stone and barrel throwing designs of all kinds, as well as ballistae, are employed and many of these weapons in slightly smaller form are to be found on the decks of Gorean ships.

Catchers: Catchers are small, young or disgraced Kur who patrol the corridors of the steel worlds looking for runaway slaves, capturing them and either returning them or disposing of them, often eating them.

Cattle Goads: Mul herdsmen, working in The Nest, use long, spiked spears to herd animals around.



The 'cattle' of the Priest Kings are large, gray arthropods, slow, stupid and moving in herds.

Cattle Humans: On the steel worlds of the Kur humans have been bred, since the arrival of the Kur in the solar system, for many purposes.

Amongst these breeds, and horrifying to most humans, are the 'cattle humans'. Kept without speech and reproduced through artificial insemination they are pitiful, fat, bloated, whining creatures that are bred only for their meat.

Some were released on Gor after the fall of Agamemnon and human meat is no longer eaten on that Steel World. Somewhere on Gor a herd of these 'cattle humans' remains, their fate unknown.

Cave of Agamemnon: The Cave of Agamemnon was a hidden Kur base on Gor, hidden in the Voltai Mountains.

After his defeat in the Steel Worlds Agamemnon and his loyalists retreated to the cave in order to regroup and further their plans.

Somehow escaping the detection of the Priest Kings, the cave was mostly self sufficient with artificially lit gardens and many rooms spread over a labyrinthine four levels. A Kur spaceship was hidden in the upper parts of the crag and some fifty Kur and eighty men labored there in Agamemnon's service until Agamemnon was finally, completely, overthrown.

Cell Spiders: Cell spiders are tiny, hunting spiders that are commonly found in prison cells, cellars and other cool, dark, filthy areas where pest insects (their prey) are likely to be found. They are dogged and admirable little predators and frighteningly efficient.

Centius of Cos: A great master of Kaissa, perhaps the greatest living master of kaissa, Centius of Cos owes his allegiance primarily to the game more than any city or faction. He is not so much obsessed with winning as with the art of the game itself.

His style of play can seem random and sacrificial to more traditional players but it rapidly turns upon his opponent with hidden complexity and surprises. Despite his skill and his peerless level of mastery, he is unhappy with Kaissa as a mere game and has spiraled into obsessional madness as he continues his study of the deeper meaning and mathematics of the game.

Cernus: Cernus was a slaver, head of his own house (the house of Cernus), who had the ambition to rule all of Gor. A cruel man who throttled his slave girls with chain when he used them and who killed his own father to take over the house, he was used by the Kurii as one of their agents.

He, in turn, used the Kur and leveraged those contacts to subvert and undermine the other slave houses of Ar, consolidating his power for an attempt to usurp Marlenus and become Ubar of Ar.

He succeeded in ruining many other slave houses in Ar and in being invested with the scarlet of the warriors so he could enter the council as high caste and rule.

In the end his attempt was foiled, but not without causing great upheaval in Ar and the restoration of Marlenus.

Cestus: The Cestus is an armored glove or hand covering fitted with studs or spikes and often used in gladiatorial combat. In Anango a deadlier version of the Cestus is used which has four blades projecting from it.

Chains: The metalworkers of Gor are experts in the production of chains of all shapes and sizes.

Chains are typically made for specific jobs. A chain meant to hold a female slave will be lighter and more decorative while those for male slaves will typically be more robust and basic – reflecting their relative value.

Use chains are used to bind slaves for sexual services while body chains are used for decoration and leading.

Chairs: Chairs are rarely used anywhere on Gor and most Goreans sit cross-legged on the ground, on rugs or on cushions.

Chairs are reserved for people of rank and importance and hold a status more like that of a throne.

Chalwar: The chalwar is a diaphanous, trouser-like garment worn by slaves and held up and in place by a sash around the waist. It is most commonly found in the Tahari but turns up elsewhere as a garment for dancers or for slaves who are meant to look more exotic and 'foreign'.

Chamber of the Council: In most of civilized Gor the Chamber of the Council is a high room in the widest of the city's cylinders where the administrator or Ubar meets with the representatives of the high castes and makes decisions about the future of the city.

Chenbar of Kasra: Ubar of Tyros, also known as The Sea Sleen. Chenbar is a masterful commander and a skilled naval admiral.

A lean, large-eyed man with nervous hands, this slender appearance belies his skill with weapons and his sense of honor.

Cherries of Tyros: There are different kinds of cherries grown in other places on Gor but the cherries of Tyros are famed for good reason.

They are grown in orchards and used in many different ways, preserved, sugared and made into liquors.

They're hard to get outside of Tyros, especially fresh, but are all the more valued for that fact making them a precious cargo.

Chios: Chios is one of the semi-legendary 'farther islands'. These farther islands were the

greatest distance from shore any Gorean had ever been until the Pani were revealed.

Chocolate: Chocolate is not completely unknown on Gor, though it is exceedingly rare.

Found and grown in the tropics and the interior it is shipped – principally by Cosian merchant ships – to civilized Gor and is most often drunk, rather than eaten.

It is a far stronger and more bitter kind of chocolate than that known on Earth.

Choke Collar: A choke collar fits as snugly as any other collar but is designed

to tighten and constrict if a leash or chain is pulled, choking and throttling the slave upon whom it is fitted.

The choke collar is usually only used on dangerous male slaves or on arrogant women who have only just been enslaved. It may be a last attempt to bring a slave to heel before destroying them.



Chronometers: Personal timepieces are rare amongst Goreans, though they are sometimes built into the compasses that are used by mariners and warriors.

They're expensive and Goreans are generally more relaxed about their day, organizing it around sunrise and sunset. For the general public there are public clocks and alarm bars, rung every ahn.

Chung: Before the Council of Captains took control of Port Kar there were several different men trying to claim the position of Ubar. Amongst them was the squat, brilliantly minded Chung.

Cities of Dust: Goreans of high or educated caste do not tend to believe the religious claims made by the caste of initiates, but those of lower caste put great stock in superstitions of all kinds.

The Cities of Dust are supposed to be the Gorean afterlife where Goreans live out their eternity according to their comportment during their lives.

Cities: Gorean cities are fortresses. They are almost always surrounded by a high wall to defend against attack and their high cylinders are each independent and capable of being turned, swiftly, into independent 'keeps'.

Streets and quarters determine what kind of businesses and services dominate in particular areas and also allow the city to be more easily navigated and defended from fire. The cities are also often tiered, with streets ascending different levels and even may have multiple walls defending the city like the layers of an onion.

City of Tents: When an army or a sizable mercenary force is on the move, their camps – which can be truly enormous – are referred to as a 'city of tents'.

More formally and properly The City of Tents was the unprecedented tent city that sprang up during the Siege of Ar to support, supply and rest the troops of the Horde of Pa-Kur on the site that would later become Ar's Station.

City States: The majority of Gor is ruled by city states. This is certainly the rule in 'civilized Gor' though other, wilder territories have their own ways of being run.

Each city claims the villages, towns and territories around it which then feed supplies and food to the city itself in exchange for protection.

City states are ruled, normally, by an administrator who is elected from amongst the high castes.

In times of war or strife an Ubar – a war leader – rules by decree, but they are normally deposed or replaced once the crisis has passed.

Some Ubars are popular and powerful enough to rule alone, Marlenus of Ar being the most famous example.

Cities are more than homes to Goreans and even if they travel far from home or settle somewhere else they retain a powerful loyalty to their home city and its culture, embodied in the 'home stone' that represents that city.

Cities are almost living, breathing things to Goreans with their own personalities, histories and spiritual significance. A fierce pride that rivals the strongest nationalism or religious fervor is felt towards a Gorean's polis and the stone that represents it. Even entering another city without permission and acknowledgement at its gates is punishable by death.

Each city has its own traditions, its own holidays and its own way of keeping time, which can become very confusing.

Ar, which claims to be the oldest city on Gor, tracks its years from the time of its founding by its mythical founder, supposedly the first man on Gor.

The year, according to the calendar of Ar was 10,117 Contasta Ar when the Earth year was 1967.

Clad Kajir: Dress codes and identifiers for slaves are common in almost all Gorean cultures and cities, but the Wagon People have a very particular set of clothing to mark out their slaves.

The curla (a red cord around the waist), a strip of leather that passes under the cord front and back (chatka), a sleeveless black leather vest (the kalmak) and a red cloth strip to tie the hair back (the koorā). Male slaves wear a short, sleeveless black leather tunic called the 'kes'.

Clan of Torturers:

While many cities have men and women who apply themselves to torture, often dishonored physicians, the Wagon People have a whole clan devoted to this specific end and trained and honed as any high caste of the cities.

The clan wear hoods to mask their identities and only remove them, as a mark of respect, when administering a sentence of death.

Clans: Goreans fall into clans, as well as castes and even though clans are broadly analogous to a very extended family, caste and city is likely to mean more.

Clan is more important to the lower castes. One's clan, or 'Gens', name determines to which clan you belong.

Clearchus: Clearchus is a mytho-historical figure, a bandit who established his own 'Ubarate' and levied taxes on those passing through his roads on their way to the Sardar.

He occupies a position similar to that of Robin Hood in Earth's folklore and may be connected to Clearchus of Turia, a real historical figure and one who was a great patron to the arts.

Cloak: Cloaks are common, standard Gorean attire, especially when traveling or braving the elements.

Observations on the Cities:

It seems strange that nations have not emerged on Gor already, but in the last fifty years of their history – so far as I can discern – that seems to be the way things are going. Ar's imperial ambitions were quashed, as were those of Cos and Tyros but the islands of Cos and Tyros are island nations of several cities and are closely allied while other groups such as the Salerian Federation or the Vosk League show that proto-nations can be formed.

The Pani islands also seem to be united in a single nation, albeit a fractious one, and as the Pani influence the mainland more directly that idea may become more popular.

It did, however, seem to me that the divided nature of Gorean society was part of the plan of the Priest Kings and they may go to work to prevent any sort of greater unity between more cities.

They are often colored according to caste and different means of fastening and wearing them follow regional fashion.

Cloth: Goreans measure cloth by the 'Ah-il', which is an approximate measurement from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. An 'ah-ral' is a measurement of ten ah-ils.

Clothes: Goreans are proud of their caste and wear their colors proudly as well as having a general love for fine materials and bright colors of any kind.

Pockets are rare, replaced by satchels, pouches or just by carrying coins in the hand or mouth.

Pockets are typically only found in artisans aprons, for carrying or storing tools while they work.

Aside from the layered robes of free women, common Gorean attire includes Grecian robes, tunics, leggings, vests and cloaks.

Coasting Ship: By far the most common kind of seagoing vessel on Gor is the coasting ship, a shallow-draft vessel that never strays too far from shore.

Coasting ships are used mainly for fishing and trading along the coast. Larger ships travel more swiftly at a greater distance from the shore with more cargo, but coasting ships are much cheaper to build and much safer than going out to sea.

Coin Box Girl: In effect cheap prostitutes, or the street version of paga girls, coin box girls are put out on the street with coin boxes attached to their collars to try and entice use from passing men in exchange for money. Some owners keep a large number of coin girls and earn their living based on their service.

Serving as a coin girl is also used as a punishment and many coin girls – but not all – are poorly skilled and cheaply bought.

Coinage: As with so many other things on Gor, coinage varies tremendously from one city to another in terms of value and denomination and despite the attempts made by the merchant caste to standardize things not much progress has been made - beyond a rough sort of accord. Still, the coinage of Ar can be considered somewhat typical.

In Ar's coinage the smallest coin is the 'tarsk bit' of which there are usually ten to a 'copper tarsk'.

There are a hundred full copper tarsks to a 'silver tarsk' and ten of these to 'gold tarn' which can be present in single or double weight, the double weight being worth twice as much.

Coins can be clipped or adulterated so, for more official transactions, scales are often used to measure the genuine worth of the coins or raw metal.

Coins are typically marked with an animal on one side and the symbol of their originating city on the other.

A gold coin of normal weight has the equivalent value of around twenty-thousand U.S. dollars in Earth currency. From this we can extrapolate that a silver tarsk is worth around two-thousand dollars, a copper tarsk around twenty dollars and a tarsk bit around two dollars.

One or two tarsk bits is enough to buy a drink of paga, a simple meal and the use of a paga slave at a tavern.

Coins can be pierced and threaded on strings and in many locales already have holes through them.

Gold – and precious metals of all kinds – are worth about ten times as much on Gor as they are on Earth as the effort to

remove and refine them relies on physical effort rather than industrial machinery.

As such, as well as slaves, precious metals are often taken from Earth to Gor to take advantage of this fact.

Collar: Nothing marks a slave as a slave more than a collar, not even a brand. If a person has a collar about their neck they are universally recognized as being a slave.

Collars are typically metal and locked or hammered into place around the slave's neck.

There are also more temporary, or cheaper, collars made of leather or even rope. Designs differ from one place to another from flat loops to a looser torc-like device. Some have as many as six locks, one for each letter of kajira, others a single bolt hammered into place.

Observations on Money:

Gorean coinage is a pain to deal with. Gold, copper and silver are heavy and while you don't need to carry that much with you a hiding place in your house is not that secure and you're rather vulnerable to theft.

Paper money has never really taken off though you can get promissory notes that you can cash in at merchant settlements – for a fee – and can deposit your money in a well guarded bank, also run by the merchants, if you can afford their charges. The merchants will look for any excuse to take so much as a tarsk bit from you though.

Collars are sometimes hidden from view, to spare the blushes and offense of free women – in 'collar stockings' or 'collar sleeves'.

Colonisation: Gorean cities sometimes establish new settlements, such as Ar's Station or Port Cos, but while these cities share a common history they are founded with their own home stones and – at least in theory – their own independence.

As time passes they may grow further and further apart from their parent city to become their own culture.

Common Lit: There are many different breeds of lit, which is a small jungle bird found in the mid to upper canopy of the interior. The common lit is the most common but least spectacular of these birds.

Common Streets: Almost every city in civilized Gor has two commonly named streets; the Street of Coins – where most trading and selling takes place, and the Street of Brands which handles slave auctions, sales, slave related goods and services.

Companionship: Companionship is a formalized relationship between a free man and a free woman in Gorean society. Frequently political or economic and rarely formed on the basis of affection, companionships allow for upward or sideways caste mobility, the raising of children and facilitate political and social alliances.

Men, and less commonly women, can have more than one companion though this is rare in civilized Gor and slaves are far more common.

A companionship must be renewed every year or it is considered to be lapsed and the pair are no longer considered to be companions. This usually only happens when one party or the other has been enslaved or killed. Otherwise companionships are normally for life.

Compass: There are both expensive and cheap compasses. The most expensive ones are those used by tarnsmen, which incorporate a glowing dial and a chronometer, one of the few personal time devices used on Gor.

Complicius Serenus: Complicius Serenus replaced Om as the High Initiate of Ar. This is a position that regards itself as the High Initiate of all Gor, though no other city's High Initiate considers this claim valid.

Confederacy of a Hundred Villages: The Confederacy of a Hundred Villages was an alliance in Northern Ushindi, forged to resist the expansion of Bila Huruma's empire.

Constables: Amongst the Pani one of the lowest forms of officer in their armies is the 'constable'.

A constable is charged with keeping order in the ranks, locating deserters and dispensing justice amongst the peasant levy.

Construction: In civilized Gor, construction is normally done by free persons. There are superstitions and concerns about using slave labor on major projects and the castes concerned with construction have too much pride and too many vested interests to allow slaves to do the work.

Service can, however, be levied and if a lot of labor is required then prisoners or debtors can be put to work.

One notable exception to this rule is Port Kar. This city was raised at the edge of the Thassa and the Vosk delta by dint of a huge amount of slave labor, yet doesn't seem to have suffered for the fact.

In the interior, Bila Huruma's great canal was largely constructed by slave labor but this is not regarded by those in the coastal north as being part of 'civilized Gor'.

Containment Tube: The containment tube is a device used by the Priest Kings to store captives on the Prison Moon. It is a tapered, hard plastic cylinder into which food, water and air are introduced from above and wastes are removed from below.

The tubes can also be filled with an anesthetic gas to knock out the captives.

Contract Women: Slavery is known amongst the Pani, but amongst the higher classes 'contract women' are much more common.

Contract women are contractual 'slaves' who work to comfort men of standing and status, not only sexually but also through entertainment, music and service.

Control Stick: A control stick is a long metal shaft with a trigger, connected to a short length of chain.

The chain can be fitted around the neck of a slave and tightened or loosened by squeezing the trigger on the shaft. As such it is a more forcible means of slave control and movement than a simple leash or coffer.

Corcyrus: A city to the south of the Vosk, southwest of Ar and northeast of Argentum.

Corcyrus is a warm city known for its silver mines, which make it almost as rich as Tharna and place it at odds with Argentum and Tharna over mining rights.

Corcyrus was allied with Cos and protected by its power but has since come under the protection of Ar as its 'free' ally.

Corcyrus is known for its great library, the Theater of Kleitos and the slaver House of Kliomenes. Other famous locations in Corcyrus include its stadium, the Garden of Antisthenes, the Inn of Lysias, the Square of Perimenes, the Street of Philebus and Milo Street.

Cos: The island state of Cos is peculiar for civilised Gor in that it is a true nation. Cos is the island, occupied by the cities of Telnus, Selnar, Temos and Jad. One of its smaller cities, Naxos, is renown for its grapes and its wine.

The island itself is mountainous, with terraces cut into the hills and lower mountains to increase the amount of farming land and habitable area available on the island.

Ta grapes are grown in great numbers on Cos and exported to the mainland, protected by Cos' navy which is only rivaled by the other great maritime powers of Gor - Tyros and Port Kar.

Cos was the only real rival to the power of Ar in the past, but both great city states have exhausted each other in their great war and the invasion of the mainland by Cos.

Cosian Wingfish: The Cosian wingfish is a tiny flying fish whose back is lined with venomous spines.

Delicate and bright blue, notoriously hard to catch, the wingfish is considered a rare and special delicacy, though the flavor is something of an acquired taste.

The Cosian Wingfish is also known as the 'songfish' as – during the mating season – they stick their heads above the water to whistle to each other in display.

Cosmetics: Cosmetics are not typically worn by free women unless they are courting slavery. Cosmetics are usually only worn by slaves, to enhance their beauty, to show off their talent to a master's guests or to play a part in a play or dance.

Women of Ar are known to wear cosmetics, but elsewhere this is considered horribly scandalous.

The widespread use of cosmetics on Earth is just one more reason that Goreans think of 'barbarians' as natural slaves.

Council of Captains: The sovereign body of Port Kar the Council of Captains was instituted after the fall of Kar's rival 'Ubars' and to ensure that such a problem would not occur again.

Entry to the council is permitted only to those captains who control at least five vessels of medium class or greater.

Samos, the great trader and agent of Priest Kings is First Captain in Port Kar, the chairman of the council's debates and the final arbiter of policy.

Courier Pouch: A courier pouch is a special bag used by couriers to transport important documents, papers and small items. The bag appears to be a normal, heavy cloth satchel but it is lined with chain mail to prevent it being slit and the strap contains wire so that it cannot be cut.

Courts of the Administrator: This court of law is presided over by the city's administrator or ubar and also provides rules for the city praetors and other officers to follow.

On certain days any citizen (who has reserved a token of some kind) may bring their grievances before the city's highest authority. The testimony of slaves, whether in the administrator's court or that of the initiates, is taken under torture to ensure its veracity.

Courts of the Initiates: The courts of the initiates make rulings based on their lore and scripture, and the perceived will of the Priest Kings.

Depending on the strength of the caste in the individual city the initiates' laws may be subordinate or superior to the administrators' laws, but there is always tension between the

two and it can mean the difference between life and death, which court one is taken to.

Crested Lit: The crested lit is a small jungle bird from the mid to upper canopy, marked by having a brightly colored crest atop its head.

Crime & Punishment: Gorean justice tends to be swift, merciless and cruel. Enslavement is given for a great many crimes, especially to women. Otherwise

the miscreant may be put to death by trampling, impalement, being fed to slean or tarns, or even being burned alive.

Thieves have their ears notched on their first offense and on subsequent offenses may have their hands or feet cut off.

Crooked Tarn, The: The Crooked Tarn is a sizable inn on the road to Ar. It is all but a fortress, protected by a moat and a folding bridge.

It has its own tarncote as well as stables for tharlaron and bosk. There is a beacon near the tarn cote, with which the inn can call for help from nearby patrols.

The owners are exploitative, unscrupulous and profit-oriented as well as being more than happy to arrange things so that guests can get into debt and be enslaved or redeemed for money.

Crossbow: The crossbow is the standard ranged weapon of Gor, used by virtually every culture and people of every class or caste. Some are cranked with a tool, some by hand, some via a stirrup but all are essentially of the same overall design.

Observations on Port Kar:

Port Kar may be a filthy den of thieves and pirates but in many ways I prefer it to any other city I visited. The Council of Captains is a genuinely meritocratic organization that doesn't give a damn about caste and which is almost, almost, democratic. This seems to have worried the rest of tradition-bound Gor far less than it should have.



Crossbows are more powerful and easier to use than other bows, but they are slow to reload.

The standard quiver holds twelve bolts but larger quivers – often used by tarnsmen – may carry up to twenty and two of these are usually carried on either side of the tarn saddle.

Cur-Lon fiber: Cur-Lon is a silken fiber made by spinning the web-threads of the spider people who live in the swamps and woods outside of Ar. It is spun into silken cloth in the mills of Ar.

The spider people are a gentle race who speak via the same sort of translators used by the Priest Kings and the Kur.

Currency: Gorean coins are hand struck. The rounds of metal are placed between two dies and then hit with a hammer to imprint an image on both sides.

The coinage of the cities gains much of its value from the reputation of those cities, as much as the metal itself.

Curulean: The Curulean is Ar's premier slave auction house and many slaves aspire to be sold there on the main block.

It is lit by energy bulbs and twists and turns with endless tunnels and cages that eventually lead to the main amphitheatre and the auction blocks.

Sales in the Curulean are conducted with a great sense of theatricality, and this atmosphere, along with the quality of the goods, ensures high prices.

Cylinders: In civilized Gor, cities are distinguished by their 'cylinders'. Tall, round towers typical to most cities. These towers are joined by bridges and steps and can be closed off individually in the case of invasion, each its own fortress.

Tarns can land in tarncotes in many of the high cylinders or tarn wire can be strung between them to discourage attacking tarnsmen from other cities.

The high bridges rarely have any safety barriers, but Goreans are used to making their way along them without fear.

Czchar: The Czchar is a popular stringed instrument in the shape of a box. It is laid across the lap and played by plucking at the strings.

Observations on the Curulean:

I visited Ar, and the Curulean, early in my visit to Gor. I had seen smaller slave markets but this was something altogether different. I had thought I would be disgusted with it, but to see the auctions in action with the skill of the auctioneers, the slave handlers, the proud pleasure slaves on the block... happy, even ecstatic to be considered worthy of being sold... that was a transformative experience.

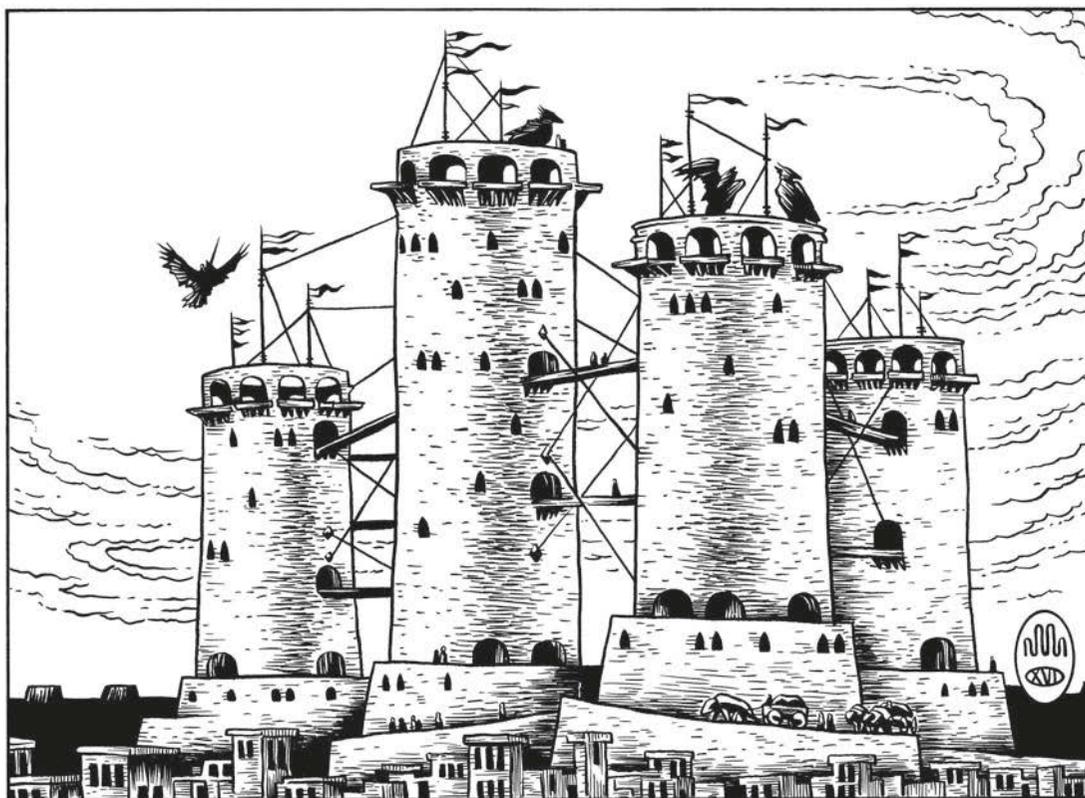
This was not just an auction; it had the feel of a rally or a sports competition, a play or a film just as much as it was what it actually was.

The smell of straw and sawdust is not associated in my memory with that auction and the ridiculous sum I almost spent on a slave I would have had no use for on my travels.

Observations on the Cylinders of Gor:

As a man with a fear of heights I was the target of much humor as I swayed along the high bridges trying not to vomit. Somehow this was worse than being carried by a tarn because of the sheer drops and being unused to the way the lower gravity allowed for less solid looking buildings. I will never get used to it.

For all its faults, Tharna had safety rails when it was controlled by women, an innovation I wish had stuck and had been adopted by the rest of Gor.





Dagger: Virtually all Goreans carry a dagger on their person for personal protection. A woman's dagger is typically a thin, stiletto type dagger, as it that used by assassins. A man's dagger is bladed rather than pointed and more of a general tool. Women's daggers are also, often, poisoned as are the hidden pins that many women also carry for defense, hidden in their hair and robes.

Dance: There are many forms of traditional and formal dance but the most common forms of dance are those made by slaves.

There are hunt dances, capture dances, submission dances, chain dances, whip dances and more. Slave dances typically have a theme and tell a story. Some even tell specific stories in their movements and enticements. The burlesque dancing and strip-teases of Earth would be considered jokes, an amount of teasing that is intolerable without the promise of fulfillment.

Dancing Silks: Dancing silks are typically a rich scarlet, to demonstrate the 'opened' and sexually available nature of the slave. Dancing silks are brief, diaphanous and scandalous, designed to flow and move with the dance. They are rarely, if ever, worn save for when dancing.





Daphna: Daphna is one of the farther islands, remote and semi-mythical to most of Gor (save Cos and Tyros).

Daphne: Daphne is a remote, small settlement, little more than a hamlet. It is a front for Kur operations on Gor and a hidden port for their sky ships and slavers to operate.

Dar-Kosis Pits: Sufferers of the Dar-Kosis wasting disease have the choice of wandering outside the cities, or of being voluntarily imprisoned in the Dar-Kosis pits.

Dar-Kosis pits are vertical shafts with passages and alcoves carved into their sides to afford cover. Charitable people provide food and water to those imprisoned within, lowering it on baskets or throwing it down for the anguished sufferers to subsist on.

Observations on Dar-Kosis:

Novel diseases sometimes arise but a combination of ruthless quarantine and advanced medical science normally deals with the problem. Quite why dar-kosis should be chosen as a holy disease by the initiates is anyone's guess, particularly since it is such a nasty sickness. With the passage to and from Earth I worry that there may be a chance it would spread and on our over-populated and crowded world that could be devastating.

Many cities have such pits and in some cities – such as Ar – they conceal hidden passages and tunnels that lead into and out of the city, for use during sieges and similar events.

Dar-Kosis: Dar-Kosis is a terrible disease

which has thus far proven incurable, even on Gor. Its name means 'The Holy Disease' which is a large part of the reason that it has never been cured. The powerful caste of initiates has opposed all attempts to cure it in the past, though some rebellious members of the caste of physicians are now applying their talent to the task.

Dar-Kosis affects the whole body, turning its sufferers into hideous, twisted and wretched things like a combination of wasting disease, necrotising bacteria and leprosy. It is extremely infectious and its sufferers swaddle themselves in yellow shrouds, clacking a wooden device to warn others of their approach.

Darts: Only really seen in use in Anango, these are flung with the hand and are flighted, weighted missiles with a short shaft. Only effective at short range, but quick to use, they are well suited to jungle warfare - especially when poisoned.

Day: The Gorean day is divided into twenty ahns, the tenth ahn being midday, the twentieth midnight.

An ahn is divided into forty ehn and each ehn into eighty ihn.

An ahn is an hour and twelve minutes in Earth measurements, an ehn a minute and forty-eight seconds and an ihn one point three-five seconds.

Death Eels: Death eels are a vicious form of needle-toothed eel, native to the Pani lands. The Shogun - and others - keep pools of these eels as an execution device. It can take as much as an ehn for a body dropped into the pool to sink to the bottom, reduced to bones in the process by the frenzied eels.

Debtors: Men and women who owe a great deal of money and have their debts called on them without being able to pay are pressed into service in a limited form of slavery.

Their friends and relatives can purchase their debt and doing so gives them the right to either free or enslave them. Some debtors manage to beg, plead and wheedle strangers into paying their debt for them. Others work off the debt in service to the state or the person that they owe the money to, though they will be charged for their feed, water and anything else their creditor can think of in order to prolong their service.

Delta Brigade: An organization, supposedly of Ar's military veterans who survived the disastrous Vosk Delta campaign, the Delta Brigade undertook acts of terrorism, assassination, vandalism and thievery in order to destabilize Cos' grip on Ar.

These actions were designed to weaken Cos and its mercenaries and to encourage the people of Ar to rise up. Originally a fiction, it rose to become a genuine organization and the catalyst

for revolution and the throwing off of the Cosian yoke.

Observations on Time:

Growing used to Gorean timing is especially difficult but fortunately they live a more relaxed and less time-conscious life. To count a Gorean ihn, use 'Mississippi', but with an extra 'ippi'.

Observations on Debt:

In Turia I observed that a friend to a merchant who had fallen into debt interceded on her behalf, apparently several months into her debt service. He didn't pay her fee, but called the attention of a Praetor to the fact that she was purposefully being charged ridiculous amounts to keep her in service. The Praetor ruled that she should be freed without working another minute or paying another penny. I doubt that the Praetor would pay attention to the pleas of a debtor without someone to speak up for them however.

Desert Kaiila: The desert kaiila is similar to the kaiila used by the wagon people.

A lofty, silken, long-necked creature it has a smooth gait and a proud bearing.

The desert kaiila stands around twenty hands at the shoulder and is a swift runner with great stamina, able to cover over six-hundred pasangs

in a day. While a swift and useful mount, desert kaiila are also temperamental and vicious.

Desert kaiila are almost always tawny in color and unlike the more common kaiila suckle their young. Desert kaiila milk is reddish, with a strong salty taste and a high level of iron.

Desert kaiila are omnivorous with broad, heavy, padded paws with webbed toes. This keeps them more stable on the sand, and especially in the dunes.

Desert Tribes: The desert tribes of the Tahari wear different headdresses to identify each other and have a much stricter societal code than those who live at the oases and cities.

They eat only with the right hand – the hand that wields the scimitar and draws blood – and have very strict rules about hospitality and guests.

Destroying wells, crops or animals is unconscionable to them, even at war. Anyone who does so is anathema, never to get hospitality or quarter.

Desmond: Desmond is one of a cadre of spies who work for the merchant caste, another display of uncommon cooperation across the length and breadth of Gor from that caste. He disguises himself as many different castes but his most common disguise is that of the metalworkers.

Given his involvement in the final downfall of Agamemnon it is likely that the merchant caste as a whole are now much more aware of the Kur, their presence and their threat to two worlds.

Desmond was last known to be returning to Harfax to report what he had found.

Dietrich of Tarnburg: Dietrich of Tarnburg is a famous mercenary with a combined force as large as that of some city states. His fame

and competence draw men to him to serve and he can command the highest prices. Despite this he sometimes picks sides according to his own sense of honor and a broader sense of what is best for him and his men.

Observations on Desert Kaiila:

I have a hard enough time with horses. Mounting a predatory, stinking, pest-ridden beast in the heat of the desert and before men who were born to the saddle is much worse than mounting a horse.

The worst you can get with a horse is trodden on, the worst with kaiila is eaten. At least the desert breed is somewhat more mellow than the northern kaiila and as content to munch on plants as people.



His tactics and campaigns are taught in military schools and he has been involved in some of the most definitive battles of Gorean history. He won the day at Piedmont and Cardonicus, led The Forty Days March, relieved the Siege of Talmont, crossed the Issus, completed the night evacuation of Keibal Hill and was the victorious party at Rovere, Kargash, Edgington, Teveh Pass, Gordon Heights and the Plains of Sanchez.

His invention of the Harrow Formation (archers in projected lines ahead of heavy warriors) is now part of the soldiers' canon as are his innovations in coordinating air and ground attack and using siege techniques in open warfare.

During the conflict between Ar and Cos Dietrich took and occupied Torcadino, acting on his own behalf, slowing the Cosian advance and destroying many of their siege supplies.

He wished to maintain balance between the two sides to preserve the opportunity for profit for mercenary companies.

Dina: The dina is a tiny, delicate, rose-like flower. Its image is sometimes used as a brand and its name is often used as a slave name.

Dip: Dip is a substance created by the caste of physicians for the treatment of animals and slaves to protect them from parasites. This dark liquid is stored in tanks and animals are forced to walk through it and to be submerged.

This kills lice and any other creatures lurking on or in their bodies and protects them for a few weeks afterwards. It is a foul, cold, stinging fluid and the desire not to be put through it again makes many slaves more fastidious and careful with their hygiene.

Directions: All directions on Gor are calculated from the direction of the Sardar Mountains, to which magnetic compasses invariably point. The two main directions are Ta-Sardar-Var and Ta-Sardar-Ki-Var, usually shortened to Var and Ki-Var. Var means 'turning' and 'Ki' indicates negation so this could be described as 'turning to the Sardar' and 'Not turning to the Sardar'.

The Gorean compass is split into eight divisions and each of these is in turn subdivided. There is also a system of latitude and longitude based on the Gorean day and calculated in ahn, ehn and ihn.

Ta-Sardar-Var is present on all Gorean maps but Ta-Sardar-Ki-Var never appears, since that would be any other direction at all.

The divisions on a compass are Ta-Sardar-Var, Ror, Rim, Tun, Vask, Cart, Clim and Kail. Vask is sometimes called Verus Var, which means 'The true turning away'.

Observations on Directions:

I have used Earthly directions in my descriptions as much as possible in order to make this work more understandable and accessible to 'barbarians'.

Discipline collars:

The Pani often express a cruelty and a level of dominance over their slaves that even other Goreans do not. One

expression of this is the discipline collar, a metal collar with spikes either on the inside or pointing upwards as a way to correct posture or encourage compliance.

Display Chain: Display chains are used to bind slaves in place and to each other so that they can be lined up for inspection.

The display chain is an ankle cuff with an outside ring through which another chain can be placed and linked to the next – and so on.

Display Slaves: Display slaves are chosen for their exquisite beauty above any and all other considerations. They are expensive baubles, like jewels, intended to show off the wealth and power of the owner.

Some merchants use display slaves of the more expensive kind to show off or compliment their wares.

Djelleba and Burnoose: This combined garment is common across the Tahari. It weds a short sleeved long, loose tunic with a coarse, sleeved cloak.

Djinn: In the Tahari the word 'djinn' is a generic word for any supernatural or mythical beast or monster, though it is most often used to refer to the Kur as they go about their shadowy business.

Dock Eels: Dock eels are a long, bloodsucking eel that can be up to four feet long.

Tenacious to a fault they will not easily let go and must either be prised or cut free. A single eel can drain enough blood to make a man weak, but will drop away once full. Three or more can kill a man.

Domestic Verr: Domestic verr are a smaller and much less fractious breed than the wild verr of the Voltai.

They are raised for their skins, their horns, their milk and their meat.

Doors: Gorean doors are typically sturdy affairs, bound with metal and made of thick wood. Despite this obvious concern for security, their locks are extremely variable.

Gorean locks are hand-crafted, expensive and complex. While a person is within a dwelling they bar them with two bars and a latch string.

Mechanical locks use pins or disks in order to stay shut. Lockable slave collars have six pins or discs that must be aligned to unlock them.

Huge doors may be closed with giant locks that are opened with 'sickle keys' that can also be used as weapons. Many expensive locks also include poisoned needles or blades that spring on anyone failing to open the lock properly.

It is a capital offense for a locksmith to create a copy of a key and there are few who would risk it, even under duress.

Padlocks are more common but simple to pick, used to secure a lid or box rather than for security itself.

Observations on Security:

Goreans can be remarkably cavalier about the security of their homes. It seems sufficient for them to know that they have been broken into and robbed, rather than to prevent the thief.

If you want security you pay for the locks and the guards necessary to keep your property safe, otherwise you carry your true valuables on your person and rely on luck and your neighbors to protect your property.

An unfortunate side effect of this is that poor people get burgled far more often. On the upside, wealthy people are more often the targets for pickpockets.

The penalties for thieving being so severe probably deter some, but most thieves are either desperate or don't believe they will ever be caught.

Common, poorer Goreans use personal knots to tie latches and boxes. Each knot is individual to a person so if it is cut or re-tied they will know that someone has broken in.

Dorna the Proud: Dorna the Proud was once the second highest woman in Tharna. She plotted and schemed to remove the rightful Ubara and succeeded – for a time – before being ousted and

forced to flee. She later turned up in Treve, a slave, owned by Terrence the mercenary tarnsman, but no less ambitious or cruel and with him wound around her finger.

Double Knowledge: Different castes upon Gor are taught different things about the world. The low castes are taught a much more simplistic and supernatural-oriented view of the world while the high castes are taught a much more scientific and realistic view.

Low castes, for example, are taught that they live on a flat planet while higher castes are taught that it is a globe.

Persons of low caste may gain higher knowledge over time, but still it is not held to be general knowledge. This is referred to as the 'first knowledge' and the 'second knowledge'.

Those who know about the even broader and more secret implications of the war between the Priest Kings and the Kur sometimes refer to this as the 'third knowledge'.

The closer to the truth, the higher the order of knowledge.

Drinking horns:

In Torvaldsland and many of its bordering territories the drinking horn is the vessel of choice for alcoholic beverages. It is traditional to drain the horn in one go or – if one does not wish to, or cannot – to drink some and then pass it on to another.

Horns cannot be set down and that, combined with these practices, often leads very rapidly to drunkenness.

Drum Language: The beating of drums is used in the jungles of the Gorean interior to signal information, to form battle lines and give orders. Each tribe and village has its own drum language and confederations or empires create their own drum signals so that they cannot be understood by the enemy.

Explorers have learned to dread the sound of distant drumming as a herald of imminent death coming from the jungle. In civilized Gor similar drum signals are used to organize flights of tarns.

Drusus: Drusus is, or was, a member of the caste of assassins. He failed his final test – refusing to kill his friend Kurnock – to become a fully fledged member of the caste. As such he ended up using his skills on behalf of the Kur as a sell-sword.

Observations on Drinking:

The horns of most Gorean animals are rather large, though the varying size is also a source of much trickery and laughter amongst the Torvaldslanders.

Enticed into a drinking competition with a bondsmaid I was upset to discover that she was given a verr horn while I was given a bosk horn. I still cannot stand the taste of honey.



When Tarl Cabot came to the north to find and prevent Half-Ear's plans he eventually turned Drusus to his side against the Kur.

Where Drusus is now is unknown, but few failed assassins survive for long without a powerful sponsor, despite their skills.

Dust Legs: The Dust Legs are the most 'civilized' of all the tribes of the Red Savages. The Dust Legs

have the most dealings with slavers and traders and the most interaction – good or ill – with the borders of civilized Gor.

Their name may come from an ancient shame since, in legend, they were the last of the tribes to master the use of the kaiila. They now wear the name with pride and their limited contact with white traders and settlements makes them relatively wealthy and rich in metal weapons.



Earth: Earth is thought of by most on Gor as a distant land from which barbarian slaves are captured and brought to be sold.

Barbarians do not speak Gorean which is rare outside of marginalized, tribal or isolated people such as the tribes of the interior or the Red Savages and this is part of what marks them as different, along with vaccination scars and fillings in their teeth.

Whatever education a barbarian might have had on Earth is considered irrelevant and they are regarded as primitive, stupid and low.

So strong is this the perception that it is even known as the 'slave world' to those who know of it is a separate planet, its societal pathology looked down on by Goreans, prideful in their own society.

Gorean presence on Earth is found in many arenas, sponsored either by Priest Kings or Kur. Networks of slavers, spies and agents exist within government, business and education scouting for potential slaves, covering up operations or acquiring other goods (such as gold) for transportation to Gor.

The Priest King operations have declined since the Nest War and have not truly recovered, leaving the Kur free to operate on Earth with relative impunity. The amount of collusion between the Kur and governments and corporations is unknown, but must be reasonably extensive.

Those with the Second Knowledge often pity those of Earth and regard it as a sick and broken culture living in conflict with its own biology and urges. The Goreans see their own, somewhat brutal, society as at least having the virtue of honesty and truth.

Slaves are frequently taken from Earth whether by agents of Kur, Priest Kings or those who retain access to silver ships despite the fall of their Kurii sponsors.

Observations on Attitudes:

Being 'undercover' as it were, I have had to endure many conversations about the men and women of Earth that I have found insulting and erroneous. I console myself with the thought that Tarl, Jason and many other men and women of Earth have been involved in formative events here, even though their origin might not be known. Tarl's father is even Administrator of a whole city!

The Goreans regard our culture as sick and unnatural and while that is hard to properly refute I would tend to think the Gorean culture has its own issues. That said there's a vitality to the lives of Goreans that one rarely sees on Earth and despite the dangers and simplicity of their existence they seem far happier.

Perhaps I'm the one who is wrong to be insulted, the Priest Kings guide Gorean society and they are far more intelligent than I. That, and they have the advantage of distance that even our most accomplished anthropologists do not.

Maybe this is how we are meant to be, different sexes, divided and warring, living lives of pleasure and conquest – fulfilling our primitive desires. It just seems so... short sighted.

These are mostly women but, increasingly, the weak men of Earth are taken as silk slaves for free women. Their docility and deferential attitude towards women being considered to make them a safer prospect than a Gorean male slave.

Eating Prong: The eating prong, a fairly long, two-pronged fork, is native to Turia and used to eat with, while those on the rest of Gor use spoons, eating-knives, or their hands.

The prong has slowly been becoming more common in the north of Gor,

especially amongst the higher castes or those with pretensions to be so, most often fashion-conscious merchants.

Empire of Ar: The Empire of Ar was the ambition of Marlenus to forge a nation from the normally independent cities of civilized Gor.

Imperial Ar brought city after city under its control until Pa-Kur's horde combined internal civil war inside Ar with the grandest siege Gor has ever seen. Even though the horde was broken up at the end of the Siege of Ar the client cities of Ar were freed and had their home-stones returned. Ar then concentrated on less direct ways of expressing its power through alliances and protection, and many of its former imperial subjects retained reasonably good relations with the powerful city.

Energy Bulbs: Energy bulbs are somewhat rare on Gor, despite their principles being well known to the Caste of Builders. This is partly due to their expense and partly due to the cultural preference of Goreans for the 'natural'.

An energy bulb is a completely self-contained light and power source producing a clear, soft light that lasts for years.

Only the richest tend to use them, though they may also be used in some mines and earthworks or secret tunnels where torches and so forth would be more troublesome or foul the air.

Ko-Ro-Ba is one of the few cities where energy bulbs are in much greater usage, doubtless due to the more technologically progressive viewpoint of Matthew Cabot.

English: Earth languages are known by very few on Gor. Those that travel to Earth learn languages – usually English – but otherwise it is known only by a very few scholars as a curiosity and slave trainers as a practical aid.

Earth languages other than English are even more rare as slavers tend to concentrate their efforts in multicultural nations such as Britain, Canada America and Australia.

Equinoxes: Gor celebrates its solstices and equinoxes as markers of the seasons and each is marked by fairs and festivities in the cities and in the Sardar.

En'Kara is the vernal equinox, Se-Kara the autumnal equinox, En'Var the summer solstice and Se'Var the winter solstice.

Esalinus: Esalinus is a small town that plays host to a slaver's camp and metal smelting facilities. It sits at the edge of the woods of Clearchus and within a hundred pasangs of Besnit and Harfax.

Eteocles: Eteocles was one of the sparring Ubars of Port Kar. Narrow of feature and known for his cunning he did not, however,

foresee the Council of Captains usurping the power of the Ubars.

Eteocles fled the city with his men and ships before the great sea battle on the 25th of Se'Kara, leaving the city to its fate to preserve his own skin.

Eve: A female version of Grendel, bred on the

Steel Worlds as part of the same experiment - to be an ambassador to smooth the way between the Kurii and men.

Both Grendel and Eve ended up monsters to both men and to Kur, equally disgusting to both, but Eve and Grendel see each other as beautiful.

Eve was a prize at the centre of a plot to try and tug Grendel's loyalties to one side or the other in the ongoing aftermath of the civil war on the Steel World but he was not swayed. Now they have each other.

Exchange Islands: Exchange Islands are 'free ports' maintained and ruled by the caste of merchants and run under merchant law.

Observations on Merchants:

Gold is the true Ubar anywhere that the merchants hold power. I'll admit to a dislike of the bureaucracies and dictatorships that characterize most Gorean cities and I do find the merchant areas more tolerable and liberated. At least there is a way anyone can get something done – through earning coin. It is strange to me, however, that collectivist ideology is virtually absent on Gor, save in some peasant communities, cults and as echoes in Gorean caste philanthropy. At least the regular raids, thefts, conquests and acts of banditry do something to redistribute the wealth.

Gor has been becoming more cosmopolitan and open to trade over the last fifty years but the Exchange Islands still play an important role in trade between cities, especially those which are officially at odds.

Examples of Exchange Islands and free ports include: Anango, Asperiche, Bazi, Farnacium, Helmutsport, Hulneth, Hunjer, Ianda, Lydius, Scagnar, Schendi, Skjern, Tabor and Teletus.

Exchange Points: Panther Girls trade slaves at certain points along the coast. They tie slaves to 'A' shaped beams along the beach to advertise that they are open to trade. The slaves they trade are captured from other panther groups and from outlaw bands or unwary explorers.

Exchange points are considered safe ground where enslavement or fighting between panther girls and traders or outlaws doesn't happen and they can also trade with each other.

Executioners: Across Gor, even as distant as the lands of the Pani, it is conventional for an executioner to wear a mask or hood. This allows them to hide their features and to avoid retribution from the friends or family of the person being executed.

Exotic: Certain slaver houses spend generations breeding slaves for particular traits. Usually this is simply a 'bred slave', chosen for beauty, submission and responsiveness.

More rarely slaves are bred with an eye to collectors or other purposes. Some have been bred for a particular deformity or physical trait, some for things as exotic as stripes or poisonous saliva glands.

Another form of exotic is a slave girl raised in total isolation from men in perfect and absolute innocence. These are purchased for victory feasts and the first they know of men is serving, wholly, at that event.

Many of these slaves, traumatized by their experience, commit suicide.

Observations on Exotics:

I have seen slaves with gigantic ears, slaves with unnatural body shapes that would put the most pneumatic adult star on Earth to shame, male slaves with generous 'equipment' that rendered them freaks, dwarfs and giants, even eyeless slaves bred for pale, blindness. Gorean breeding lines for exotic slaves seem as strange and twisted as what we have done to dogs and cats on Earth.

In a café in Tor I was transfixed by a dancing exotic they had, a girl in scraps of scarlet silk who moved like liquid, but who was striped, head to toe, a mix of creamy white and dark skin such as you could not tell which were the stripes and which were the skin. She was beautiful and fascinating.



Face Stripped: To be face stripped is to have ones veil torn aside to reveal her face.

Free women are covered up in most Gorean cultures and to have one's face revealed is a shocking invasion of privacy and often the first step to being enslaved.

Many Goreans fetishise the mouth or a glimpse of ankle - despite the presence of naked slaves - precisely because such glimpses are so rarely given by free women.

Falarian Wine: Falarian wine is an incredibly rare vintage of legendary quality. A single bottle could make a man rich enough to buy a city - if you could find someone to purchase it.

Fan Palm: The fan palm is a twenty foot high palm tree that spreads its leaves out like a fan, across the top. At the base of each leaf is a 'cup' that holds nearly a full litre of drinkable water.

Far Tharlarian: Also known as 'sea dragons', far tharlarian are rarely encountered as they dwell in the deeper seas that few - outside of Cos, Tyros and the Farther Islands, sail.

Enormous, with long, sinewy necks, they can threaten ships with their bulk, though their conventional prey is smaller than men or ships.

Farther Islands: The farther islands are semi-legendary on much of Gor. Small and sparsely populated they lie beyond Cos and Tyros but still close enough to civilized Gor to have a Gorean society.

The islands include Chios, Daphna and Thera. The islands are known to trade with pirates as well as with those of Cos and Tyros but are yet to be punished for it with any punitive raids or to be brought under the control of the larger island states.

With contact made with the Pani it seems likely

Observations on the Farther Islands:

Cos and Tyros have a culture and style that is Grecian to Ar's Rome, and the farther Islands are much like the old, separate, political islands of Greece before it was truly a nation.

I wonder at the cultures and the providence of the settlers on these islands and whether direct descendants of Spartans or Thebans live on these islands now.

that the farther islands will grow in wealth and influence as a closer stopping and resupply point between the two cultures.

Feast Slaves: Feast slaves are groups of entertainers, dancers, servers and pleasure slaves which are hired - either from specialist vendors or directly from slavers - to accommodate guests at a feast or celebration.

Owners of Feast Slaves can make a considerable amount of money but reputation is everything.

Field Diaries: The 'Field Diaries' are a important, studied by members of the warrior caste.



Carl Commenius of Argentum wrote them after his military campaigns, analyzing and discussing the tactics while he was in exile. It is considered a classic on the principles of warfare.

Fields of Hesius: The fields of Hesius were the site of a grand battle between the cities of Argentum and Corcyrus.

Fina: Fina is a small river town on the banks of the Vosk River and a member of the Vosk League.

Finger Cymbals: An instrument used by slave dancers to chime as they dance.

Fire Cubes: Fire cubes are wooden cubes, soaked in an accelerant, which are used to rapidly light and heat a fire.

Lower castes often eschew these for the more traditional methods such as fire makers, rubbing sticks, or flint and steel.

Fire Jars: Fire jars are filled with tharlarion oil (sometimes treated and mixed) and dropped from tarnback like bombs. They can also be fired from siege weapons, aimed over walls or against defenses so the flames can keep the area clear.

They can wreak havoc on camps, especially tents, igniting supplies and increasing hardship for the armies camped there.

Fire arrows are more rarely used from tarnback as crossbows take a while to reload. The exception to this is Tarl Cabot's innovation of using the Tuchuk bow and arrows from tarnback, which makes fire arrows a more viable proposition as they can be fired in greater numbers. Users of the peasant bow are also more likely to use such arrows and over great range.

Fire Maker: The Gorean fire maker is a wheel-struck lighter, a slightly larger, boxier device than an Earth cigarette lighter and used for many of the same purposes.

First Girl: In a household or chain with more than one slave it is usual to make one of them into the 'first girl'.

The first girl is given limited authority and favor over the other slaves on the chain or in the house and the position can be hotly contested between them. First girls may even use a switch to keep the other girls in line and may be more feared by some slaves than their master or mistress.

First Wagon: The First Wagon is the enormous, rolling home of the Ubar of the

Wagon People. The wagon is drawn by a hundred red furred bosk with polished and inlaid horns. The top of it towers a hundred feet into the sky with bosk hides stretching out in all directions like a sky of leather.

Observations on the Wagon People:

Even the palace of the Wagon People's 'Ubar San' stinks. Smoke, bosk dung, sweat, past meals. It's all layered thick in here and the effect is utterly jarring. It's like finding the crown jewels in a blocked toilet.

The movement of the wagon could almost be mistaken for the rock of a ship if you close your eyes and while the Wagon People seem able to cope, it took me some time to both gain and lose my 'wagon legs'.

Within it the Ubar sits, dressed in a gray robe to mark his status and surrounded by the wealth of the wagons.

Fish Canal: 'Fish Canal' is the unofficial name of one of Schendi's canals. More officially it is called 'Tangawizi' or 'Ginger Canal'.

Its commonly used name comes from the fact that it runs adjacent to a market that sells river fish and so always strongly smells of them, being used as a gutter or rubbish dump for fish guts, bones, fins and other leavings from the market.

Flahdah Trees: Small, no more than twenty feet in height, flahdah trees resemble flat umbrellas or parasols on sticks.

Their circular spray of narrow branches are covered in flat, lance-shaped leaves.

Flame Death: The Flame Death is the punishment of the Priest Kings and the one thing that convinces most Goreans that they are real. Those who break their technological edicts or betray them are consumed by blue fire and reduced to ashes.

The rays that enact the Flame Death are fired from a network of orbiting silver ships and targets monitored and chosen from operations rooms in the Nest.

Flame Lock: The flame death of the Priest Kings can be applied to objects and even preprogrammed to consume them under certain conditions. A letter or device, for example, might fall into the wrong hands only to be consumed in the fire and disintegrated.

Flaminius: Flaminius was the house physician of the House of Cernus.

Exiled from Ar for working on a cure for Dar-Kosis under Marlenus, he was sold out to the High Initiate and had to be outcast. In revenge he may have infected the High Initiate with the disease, but it can take some time to manifest.

He had some success developing urts and other species to have an immunity to the disease and his work for a human cure now continues – in exile and privately and secretly sponsored.

Fleer Tribe: The Fleer are a tribe of Red Savages who take the Fleer – and other birds – as their totemic animals. The Blue-Sky-Riders are one of their warrior societies.

Fleer: The Fleer is a nocturnal hunting bird with large eyes for night vision and a sharp, hooked bill. Fleer hunt urts swiftly and silently in the night.

There is also a prairie fleer, a large, yellow, long-billed and long winged bird also known as the 'maize bird', (the one that finds food the soonest). In the jungles there is the long-billed fleer, which flies above the canopy looking for prey in the tree tops.

Flower Trees: Flower trees have been bred and engineered over the centuries to produce long garlands of flowers for decoration and adornment. The garlands hang down like the strands of a willow tree.

Observations on the Flame Death:

We were diverted to try and find a cache of Earth weapons that had belonged to agents of the Kur while we were in Port Kar. It was not my business or my purpose but rather that of my escorts and one they took very seriously.

We never did find them due to the fact that the man we were pursuing was killed, out of our sight, by a flash of blue light.

When we rounded the corner he was still burning in a corona of blue flame but was dead and barely recognizable. The gun was reduced to slag. Somehow that made things much more real and I have found myself, since, looking to the skies and hoping the Priest Kings find my work acceptable.

Flute: The flute is a very important instrument in Gorean theatre and a favorite for wandering musicians. Flute players can become quite famous and known flautists are often listed quite highly on the posters for performances. The flute is used to accentuate speech during plays and to help establish moods.

Forest Port: Forest Port is a small river town on the Vosk, providing timber to other settlements on the river. It is a member of the Vosk League.

Fort Haskins: Fort Haskins is a small border town that lies on the Boswell Pass near the barrens.

The Haskins Company is a merchant group, originating in Thentis, which maintains a mercenary outpost at the same locations. Fort Haskins has twice been burned and looted, once by forces from Olni and once by the Dust Legs tribe.



Fossils: Gor has fossils as any other long-inhabited world might. Many of these are completely alien to the modern life on Gor, even more so than fossils on Earth are.

Gor has a strange history, no doubt due to the influence of the Priest Kings. Of particular interest to humanity is the presence of hominid remains other than modern humans. This pushes back the first instances of Priest King visitations to Earth at least to twenty-five thousand years and likely much longer.

There may still be non-human hominid species in The Nest or in remote regions of unexplored Gor, or they may be the origins of specialized slave races created by the Priest Kings.

Four Palms: Four Palms Oasis is a small outpost of the Kavar tribe, out in the dune country of the Tahari.

Frame of Humiliation: The Frame of Humiliation is an execution device used to rid oneself of the most terrible traitors and enemies.

The subject is tied to the frame, face down and spread eagled, spat on and then placed into the river or the sea to float away and drown or die of exposure.

It is considered a taboo to try and rescue a prisoner being bound in such a way.

Free Women: The Gorean free woman is exalted and respected, whether she is of low or high caste. Men show her deference and she often controls the budget of a home or business.

Her position of power, however, is one that is extremely fragile. Free women are subject to enslavement in raids and war, through bankruptcy and trickery or as payment for debts. They are companioned for political and business reasons – though they retain their power – and can be kidnapped or killed, if they are important enough, to punish, control or embarrass a city or company.

With a woman's beauty being a currency on Gor, most free women wear veils, hoods and all-concealing robes to hide their appearance from would be raiders, who are then more likely to pursue the obvious charms of slaves. Many even choose such slaves for their retinues and service in order to distract would be attackers.

Frevet: The Frevet is a tiny, mouse-like creature that survives by eating insects, lice and beetles. It's often a welcome sight where such are pests and they may groom larger animals in pursuit of lice, fleas and ticks.

Frevet infestations can be common in cheap housing in the larger cities, but their presence is not entirely unwelcome.

Frobicain: Frobicain is a drug used by slavers to place a capture – typically an Earth capture – into a long state of unconscious sleep, almost suspended animation.

Fruit Tindel: The fruit tindel is a jungle bird that feeds on hanging and dropped fruit.

Fukuro: A fukuro is a half stone bag of rice with a value of around 2 tarsk bits. Amongst peasants in the Pani islands these weights are used as money.

Funeral Rites: Funeral rites vary across Gor by culture and city but a commonality across civilized Gor is cremation – at least of those of high caste.

The ritual used by the city of Ko-Ro-Ba is fairly typical. A pyramid of wood is built atop a scented, oiled pyre. After the fire, decorated jars are filled with the ash and remains of the deceased and stored as a memorial. These cremations may take place on the high towers for a person of station, or beyond the walls for those of lower caste.

Observations on Free Women:

Never have I met a more spoiled, entitled, shrewish and spiteful person than practically every Gorean free woman.

From the lowliest peasant to the grandest Ubara, all of them treat slaves abominably, worse than their male peers do by an order of magnitude.

They swan about swaddled in their robes haughtily and imperiously treating everyone like crap. What beggars belief is that Gorean men go along with it and defer to women for the most part, at least so long as they are free.



Gag: Goreans use many kinds of gags in controlling and silencing their slaves and captives.

The professional gag is usually in the form of a stuffed leather ball, pushed into the mouth and tied securely behind the head.

A more advanced gag is the 'slave bit' which fits between the teeth like a bridle, keeping the slave silent, but with their mouth open. Some Master's prefer the look of it and the way it fastens around the head. The greater discomfort is also seen as an aid to discipline.

Galleys: Most ships on Gor are galleys, with only the great Ship of Tersites and the 'junk' style ships of the Pani really being any exception of significance.

Lateen rigged with sails and oars – organized in banks – the galleys ply trade up and down the Gorean coast and out to the islands. In Port Kar they are called the 'Tarns of the sea'.

Gorean sailors are very superstitious. A ship must have eyes painted upon it before it is truly 'alive' and ready to set sail. Offerings must also be made to the Thassa before every voyage to guarantee the safety of the crew.

Gambling: Given a few spare ehn many Goreans will resort to gambling to pass the time. In the cities there are often professional gambling houses with slaves trained to officiate the games and to encourage the customers to gamble more.

There are games similar to roulette, many different card games, games using ostraka (marked tiles) and simple games like dice, knuckle bones and 'stones' wherein one tries to guess how many stones the other person is holding. Even the simplest of games can be spiced up by the inclusion of betting. Another game, 'bone drop', involves the casting of bones and the one still pointing upwards is the winner – as is its owner.

In Torvaldsland games and gambling are integral to their grand meetings and they set all manner of strange challenges such as balancing on a greased wineskin, pushing beans along

the ground with their nose, wrestling boulders and others upon which money and goods can be wagered.

Game of Worlds: In the Third Knowledge the 'cold war' between the Priest Kings and the Kur is sometimes referred to as the 'Game of Worlds', referring to the two prizes in the solar system; Earth and Gor.

Gant: Gants are a small water fowl, common everywhere on Gor but especially in the Vosk delta.

Broad-billed, web-footed and horned they have broad, stubby wings. When domesticated they are extremely friendly and fearless as well as, usefully, having a homing instinct to return after they have fed. Rencers may keep flocks for eggs and meat, sending them out to feed themselves and having them return for the night.

Another breed, the arctic gant, nests in the cliffs of Hrimgar and migrates from north to the south over the year.



Its eggs are a delicacy, left in the snow to freeze and eaten like an apple.

The long-necked gant is a little more like a goose or swan, though still smaller, its bill is long and pointed for delving into mud.

Garbage Death: The Garbage Death is an execution unique to Port Kar and its filthy, urt-infested canals.

The hapless victim is stripped of all their possessions and clothes, tied hand and foot and thrown into the canals close to where urts nest.

They are usually swiftly devoured.

Gardens: Gardens amongst lower caste Goreans tend to be quite practical affairs for feeding bees, growing vegetables and providing fodder for the table or goods to sell.

In the cities there are few gardens, though there may be open spaces and public parks. Those few that there are, are likely to be walled pleasure gardens, housing exotic plants or used to seclude slaves or companions from the bustling city beyond the wall.

Amongst the Pani gardens are an art form, developed over many years and with a preference for blossoming fruit trees and the interplay of sand, stone and water. Generations of gardeners will maintain the gardens of the ruling class, often passing down secrets from father to son, making themselves indispensable.

Garlic: Garlic is grown wherever it can be, all across Gor. Typically the most is grown in the warmer climes, giving way to wilder, smaller, stronger strains further north. It is a staple food and used to provide flavor to a great many different meals.

Gauntlet Axe: The gauntlet axe is an armored gauntlet with an axe blade affixed to the end and replacing the hand.

It can be used to parry and chop, though it is shorter and slower than a dagger or sword and not as heavy or damaging as a proper axe.

More of a showy, gladiatorial weapon it is still popular with some who have fought on the sands before.

Gender: Goreans have views on sex and gender that are virtually the opposite of the dominant view found on Earth. Where Earth has embraced the idea of equality as equivalence, Goreans embrace the differences between the sexes.

Goreans would regard the idea that women are physically equal as a bad joke. They consider women to be naturally submissive and men to be naturally dominant - at least in the overwhelming majority. The people of Earth would consider this to be oppressive and sexist but those of Gor see it as an immutable reality.

They see each gender being valued and celebrated for what it can contribute and its own perceived strengths.

Women's intelligence and social acumen is valued and sought after, even in slaves, and women are commonly agents for Kur, Priest Kings, merchants' organizations and other kinds of espionage. Tatrices and Ubaras are not uncommon and wield great power while female free companions run households and hold the economic reins. Free women are exalted, valued, protected and treasured, while slaves are used to slake the carnal lusts of men which, again, are seen as perfectly natural and normal.

Intersex conditions and transsexuality is virtually unknown on Gor outside of particular cultures or fringe religious grounds such as the Waniyanpi of the barrens. It is likely that intersex conditions are seen as deformity and aborted or killed at birth while transsexuality is almost unheard of, outside some cultural accommodation and shaming amongst the Red Savages.

Homosexuality is also somewhat rarer than on Earth, though it is in no way hated or considered unnatural and there are male slaves bred and raised solely for that market.

The Gorean concept of natural roles is so strong that they consider the ideas of Earth to be a pathological, societal sickness and collective insanity.

Giani: Giani are tiny, house cat sized panthers, which are native to the jungles of the interior, and especially close to Schendi.

Giant Lung Fish: Big, muscular, lobe-finned fish, the giant lung-fish have muscular, pulsating gills and big mouths for gulping air. They climb onto the shore to sun themselves and can swim in areas too foul and low in oxygen for other fish.

Truly huge ones can reach ten feet in length and be dangerous predators to anything small enough for them to eat.

Giant Panga: The Kur use enormous, curved, heavy blades with heavier tips to slash through jungle foliage. A Kur can use these one handed but a man has to use two.

Giant Rock Spiders: Found deep in the interior, along the banks of the Ua, these rock spiders are the larger cousins of the smaller, more common breed.

As with that smaller member of the species they can dig a shallow trench and curl up their legs to appear to be a brown or grey rock.

Giant rock spiders are incredibly tough and can take grievous wounds without dying.

Giant Tarsk: The giant tarsk is related to the common tarsk but is comparatively gigantic, ten hands at the shoulder, and hunted with long lances from tarnback – when it is hunted at all.

Gints: Gints are small, semi-amphibious fish, which are not unlike mud-skipper.

They rest on roots and on the backs of tharlarian to avoid predators as well as to feed on their scraps and leavings.

Dozing tharlarian can have dozens of gint battling on their backs for a prime spot and to claim or retain that tharlarian as their own, personal territory.

Observations on Rock Spiders:

The interior is not especially safe to visit, at least for any protracted length of time, and there are many beasts you would not want to meet in the wild.

In Schendi we visited a wealthy merchant by the name of Okafu who had a sort of private zoo, designed to protect his vault. In one of his rooms he kept rock spiders and they really are indistinguishable from rocks until they move. What I initially took to be a genuine bolder unfolded and moved when a verr was sacrificed to feed the spiders.

Those large ones are utterly terrifying and may well cause a man to lose his faith in the solidity of inanimate rock.

Girl Catch: Girl catch is a game played on Gor in various guises.

In one version a slave is belled and the hunters are hooded, trying to catch her only by the sound of the bells.

Another version, played between cities, has a hundred men and a hundred women of rival cities enter an arena and seek to

capture the women or force the men outside the circle. This is sometimes used as a more peaceful stopgap to settle disputes without resorting to war.

Gitches: Gitches are nasty, biting insects, some of them as large as a roach. They can get into homes and buildings and cause considerable irritation for the people who live there, especially in insulae.

Frevets are sometimes brought in (or move in under their own auspices) to deal with an infestation.

Gladiatorial Games: Almost all Gorean cities play host to games of gladiatorial combat between men, between beasts and placing man against beast.

There are professional gladiators, slave gladiators, debtor gladiators, prisoners and others - such as bred, gladiatorial slaves - who are all put onto the sands to fight.

The games offer opportunities for wealth and freedom – for those who seek those things – and are sponsored by rich individuals, the state and the caste of initiates to placate and win over a blood-hungry populace.

Glaive: Glaive is the mainland name given to the staff-spear commonly used by the Pani ashigaru. It has a broad blade at its tip and is used to thrust, cut and block.

Glana/Metaglana: Goreans have a markedly different attitude towards female virginity than the people of Earth.

They have many different terms for it, Glana to metaglana, profalarina to falarina etc,

Amongst Goreans the 'loss' of virginity is seen as a gain of sexuality and adulthood.

While 'white silk' (virgin) girls have value as men like to be a slave's first, 'red silk' slaves will often still command the higher prices and be much valued due to their responsiveness, experience and skill in the furs.

Glave: A light, bladed pole arm – not to be confused with a glaive – used to cut reeds and sedge and clear the way for barges or rences' rafts to slip through the marshes.

Glyco: Glyco is a merchant, operating out of Port Cos on the Vosk River.

Observations on Virginity:

The view of virginity as something precious, found on Earth, is probably more than a little outdated now, or quaint. Still in hearing Goreans – men and women alike – talking about it there was much more equanimity. Despite the threat of a free woman losing her reputation for acting like a 'slut', losing her virginity, perhaps to a silk slave, was viewed with much the same back-slapping camaraderie as it was amongst the men.

His regard and standing gave him the authority necessary to bring the river towns together to tackle the river pirate bands and to birth the beginnings of the Vosk League.



Gnieus Lelius: Gnieus was First Minister in Ar and stepped in as administrator in Marlenus' absence during his punitive raid on Treve.

When Marlenus went missing Gnieus remained in charge against the hope of the Ubar's return.

He was a popular administrator, a patron of the arts, solicitous and considerate of the needs of Ar's people and much less warlike than the Ubar. He forgave the debt of some castes, distributed bread and hosted games for the poor. He even instituted the holiday of the Day of Generosity and Petitions.

None of this was enough to prevent Cos turning the people of Ar against him, painting him as a tyrant and a scapegoat and dragging him in chains through the streets of Ar.

Goats: The goats on Gor are the same animal that is found on Earth and were transferred to Gor at some point in the past.

Goats are the herd animal of choice of poorer communities and can be raised on all sorts of poor land unsuitable for other animals.

Golden Beetle: The golden beetle is a creature incorporated into the Nest by the Priest Kings.

An ancestral, natural predator of the Priest Kings it lives in filthy tunnels, covered in bones and waste. It sucks marrow from bones, or fluid from the carapace of Priest Kings, and preys upon slaves for convenience.

Every now and again it will claim the life of a Priest King, something that they seem to welcome.

Its bite is paralytic and it gives off a hypnotic, soporific scent that is only dizzying to humans but utterly incapacitating, narcotic and pleasurable to Priest Kings.

It lays eggs in paralyzed bodies which later emerge from the flesh and begin to grow.

The beetle itself is squat, heavy, the size of a rhino with two flaming eyes, massive pincer jaws and short, fluffed antennae like a moth. Its head is surrounded by a mane of fine golden hairs that are the source of its scent.

The Priest Kings see the predation of the golden beetle as natural and even desirable, a surrender to the natural order that they have passed on to Gorean society as a whole.

Golden cup: The Golden Cup is a reasonably common Gorean flower that gets its name from its bright yellow color and its close-knit petals that form a cupped shape.

Gor: Gor, the Counter-Earth or 'antichthon' orbits exactly opposite the Earth, hidden by the sun and the technological wizardry of the Priest Kings.

The planet is slightly smaller than Earth and slightly closer to the sun with slightly less gravity and mass.

It is relatively unspoiled, being without large scale industry and as such has very clean air with a higher amount of oxygen in it than Earth does – something that, along with the lower gravity, allows for its larger fauna.

Gor means 'home stone' in older forms of Gorean and thus echoes the loyalty that Goreans show to the home-stones of their cities.

The planet has three small moons, one called the Prison Moon, a name that turns out to be true, given that the moon is genuinely a prison used by the Priest Kings. The other two moons are not officially named.

The planet has traveled to Sol from another star system in the deep past and the Priest Kings seem to use their world as a sort of 'zoo' and living experiment. The planet is full of life from Earth's past and present and other creatures that may or may not be native to this solar system.

Gorean Kur: Over the years Kur, stranded on Gor or exiled by their fellows, have settled there. How they replenish their numbers is unknown (perhaps from female throwbacks or nurturants supplied by the Kur of the Steel Worlds) as are the locations of their settlements – which must exist.

They mostly encounter men in the far north though individual Gorean Kur come south on the business of their people or as sick, weak outcasts from the larger Kur tribes.

Unusually the Priest Kings leave them alone, so long as they abide by the same laws as men.

Gorean Kur are even closer to their animal nature than the ones from the Steel Worlds. They hunt humans for meat, raid their farms and revel even more in their predatory nature.

Steel World Kurii sometimes strive to enlist and use the Gorean Kur in their plans but since the attack on Torvaldsland these efforts have failed.

Gorean Names: Many Gorean names are familiar to those of Earth, though they will often seem historical. Names often seem to derive from ancient or medieval Earth societies, perhaps deriving from when those populations were brought to Gor.

Germanic, Norse, Greek, English and Roman naming conventions are most common in civilized Gor.

Grain Cylinders: Grain cylinders are tall towers, like the high cylinders. Unlike the cylinders they are filled with grain and stores for sieges, separated by sections so that they cannot all be burned or spoiled at once.

Grapnels: Gorean grappling lines, whether shot from ballistae or thrown or fired from a crossbow, have a length of chain behind the hook to prevent the line being cut. On the great ballista lines this chain can be as long as ten feet before it reverts to rope.

Graves: Goreans tend to prefer cremation and those of high caste may have their ashes and remains interred in jars. For many though, burial is the only available option.

Grave sites are not marked, or visited, save in the most exceptional circumstances. People are remembered by their deeds, memorials and statues rather than their tombs.

Gravitational Disruption: Gravitational

disruption is the greatest power the Priest Kings can wield.

It provides them with endless power and lets them move their world when they need to.

Abused it can disintegrate objects to dust, cause earthquakes and create differences in low and high gravity sufficient to tear a world apart.

Great Farms: Many farms are owned, independently, by peasants in villages that lie within the claimed territory of a city. However, this has been changing with merchants setting up 'great farms'.



These great farms are enormous agricultural holdings where the land does not belong to the peasants who work it, but to the merchants, who pay the peasants to work it. Inducements, games and distractions are provided, intended to prevent the peasants taking offense and rising up against the merchants whose interest is only in profit.

Great Roads: Gor is criss-crossed with many roads but the grandest cities spend a great deal of time and effort constructing huge, military roads. These connect their territories, provide access to the sea or rivers and encourage trade.

These roads are sometimes called 'walls in the earth' and they are constructed with centuries and millennia in mind.

Great Spined

Anteater: The great, spined anteater is a creature that inhabits the jungles of the interior.

Thick furred and covered in quills, with leathery skin to protect against insect bites. It tears open stumps and insect nests with its claws and licks up its prey with a four foot long, sticky tongue.

Grendel: 'Grendel', a name given to him by Tarl Cabot, is an experiment of the Kur to try and unite human and Kur blood and genes in a single body.

Forested and defeated so many times by humans that they had previously considered weak, they thought to create a creature that could more easily understand humans and negotiate with them.

Instead they created a monster.

Grendel has hands and eyes like a man and is better able to form human speech than a regular Kur.

Despite his strength and power – even greater than a normal Kur, Grendel is considered a grotesque failure. His mother killed herself when she saw her child and his existence may have helped tip his father – Agamemnon – over into megalomaniacal madness.

Grendel is in love with, and obsessed with, Lady Bina – a former Kur grooming slave who is now a free woman on Gor. He protects her with an unconditional love and absolute obedience, aiding her in her ambition is to rule all of Gor. With his help it may just be possible.

Since he acquired his female counterpart - Eve - the hold Bina has over him may weaken, but this remains to be seen.

Observations on Roads:

Returning to Earth after seeing how the Goreans build with eternity in mind has left me rather irritated with the state of things on our own world.

Imagine if every permanent building was constructed with the same thought we put into monuments, palaces and seats of government.

That is Gor, there is very little in the way of short term thinking there and roads are not left to disintegrate into potholes or houses left to fall to ruin.

Grub Borer: A small, intelligent, curious bird the grub borer cannot fly but is nimble and quick. It hops from log to log and branch to branch as it darts around the jungle floor seeking rotten and damp wood to peck at.

Grunt: One of the few traders who deals successfully with the

Red Savages of the Barrens, Grunt's secret is that he survived being scalped by raiders and, as such, is considered a 'ghost' from the medicine world.

This garners him respect and superstitious awe from the tribes, which allows him to move more freely. This gives him an advantage over others who trade there, and take their life into their hands when they do.

Guernon Monkeys: A small monkey that inhabits the interior, along the Ua River. Guernon monkeys dwell in the lower canopy in large troupes and can be recognized by their chattering voices.

Guide Slaves: The blind or infirm use slaves in special harnesses to guide them.

These are typically cheap slaves, unsuited or too unsightly for other work, though a comely guide slave can be a good source of income for a beggar.

The harnesses are well made and a skilled user can tell from the subtle pulls of the straps a slave's moods, apprehensions and more.

Gunni: Training devices used to train slave fighters and boxers, these are curved, padded weights.

The fighter practices by punching at heavy wooden beams. Skilled fighters can smash through these beams with a few ehn of practice.

Gur Carriers: Gur carriers are a subspecies of human, bred by the Priest Kings to serve The Nest.

The long, gangly arms and legs, the round bodies and the large eyes make them look barely human. Their feet, which are fleshy cushions, capable of sticking to walls and ceilings, only compound their unsettlingly alien nature.

According to their own stories and records they have existed in the nest for fifteen-thousand years, a clue to just how long the Priest Kings have interfered in the affairs of human kind.

Gur carriers need little sustenance to live and can see in the dimmest of light.

Gur: Gur is a kind of natural honey, produced by Priest Kings when they are gorged with food harvested from giant arthropods that they raise as 'cattle'. This is done, deliberately, in preparation for hard times ahead or for upcoming festivals.

Gur is like milk and honey, white, dilute and sweet. By tradition gur is fed to the nest mother by the eldest of her drones.

Gynaecea: Gynaecea are isolated, walled, secluded slave centers in which slaves are raised as virgins with no knowledge of men (or women).

This is a cruel practice but such slaves are sold at vastly inflated prices to collectors and for celebrations of surpassing importance.



Ha-Keel: Ha-Keel was once a man of Ar, but lost his position and life in that city to some scandal or disaster, which he keeps quiet from all save his most trusted men.

A mercenary tarnsman, he resides within Port Kar as well as hiring out his services, serves to defend the city. Scarred and bitter, he is – nonetheless – an effective commander and tarnsman.

Haik: On Gor the Haik is a total body covering for a woman, a swathe of heavy cloth to completely engulf the body. Even the eyes are covered with a strip of lace.

It is an extreme version of the robes of concealment.

Hair Gag: Most slaves are kept with long hair and will plead and beg to keep their hair long as it is a source of pride and beauty.

This long hair is used for many purposes; styling, a leash, something to be threatened for punishment, cut to use as rope, even wadded up and pushed into a girl's as a gag.

Hair: Human hair is a common trade item on Gor and it is used to make ropes, cushions and all manner of other items.

A free woman's hair is worth more, slave's hair is worth less – but much more abundant. In times of war, free women may donate their hair as a sign of loyalty and to aid the war effort.

Hairstyles: Free women might have all manner of elaborate hairstyles, though in most cities these will never be seen as they will be hidden under veils and robes.

Slave hair is normally kept simply, long and loose, though sometimes it is kept in a leash (a ponytail or braid) or styled for a particular purpose such as a dance or feast.

Men's hair is normally short, though some allow it to grow out to shaggy length and even braid it – this being more common in the north.

Half-Ear: A great war general of the Kurii, Half-Ear is also known as 'Zarendargar', a very rough approximation of his name in a form that can be pronounced by humans.

Eight feet tall and nine-hundred pounds, Half-Ear eschews modern weaponry, with a preference for axe and claw that made him an effective agent on Gor.

Observations on Hair:

My longer hair made many mistake me for someone from Torvaldsland or other settlements in the north.

I didn't want to cut it, even when traveling in the Tabari or the interior which was a cause for some consternation and mirth-making by the people we encountered.

In the end I had it braided every morning by a slave to avoid some of their humorous insults and harassments.

With the braids in place I was sometimes mistaken for an Alar, which had its own hazards and benefits.

Thwarted by Tarl, he lost his position and was hunted but – with aid from the man who ruined him – was able to destroy his assassins and ascend to the heights of command again.

A brilliant general and a capable warrior, Half-Ear's honor is not dissimilar to the

codes of the caste of warriors.

Halls: The halls are the great homes of the north, used by men of Torvaldsland and their near neighbors.

Lofty-ceilinged, high beamed, made of sturdy logs and boards, the halls are places of communal living and celebration; though a village might also include separate homes and businesses as well. Shared accommodation uses less wood, can be heated as a central point and allows men to watch over each other in case of attack and to rally as a fighting force very rapidly.

A typical hall contains benches, high seated pillars, carvings, hangings and long fires. A typical long-house is a hundred and twenty feet in length, its walls turfed and reinforced with stone up to eight feet thick. Grand halls are even larger.

They are usually built along north/south lines with narrow holes in the roof as chimneys and the sides divided up into sleeping areas for the men.

Hammerfest: Hammerfest is one of the river town settlements on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Hand Sign: Hand sign is the trading language used between the Red Savage tribes and the barrens traders, as well as tribes that do not necessarily share an intelligible language.

There are several versions, but most are fairly representative – at least in the abstract – using the hands to indicate numbers and items.

Harfax: A Gorean city near to Besnit, Harfax is allied with that city. That alliance was secured – after years of feuding and a history of battle – by the voluntary enslavement of a hundred women of Harfax to Besnit.

Harfax is home to powerful merchant groups and is also home to a large slaver's camp. It is a beautiful city with a tendency to 'English' sounding names such as William or Desmond.

Harrison Smith: Harrison Smith is a city lawyer who tends to the Tarl Cabot manuscripts when they are shipped to Earth.

Harrison met Tarl at college, where Harrison worked as a PE teacher to save money for law school.



When Tarl returned to Earth they met and renewed their friendship. Since then, Harrison has acted as his agent, releasing the manuscripts one by one as fiction, via an intermediary.

Haruki: A gardener in the palace of the shogun in the Pani lands, Haruki was the father of one of Yamada's wives and grandfather to his missing son.

Haruki acted as a spy for Temmu's clan within the palace, with access to secret passages and knowledge available to a man who was 'beneath notice'.

Haruspexes: Haruspexes are omen readers, the equivalent to the caste of initiates for the wagon peoples.

They see signs in bosk blood and verr livers and offer reassurances and warnings for those who would listen. Similar fortune-telling roles are found throughout Gor, even in the civilized cities.

Hassan: Hassan's real name is Haroun and he is the high pasha of the Kavars.

Living as a bandit with a small, but loyal (and expert) band, he conceals his identity to gather intelligence and to live with the freedom that a nobleman and leader cannot. When needed – as in the fight against the agents of the Kur – he reveals himself and leads from the front, commanding great loyalty through his heroism and fearlessness.

Hats: Goreans wear hats for primarily ceremonial and decorative reasons.

Warriors will wear helmets, workers will tie cloths around their heads.

To protect against the weather, most prefer cloaks and hoods but one can also find broad-brimmed traveling hats to protect against the sun and rain, similar to the Greek petasos.

Heart Eating: A bloody tradition amongst warriors and hunters is to devour and eat the heart of a slain predator to take on their power and to provide luck. Rumors persist that heart-eating is also performed on human victims, especially by the less civilized peoples of Gor.

Despite warriors being a high caste superstition and ritual around them helps to give them morale and confidence, as well as aiding their warrior mystique.

Heat Knife: A heat knife is a technological weapon of the Kur.

Kept in a scabbard it can be switched on when drawn, instantly turning white hot yet retaining its razor edge.

The heat helps it cut through many materials and instantly cauterizes many wounds. Even without charge it can be used as a standard Kur dagger.

Observations on Fortune Telling:

It is hard to stand too much in judgment over the Goreans for the faith they often put in signs, portents and fortune telling.

Yes, it is violent and bloody and innocent animals are unnecessarily killed quite often, but most Goreans still live in a world where they have no understanding of science. Even on our world people still read their horoscopes, see tarot readers and talk to priests and psychics. We're not that much better.

Helmets: Gorean helmets are usually made in the Greek style, which may or may not include a crest.

Assassins wear black helms to keep them hidden in the dark.

In the north helmets are more conical with a nose guard that can be lifted or dropped. The neck and sides are protected with a curtain of chain mail and this style of helmet is also found in the south and the Tahari.

Helmutspport: Helmutspport is a coastal settlement in the north.

Hemp: Hemp of various kinds is grown across Gor for use in making cheaper rope, paper and cloth.

Varieties of marijuana are also grown for medicine and recreational uses.

Henrius Sevarius: Originally one of the would-be Ubars of Port Kar, this blond haired boy was usurped by his regent and supposed to be drowned in the canals.

He was rescued and enslaved by 'Tarl and given the name 'Fish'. He earned his freedom and his manhood and now runs his own household alongside his slave girl, Vina.

Vina was once the ward of Chenbar of 'Tyros and was intended to be the companion of Lurius of Jad until she was captured in a pirate raid. Her loss has not improved relations between Port Kar and the island states.

Heralds and Criers: With illiteracy so common amongst Goreans, the roles of heralds and criers are important as a means of spreading news/

Their activity supplements the boards that display announcements for the literate. At these boards those who can read will often read out announcements to those who cannot.

Herd of Tancred: The Herd of Tancred is one of the great herds of the north, a massive group of two to three hundred thousand animals that provide food – and so much more – for the people of the north and the tundra.

Herlit: Also known as the sun-striker the herlit is a great, carnivorous eagle with a six foot wingspan. It has golden, black-tipped feathers and prefers to attack by diving out of the sun.

Hesius: A legendary hero from Gorean prehistory, Hesius supposedly performed many labors on behalf of the Priest Kings and – in return – was given a home stone. This stone's meaning as a symbol allowed Hesius to unite his people and to found Ar.

Hesius' stories combine and mirror many of the stories ascribed to Hercules and other heroes from Greek mythology.

High Watch: The high watch is the watch held at the very top of a ship's tallest mast.

The duty is a difficult one, able to make even the most hardened of mariners sick, but it is also quite prestigious to be chosen.

A sure footing, a strong stomach and skill with knots is necessary to do the job safely and well.

Hinrabian Kilns: Owned, like so much else, by the Hinrabians, one of the most powerful families in Ar. The Hinrabian kilns produce vast quantities of high quality brick for Ar's buildings and roads, the repair and upkeep of which maintain a steady demand.

Observations on Herds:

The great herds are unbelievable to see. You hear stories of the great buffalo herds in the prairies of North America but it's impossible to visualize in the modern era.

Any amount of words cannot really describe it, but it is like a great thundering river, an avalanche of flesh. Little wonder that so many of the tribal peoples of Gor treat them like a force of nature or something spiritual.

Hith: The Hith is an enormous Gorean python, typically banded. There are also much rarer 'golden' hith with a yellowish cast to their scales.

Ho-Hak: The 'Marsh Ubar' is head of the alliance of rencer villages in the Vosk delta, organizing them to their defense and to use 'dishonorable' tactics in order to make the marshes a safe, secure and dangerous place for interlopers.

An exotic slave, bred for huge ears he has earned his place in the rencer community since his escape and has urged the adoption of the peasant bow, which the rencers now use to terrible effect on anyone who threatens them.

Ho: 'Ho' is a prefix meaning 'son of' in Gorean.

Hochburg: A mountain fortress city in the Southern Voltai Mountains.

Home Stone: All settlements have a home stone, the tradition deriving from a flat stone around which houses and huts were built.

In Ar's legends, however, the first home stone was given to Hesius by the Priest Kings to unite his people.

To a Gorean it is symbolic and stirs up the same sort of feelings that a flag or a constitution do.

It is tradition to stand when speaking of the home stone and to hold it in total respect.

Some despots and ambitious city states dream of a supreme home stone and will transport the home stones of subjugated cities to their own as a symbol of their conquest.

Desecrating a home stone is the most terrible crime, punishable by torture and death though, at the same time, stealing a home stone is the ultimate expression of a warrior's skill.

Men show incredible loyalty and tenacity when it comes to the

home stone even of a small village. 'Beware, I carry a home stone' is a real and powerful warning to those who would waylay a man, marking that he

will fight to the death and - commonly - with superhuman endurance.



Observations on Hith:

Judging from the groove cut into the soil by its passage and what I was told, this sounds like a beast to rival the titanoboa of Earth's far history. I'm rather glad I didn't get a closer look at the beast, though I did see a single skin made into a fairly roomy tent.

The power reactor used by the Priest Kings is called 'The Home Stone of All Gor', a dome of blue, glowing crystal that, in Gorean legends, is reduced to a glowing blue stone.

Hook Bracelets: Hook bracelets are leather armlets, fastened to a slave's arms and equipped with many snaps, hooks and rings so that they can be clipped together – or to chains – in a number of different ways.

Hook Knife: A small, thick bladed, curved, razor sharp blade the hook knife is most common in Ar but can be found almost anywhere. It is primarily used by peasants and in slave fights.

In sport the blade remains sheathed and the edges of the sheath colored with blue dye to indicate hits.

Unsheathed the blade can rip and tear causing the most grievous wounds and cuts.

Hook-Billed Gort:

A jungle bird and ambush predator, the hook-billed gort predated on urts in the jungle floor of the interior and rests, safely in the canopy at night.

Horagai: The horagai is a conch trumpet, used by the Pani as a war signal.

Horn Bow: A small, but powerful bow of the wagon people, the horn bow is made of lacquered layers and is small enough to be used from the back of a tharlaron, kaiila, or even a tarn - a recent innovation.

Horned Gim: Purplish in hue, the horned gim is a small, owl-like bird with tufts of feathers that resemble horns above its eyes. It is notable both for its color, and for its deep, throaty warbling.

Hort: The hort is a Gorean unit of measurement, equal to around 1.25 inches.

Hospitality: Goreans take hospitality very seriously indeed across many of their cultures.

A guest in your house is normally safe until or unless they transgress law or honor. Food and lodging is a given and householders are expected to provide slaves for the needs of those guests.

Exploiting hospitality is frowned upon however, and the requirements of etiquette and tradition can only last for so long.

House of Cernus: The House of Cernus was, until its fall, a very successful slave house that tried to monopolize the slave business in Ar.

Observations on Home Stomes:

I have never been much of a nationalist. Europeans tend to be more suspicious of flag-waving than our cousins in America. It is hard for me to even attempt to understand the kind of patriotism, nationalism and fervor for a symbol like a home stone that Goreans have.

The sheer meaning that the home stone has for men in civilized Gor meets the worst excesses of nationalist fervor and can be used to make the gravest insults to men and the city they call home.

This monopoly was built on the back of its not-inconsiderable funds, and access to a huge number of barbarian slaves brought to them by alliance with the Kur.

The House of Cernus was thirty generations old and had bred slaves for twenty-five generations. Its

breeding lines were known across all Gor and its wealth paid for grand baths, large laundries, in-house physicians, libraries, smiths, bakers, cosmeticians, clothiers and even its own tarncotes.

The House of Cernus was a fortress and almost a city within a city with hundreds of staff and up to six thousand slaves in its rooms day by day.

Eventually the conspiracy was exposed and the house broken up, but its former staff and much of its money may still be at work in the service of Kur.

Hrimgar Mountains: The Hrimgar Mountains are a range of mountains in the north, tall and steep and cut by a handful of passes. One of these passes is Tancred's pass, through which the great Herd of Tancred passes.

Hulneth: Hulneth is a northern exchange island, administered by the merchant cast.

A free port, it facilitates trade between civilized Gor and the north.

Hunjer Long Whale: The Hunjer Long Whale is a black, toothed whale that tracks and hunts its food – most especially cuttlefish.

Disease calculus, scraped from its intestines, is much valued as a perfume ingredient.

Hunjer: Hunjer is another independent exchange island, administered by the merchant caste.

Its primary business is whaling and it trades with Torvaldsland and the frozen north.

Hunting Cylinder: A subsidiary cylinder to the main steel world of Agamemnon but also a general 'type' of cylinder, the hunting cylinder is filled with thick forest, jungle, or other difficult terrain.

Dangerous animals and specially bred prey-slaves that are capable of killing a Kur are seeded throughout the hunting cylinders in a self-sustaining biosphere.

Hunting gear: Gorean hunting gear, used in civilized Gor, is camouflaged.

Mottled green with irregular black stripes it can hide a hunter in forest or grassland, making them less likely to be seen.

Hunting Tharlarion: Hunting Tharlarion are lighter, smaller, two-legged tharlarion related to racing and war tharlarion and with softer skin.

Hunting tharlarion are suitable for free women to ride, and sport hunting – with guards – is popular with some.



Hup the Fool: A hunched, deformed dwarf with one eye far bigger than the other, broken hands and a twisted, misshapen body Hup is technically of the caste of potters but in practice is a beggar.

He is much more intelligent than he seems, gathering information wherever he goes, thanks to the contempt in which he's held. Behind it all he is one of the greatest agents of Priest Kings in Ar and a great player of Kaissa.

Hurt: The Hurt is a small, two-legged, bounding creature not unlike a wallaby. It is covered with thick, black woolly fur that can be sheared four times a year and used to make warm and sturdy clothing.

They are most common in the northern cities where the climate requires warmer and more hard-wearing clothing.

Hurtha: A somewhat famous warrior and poet of the Alar people, Hurtha left the wagons – as some do – to seek his fortune.

Good humored, arrogant and prideful of his Alar blood he has carved something of a career as an adventurer and creative thief and mugger, if not so much as a poet.

Huruma's Canal: The great canal of Bila Huruma, intended to link and open the great lakes of the interior to trade and agriculture, is two hundred yards wide and six feet deep. Without the massive drain of slaves to complete it, it is taking much longer to dig and continues to be dogged by the disruptions of jungle tribes.

Observations on Tharlaron:

Hunting, racing and war tharlaron are all of a related breed of loping tharlaron.

As a 'weak man of Earth' I was first introduced to the hunting tharlaron as a smaller, lighter, more manageable beast. The jerking, leaping gait is extremely disconcerting and hard to get used to – the pneumatic saddle is definitely needed.

I was never good at riding the relatively tame beasts of Earth, and tharlaron were no easier. I traveled – mostly – by wagon or carried in tarn baskets in my tour of Gor.



I wish you well/be well: This is a parting phrase, commonly used across Gor as a parting pleasantry.

Ianda: Ianda is a free port, a merchant island to the north of Anango.

Brightly colored beads and tribal clothes are found in abundance there as exotic goods to be traded further north.

Ice Pantry: An ice pantry is a box, cellar or small room, usually lined with metal and insulation, which contains blocks of ice covered or mixed with sawdust. It is used to refrigerate or even freeze meat.

A similar structure – the ice shed – is used in the north over the short summers, packed with snow that has been gathered during the winter.

Immunity of the Herald:

It is a convention, usually upheld, that a man traveling as a herald – whether in war or peace – is honor bound to be protected until they deliver their message and usually in delivering a reply. A herald may be identified by their sash.

Impalement: The most common form of execution in civilized Gor, impalement is used to kill people for a variety of crimes.

A spear or spike of different degrees of sharpness may be used and weights may or may not be tied to the victims feet to speed up or slow down the process. The writhing bodies serve as a warning to others in a similar way to leaving bodies on the gibbet or in cages did up until the 18th Century.

After the revolt in Ar a large part of the Viktel Aria was 'decorated' with impaled traitors, Cosians and mercenaries. These bodies - now much reduced to skeletons - remain as a warning.

Implants: The Priest Kings monitor Gor by a variety of means including ships in orbit, the Prison Moon, hidden cameras, reports and agents but also through certain implanted individuals.

A golden web is wired into some agents' brains to allow the Priest Kings to sense through them, to communicate with them and even to direct their actions – though this can be defied, leading to pain and eventual destruction. The web can also be used to trigger the flame death,

either upon the bearer or upon something or someone that they can see.

Incubation Shed:

Incubation sheds are used to hatch and raise young tharlarian.

Eggs are incubated in sand in the insulated barns and heated via a fire ditch that runs the length of them.

Young tharlarian are acclimated to humans while they are small and more manageable, before being moved outside into fenced areas.

Inn of Ragnar: The Inn of Ragnar is a semi-abandoned building, in the defensive shape of most Gorean inns. It stands not too distant from the site of the Sardar fairs. When more Torvaldslanders than usual attend the fairs the Inn is used to house the excess.

It is generally in a state of ill repair but makes a good meeting place between the fairs for those interested in clandestine meetings or a roof over their head for a night or two.

Observations on Execution:

I am deeply, personally, opposed to the death penalty.

The Goreans would rather make use of someone really, so slavery is a more common punishment but they seem far too ready and willing to dismember or kill people.

Their methods for doing so are often grotesque and sickening. It's an unpleasant and stark reminder that this is a very different world when you see a twitching body transfixied by a spear or spike.

Each fair that it is occupied those who stay there make some basic repairs, making it a little better than sheltering in a simply abandoned building.

Inns: Inns are less common than paga taverns but generally offer more services such as baths, a decent bed for the night and a wider variety of food.

Inns notoriously cut their paga by a fifth with water, something that paga taverns do not do.

Inns cater more to merchants and other traveling visitors than they do the regular folk of a city or town and often serve as keeps to garrison mercenaries and guards to protect more remote areas. They may be protected by earthen banks and even moats and walls

Insulae: Insulae provide cheap lodging in the less salubrious parts of a city. Some poor families live in them permanently, even though they are cramped, low-ceilinged, rife with vermin and prone to fire.

They are generally built around a central stairwell, at the bottom of which is a big pot for catching night soil. Lazy people will empty their chamber pots from high above; making the stairwell a dangerous and filthy place from splashes and misses.

Interior: The Gorean interior is a lush area of Savannah and jungle. While the forest is fecund, the soil is generally poor, making farming on any scale a challenge and meaning that villages have to move around to avoid exhausting the soil.

The depths of the lush jungle may hide whole lost cities or civilizations, it is a place of mystery.

The interior is constantly divided by tribal warring, especially before the planting season when they travel and seek out new places to set up their temporary farms.

In the jungle it rains twice a day, late in the afternoon and late in the evening, virtually every day.

Strange dialects and languages are numerous and there are tribes of talunas, pygmies, cannibals and others lurking everywhere.

In the interior slaves are denoted by white shell necklaces and anklets rather than a traditional collar, they are mostly taken from other tribes and kept under terrible discipline by the men and women of their 'new' village.

Invisibility Rings: Created by the legendary scientist Prasdak of the Cliff of Karrash these powerful artifacts were five in number. Two were destroyed in internecine fighting amongst the Kur, one was lost on Earth, which left two remaining. One of these emerged in the Tahari but the last one's location is unknown - though fakes have been used as weapons and traps.

Iron Belt: The iron belt is a chastity device for slaves, locking around their waist and between their legs to prevent them being used or pleasuring themselves.

It is mostly used as a punishment or to build a slave's 'heat' through frustration as Gorean masters are rarely jealous if their slaves are used by another.

Iron Dragon: The Pani have a legend about an iron dragon with the power to destroy their islands.

This legendary iron dragon loaned its name to a machine piloted by the Kur that was used to try and tip the balance of the civil war in the Pani islands.

This Kur ship was a small drone, designed to be beneath the notice of the Priest Kings for as long as possible. It was strong enough to resist arrows and spears and fired a kind of heat-ray.

It was destroyed by the Priest Kings when it was flown out over the Thassa, away from the islands.

Iron Pens: Slaves may be held or 'stored' in many different ways but the iron pens are usually those found underground.

Iron pens resemble a more traditional 'dungeon' and are used for purposes of torture and discipline, as well as storing those slaves under risk of rescue or theft.

Iron Tower: The Iron Tower was a primitive, derelict ship more like a rocket than a disc. It seems to have been a lone survivor from a previous attempt by the Kur to attack Gor.

It contained a doomsday weapon, a kind of enhanced nuclear warhead, that could have cracked the planet open. There were divisions and intrigues amongst the Kur over whether to use it and it was, in the end, wrecked and destroyed.

Iskander: Iskander is a small river town on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Ivar Forkbeard: A notorious and famous pirate from Torvaldsland, Ivar spends much of his time raiding the northern settlements of civilized Gor.

A skilled Kaissa player he plays the Torvaldsland variants with wit and cunning similar to how he conducts the rest of his life, with many feints and distractions. His ship, the Hilda, is fast and tough and almost as famous as he is.

He freed Chenbar of Tyros from imprisonment in Port Kar with great daring and united Torvaldsland against the Kur.

A fearless, good humored, hard drinking womanizer and madman in the eyes of many he is a model for many Goreans and the prototypical Torvaldslander of legend.

Ivory-Billed woodpecker: A bird of the interior the black-beaked, ivory billed woodpecker is a fairly common sight, flitting from tree to tree to hammer at the bark with its distinctive tapping.





Jard: The jard is a small, flying scavenger about the size of a starling but with a tough, pointed beak for tearing at carcasses.

Jards travel in vast flocks that can strip a corpse to the bone in minutes, swarming like flies over the bodies.

They are most common around Lydius but can be found almost anywhere.

Battles attract them swiftly and they circle and flock patiently, waiting their opportunity to feast.

Jarl Svein Blue Tooth: The High Jarl of Torvaldsland and the most powerful man in the north, the Blue Tooth commanded a thousand men in his hall and held dominion over ten thousand farms. Ten ships were in his fleet and he could summon a hundred more for battle from farms and settlements that owed him fealty.

Jasmine: A small river town on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League. Jasmine likely takes its name from the flowers and plants grown around it and shipped on the river.

Jit Monkeys: Jit monkeys are nocturnal, tree-dwelling monkeys that inhabit the rainforests around Schendi.

Jorts Ferry: A river town on the Vosk and part of the Vosk League.

Jungle Gant: Related to the marsh gant, this river bird is found in the waterways and lakes of the interior and like many jungle birds tends to bright, colorful plumage and comes in many varieties.

Jungle Larls: An apex predator of the jungles jungle larls are a little smaller than others of their species but no less dangerous or capable.

Dappled or striped fur hides them in the shadows of the jungle and they ambush their prey from close range.

Jungle Panthers: Jungle panthers, while smaller than larls, are still dangerous.

Related to their cousins in the forests they are also prized by talunas (jungle panther girls) for their hides and symbolism.

Jungle Tarsk: Miniature versions of the regular tarsk, these pygmy tarsk are much more cautious and much less ferocious. They are a prized food of the jungle tribes.

Jungle Varts: Like other varts these bat-like creatures are carnivorous and travel in flocks.

Rather than caves or other, similar nesting places jungle varts prefer trees.

Bones and guano are found in great amounts beneath their trees, the stench perhaps acting as a warning not to approach their roost.

Jungle Zads: Related to the desert zad, jungle zads are smaller with yellow wings and curved beaks. They are much less aggressive in defending their food than desert zads and may just retreat to wait until they can return to the carrion.

Observations on Jards:

Mythologically speaking the jards fulfill the same sort of role that crows, ravens and magpies do in Earth mythology, but they fly in big flocks and are much smaller.

They seem intelligent, like Earth corvids and wheel about the sky like fast-moving clouds. To me it's beautiful, but to many Goreans they're a sign of ill-omen.



Ka-La-Na Trees: Ka-la-na trees are short, twisted, knotted trees that produce a grape-like fruit used in the production of wine.

The wood is tough and flexible and useful for bows and many other purposes, despite it being hard to find a straight, thick limb to use.

Ka-La-Na wood and leaves are yellowish in hue and they are often grown next to or around sa-tarna fields to form hedgerows and dividers.

Ka-La-Na Wine: Ka-la-na is a strong, powerful and refreshingly dry wine – usually red – made from the grape-like fruits of the ka-la-na tree.

Kaffiyeh & Agal: An 'Arabian' style headdress, worn in the Tahari and its surrounding areas the kaffiyeh is a cloth headdress bound in place with the agal, a string of beads.

The color and style of the beads indicates the wearer's tribe.

Kaiila Ranches: Kaiila ranches dot the edges of the Barrens, fortified farms that are – nonetheless – vulnerable to the depredations of the Red Savages.

The drovers who work there can be hot tempered, cruel, hungry for alcohol and women when they do come to the towns to trade and re-supply. A dangerous life creates a powerful need for pleasure and a great deal of conflict and violence over what's available and who has first rights to it.

Kaiila Tribe: One of the Red Savage tribes of the Barrens, the Kaiila tribe were supposedly the first amongst the tribes to tame the beast.

Known for their treachery and viciousness the Kaiila are also feared as cut-throats, more than willing to kill without honour and even to steal from other tribes.

Kaiila: Virtually unknown in northern Gor, the kaiila is a silken-furred, carnivorous, lofty creature used as a mount by the Wagon People, the tribes of the Tahari and the Red Savages.

Warm blooded, but without breasts, the plains kaiila do not breastfeed and the young kaiila are able to hunt as soon as they can stand.

The Sand Kaiila subspecies is smaller and does suckle its young with a red milk (which contains blood). Sand kaiila are omnivorous, unlike their cousins, and have larger, more padded paws with webbed toes for moving on sand.

Kaiila are swift and agile but lack the power of tharlaron, making them better suited to light cavalry and skirmish actions than to full-on assaults.

Kaiila have large eyes each side of their heads, triple-lidded against dust, four rows of fangs and soft, padded, clawed feet.

They stand twenty to twenty-two hands at the shoulder and have tremendous stamina, able to run six hundred pasangs a day on solid ground and fifty over dunes.

Despite their usefulness as a mount, Kaiila are highly strung and vicious which makes training them and riding them a feat of courage.

The Southern Kaiila range in color from gold to black while Sand Kaiila are almost always tawny hued.

Kailiauk: Named for the animal, Kailiauk is the easternmost town at the foot of the Thentis Mountains. Many barbarian slaves are processed in and around the town and shipped south.

Randolph's Tavern is a popular paga tavern in the town.

Kailiauk: The kailiauk is a heavy-set, four-legged ruminant with a broad, low-slung head. They're usually found on the savannas but smaller subspecies can be found in the forests.



Kailiauk have short trunks, tusks and tawny red-brown bars on their haunches. The males have three horns and stand – normally – eight to ten hands at the shoulder, weighing up to two thousand pounds.

To people of Earth they resemble giant tapirs, or small elephants to some degree. The Barrens herds are a larger species, as much as twenty-five hands tall and much more dangerous.

There are four or five enormous herds across the barrens, of which the largest (two to three million beasts each) are named Boswell, Bento and Hogarthe.

Shaggy in the winter, kailiauk have four stomachs and a large, eight-valved heart, small beady eyes and large livers – which are considered a delicacy. Smooth horned when young, as they age their horns crack and toughen.

Observations on Kailiauk:

Kailiauks are amazing creatures, made all the more amazing for moving in such large herds. There's nothing quite like them on Earth and describing them, as I have, doesn't truly do them justice. A great, crack-horned bull patrolling the edge of the herd is a terrifying but majestic sight.

When threatened the males surround the females and young with a thicket of outward facing horns.

Kaissa: Kaissa is a Gorean board-game similar to, and almost

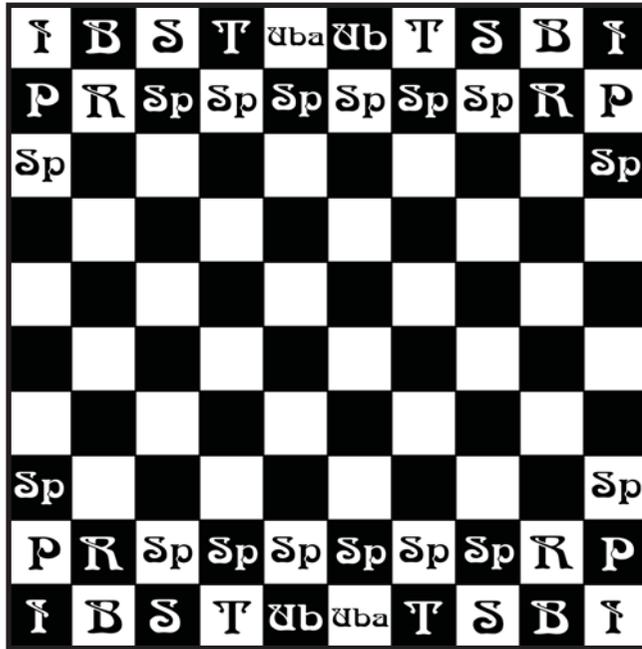
certainly sharing a root with, chess and its variations.

Kaissa has twenty pieces to a side (red and yellow being the typical colors) and is played on a board that is ten spaces by ten spaces.

Pieces include Spearman, Tarnsman, Riders of the High Tharlarion, Ubar, Ubara, Physician, Scribe, Initiate, Builder and Home Stone.

The aim of the game is to capture the home stone and that indicates a win.

The game is very widely played and studied across virtually all civilized Gorean cultures and is an obsession for many, even having its own caste.



I: *Initiate*
B: *Builder*
S: *Scribe*
T: *Tarnsman*
Uba: *Ubara*
Ub: *Ubar*
Sp: *Spearman*
R: *Rider of the High Tharlarion*
P: *Physician*

Slaves are forbidden to play though some pick up the rudiments of the game from observing their masters and mistresses playing the game.

Free women do play, but show little interest. The game can be seen as unseemly for them to obsess over, a frivolous nonsense and unfathomable obsession of men.

Matches are normally played as an odd number of games, usually three, with the winner being he who carries the most of them.

The major deviation from chess is the nature of the home stone piece. The home stone is not placed on the board at the start but must be placed on the board by the tenth move. It can only move one space and cannot capture pieces itself.

There are some regional variations. In Torvaldsland the Ubar is called the Jarl and the Ubara is replaced by the Jarl's Woman, a more powerful piece than the Southern Ubara. In place of Tarnsmen they have Axes, in place of Initiates Rune Priests, in place of Scribes, Singers and the Home stone is called the Hall. Some versions use pieces called Assassins in place of Physicians and replace the Spearmen with Spear-Slaves.

- Spearmen may move one, two or three spaces forward on their first move and then can only move sideways or forward – including diagonally – but they can only take a piece on the diagonal. If they reach the rear line of the other side they can be promoted to Tarnsmen or Riders of the High Tharlarion.
- Tarnsmen can move one space as a 'positioning move' but can move five connected spaces (two forward and three across, or vice versa) and over their own pieces on a move that takes an enemy. They cannot take on a positioning move.
- Initiates can move diagonally any number of spaces.
- Scribes can move up to seven spaces diagonally.
- Riders of the High Tharlarion can move one space in any direction.
- The Ubar can move any number of spaces in any direction.
- The Ubara can move six spaces in any direction (the Jarl's woman can move like the Ubar in the Northern version).
- Builders can move in straight lines any number of spaces.
- The Physician can move up to four spaces in a straight line.

The standardized version of Kaissa played in civilized Gor is administered and codified at the Sardar Fairs and is sometimes called Merchant Kaissa.

Kaissa is so well known and understood by many Goreans that it can be played without a board, simply by memory. Notation of great games is common and these papers are also used to transport codes. The agents of the Kur are more fond of this method than those of Priest Kings but it is used by both sides as well as in the intrigues of cities, merchants and other forces.

Kajiri: Kajiri is the plural of kajirus, which is the male version of kajira (slave).

Male slaves are commonly used for labor in many Gorean cities and their slavery usually comes about by criminal punishment or surrender in war.

Men are far more likely to earn their freedom than female slaves but also far more likely to get hard and dangerous duties or to be put out to fight in the arenas. In times of war male slaves can earn their freedom by fighting for the city that they are in.

More submissive or compliant men may find themselves silk slaves for free women and male slaves are even bred for this purpose as well as for free men whose proclivities lie in the direction of the same gender. Even so, the attitude towards male silk slaves is frequently one of caution; much as one would have for a tiger or wolf in a zoo. Free women are often fearful that they will 'revert' to their wild ways and free men - rightly - fear a male slave will fight and kill to regain his freedom.

Kajuralia: Kajuralia is a slave holiday observed in civilised Gor. During this day slaves are, after a fashion, 'free' and able to run amuck, play tricks on their masters and to otherwise go wild.



Most are relatively cautious in case of getting into trouble on the following day.

Kajuralia takes place on the last day of the fifth month, before the Love Feast. Notably, this holiday is not observed in Port Kar.

Kal-Da: Kal-da is an alcoholic drink, served hot, made from distilled (cheap) ka-la-na wine and then mixed with citrus and spice. You could think of it as a sort of mulled brandy, though it is not aged in barrels.

Kal-da is popular with the lower castes, particularly in Tharna where it is consumed in large amounts. Cheap and heady it will make a man quickly and inexpensively drunk.

Kalika: The kalika is a six-stringed Gorean instrument, plucked and played like a banjo or guitar, with a sound somewhat between the two.

Kamchak: An outrider of the Tuchucks and friend to Tarl Cabot, Kamchak traveled with Tarl into Turia and later helped to conquer that city in the Tuchuck siege.

Kamchak had once worked as a mercenary in Ar where he learned the sword – an unusual skill for a Tuchuck – and returned to act as the guardian of the Priest Kings' egg secreted amongst the Tuchucks.

Secretly Kamchak was the Ubar of the Tuchucks while another man pretended to be in order to fool their enemies – a popular trick of the Tuchucks to distract enemies from their true wealth.

After his success in taking Turia he was made their Ubar San, the grand leader of all the Wagon People.

Kanda: Kanda is a leafy, desert shrub which – to defend itself against grazers – produces a powerful drug in its leaves.

People chew these leaves as a narcotic stimulant.

The roots, however, contain a much higher dose of the poison and are too dangerous to consume.

When made into a paste the roots produce a white poison which can be spread on weapons.

Karjuk: The People (the Red Hunters of the frozen north) have a person called The Guard who watches against the Kur, whom they call 'ice beasts'.

Karjuk is their current guard, a skilled carver of ivory who lives far to the north, away from the usual camps of the people.

A thin, dour, but skilled hunter he pretended to join with the Kur and their agents in the north in order to infiltrate and destroy them.

Kaska: The kaska is a small hand drum used widely on Gor.



Kasra: Kasra is a river port on the lower Fayeen where dhows can be hired to cross the water.

Kassau: Kassau is a small town close to the edge of the Great Northern Forest. The town is the seat of the High Initiate of the North, who claims religious sovereignty over Torvaldsland.

It is a town of wooden huts and halls, walled with a wooden stockade that has two gates. The town's largest building is its temple - as befits such an important initiate's home.

Kassau makes its money from trade in lumber and fish.

Its smokehouses and fish drying enterprises can be smelled on the air far out to sea. They also trade furs from the north in exchange for weapons, iron, salt and luxuries that are more rare there.

Kavars: The Kavars are a tribe of the Tahari, rivals to the Aretai. They wear a tattoo of a blue scimitar on their forearms to identify themselves and call out the war cry: 'Kavars supreme!'

Kazrak: A wandering warrior, a tharlaron rider out of Port Kar, Kazrak sold his blade and lance to the service of Mintar the merchant.

After the Siege of Ar, Kazrak was made its temporary administrator while things in the city were calmed down and re-organized. He remained administrator for some time until he was deposed over his attempts to reform the city and challenge the power of the initiates.

Rather than be outcast from his new city he left to found a new home on one of the Farther Islands, where he presumably still lives.

Kef: The letter 'kef' in the Gorean alphabet is also a shorthand reference to slaves, the first letter of 'kajira' and 'kajirus'. It forms the typical brand for a slave. For female slaves a cursive, decorative kef of many differing designs is typical while for male slaves it is almost always a simple block letter.

Kennels: Gorean kennels – sleeping areas for slaves – vary from culture to culture and city to city.

The typical kennel is three feet by four feet, cement floored and caged with iron. There may be a grille in the floor for waste, a bowl for water and another for food. Blankets and pillows depend on the indulgence of the master.

Kes Shrub: The kes shrub grows in sandy areas and its blue colored, secondary roots are a salty tuber, suitable for eating (and a source of salt).

Killer Humans: The Kur have created many sub-species or 'breeds' of human since they arrived in our solar system, much in the same way the Priest Kings have. Amongst these sub-breeds are the 'killer humans', an imperfect translation from the Kur language.

These humans have been bred to fight in the arena against each other, Kur, animals and against machines. Their reward for victory is mating rights and they have remained viciously competitive despite their post civil-war freedom.

Fast reflexes, strong muscles, resistance to pain and hard training have made them deadly. They have also been taught to speak, in order to better be able to be trained and instructed.

Kinyanpi: A tribe of the Red Savages the Kinyanpi are the only tribe to have mastered the tarn from the wild flocks that sweep over the barrens. They are regarded by the other tribes with almost superstitious awe and guard their secrets well. Their name means 'the flighted ones'.

Kipofu: In Schendi the city's beggars consider themselves a caste and their leader is reckoned their 'Ubar'.

Kipofu is that 'Ubar'. Blind, he gathers information from the members of his caste and pools their efforts to look after each other.

An avaricious soul he somehow, despite his lowly position, projects a sovereign air through his determination, iron will and visionary ideas about collectivizing the beggars of the city.

He organized them, allotted territory, took control of begging rights and instituted a tax on income which is then used to help other beggars find shelter and basic food when they cannot get it themselves.

The beggars provide an information gathering network, for a price, and this gives Kipofu enough power to sometimes be asked important questions by the merchant council.

Unwanted beggars or those that break the rules are tossed into the sea or the canals to drown. Politics is most vicious when the stakes are small.

Kirtle: The kirtle is a warm, woolen garment worn by slaves (bondsmen) in Torvaldsland.

The slave version is ankle length, the skirt split to the waist and the garment laced in order to be cinched under the bust.

A more demure and shapeless version may be worn by poor free women.

Kisu: Kisu was one of the last major hold-outs against Bila Huruma's empire.

Mfalme of the Ukungu villages he was unusually educated and cultured, having run away to live in Schendi for two years. This knowledge gave him an advantage in the relatively primitive villages that had not been civilized by Bila Huruma.

Deposed when the village chieftains were bought off by Bila Huruma he escaped with two-hundred warriors to continue the fight but could not stand against Huruma's soldiers.

Captured he was put to work on the canal but later escaped with Tarl, traveling deep into the interior and learning humility along the way.

Huruma came to respect him and restored him to power over the villages, granting them their independence from his empire, but as an ally.

Kite: The Gorean kite is native to the plains of Turia and an important bird of omen and symbolism to the Tuchucks.

It can be seen stooping for prey over the plains and its shrill, screaming cry is very distinctive.

Knock out gas: Slavers on Earth use a knock-out gas in their captures. This can be administered into rooms or the cabs of cars though it is slower to take effect in such cases.

For faster use it can be administered via a cone-shaped mask and in this case the effects are almost instant. The gas is colorless, odorless and almost entirely safe.

Knots: Most Goreans have at least some basic knowledge of knots and ties. There are many different kinds of knots for many different purposes.

Observations on Knots:

Goreans are as skilled with knots as 18th century sailors, and that's not even the actual Gorean sailors who would put anyone else to shame.

The subtleties of the knots and their variances are a mystery to me as I can tie only the simplest of knots but they can always tell the slightest difference.

Some skilled thieves learn to retie knots to try and fool those they rob that their goods are undisturbed. It's a skill you can't help but admire.

Most Goreans also develop a personal or 'signature' knot, like a puzzle, which they use when tying their doors or bags shut so that they know if anyone has been in their rooms or goods.

Capture knots are special ties used for captives and slaves and are designed to be

very secure. Warriors in particular learn effective capture knots which most will not be able to escape.

Ko-Ro-Ba: Nestled amongst hills and naturally defended by ridges that surround it Ko-Ro-Ba was once one of Gor's greatest cities – to rival even Ar – and may be again.

Known as 'The Towers of the Morning' its name actually means 'village market' in archaic Gorean.

The city's administrator is Matthew Cabot, Tarl's father. The city was destroyed by the Priest Kings as part of a grand scheme but is now being rebuilt and is close to its former size once again.

Koora: The koora is a square of cloth, worn to cover the head and hair like a handkerchief or bandanna.

Kron of Tharna: Of the Caste of Metalworkers, Kron is a torn-earned, squat, brutish man who three times survived the gladiatorial fights of The Amusements of Tharna.

Beaten, but spared, by Tarl Cabot Kron joined with the rebellion against Tharna's matriarchal rule and after the overthrow of the old order became the city's administrator.

Kur: The Kur are a gigantic species, eight feet in height being typical, and twelve feet not being unusual.

They are heavy, muscular, furred, with bat-like ears and cat-like pupils.

Thick fur covers their body and they rarely bother with clothing, instead using hooked harnesses when they wish to carry things.

They have excellent night vision, excellent hearing and a powerful sense of smell.

Their blood is extremely salty compared to a human's blood and much more efficient, allowing them to lose a lot of blood and still fight.

Their metabolism also runs high, their body temperature higher than a human's and more similar to that of a feline.

Their head is the width of a man's chest, their fingers flexible like tentacles but tipped with claws, their broad mouth filled with two rows of sharp teeth and four elongated canines.

Kur have four genders, dominant (male), submissive (female), nurturant (womb) and non-dominant (sexually inactive male).

The nurturant is not truly sentient and receives the fertilized egg from the submissive, nurturing and feeding it until it tears its way free.

Female Kur simply resemble smaller Kur, though there are some throwbacks to an earlier time before the Kur genetically engineered themselves. These throwbacks are far more mammalian, with breasts and broader hips.

Kur lack a true family but consider each other close by whether they shared a womb, a batch or a set of eggs. Parentage is not considered important and egg brotherhood is somewhat frowned upon as a reason to care about another Kur.

Observations on Ko-Ro-Ba:

Ko-Ro-Ba is a much more modernist city and I'm given to understand that was the case before it was first destroyed as well.

Ko-Ro-Ba values knowledge and progress – dangerous values on Gor – and isn't afraid of using glow bulbs and other innovations eschewed in other cities.

I felt greatly at home in this city, despite its strangeness, especially in the company of its scribes.

When Kur are born they are far from helpless, already able to move and hunt small prey.

The nurturant, in which the Kur feed and gestate, is an entirely genetically engineered organism, a mass of tissue that grows and affixes to a wall and which is implanted by

the Kur females.

Nurturants often die in 'birthing' their charges but those that survive, scarred and fat, are highly prized.

Kur are virtually a predatory species, though properly prepared they can consume some vegetation. Their digestive system is, perhaps, comparable to that of canines though they can control their digestion rate and store food in a secondary stomach when it is plentiful, to help them survive when it is more rare.

When they attack they give a bone-chilling shriek that triggers the predatory and combat reflex in their fellows and this shriek is hard for them to control, almost a reflex.

When a Kur runs they run on all fours, like a gorilla and they are usually hunched in any case. On all fours they can move extremely quickly and with great power.

Kur's digestion copes better with and they prefer raw meat, believing that cooked meat weakens the jaws. Their hunting instinct is also strong, and their higher echelons can dispense live prey into their rooms for meals.

Kur intelligence is a function of the killings, a winnowing of their numbers by killing the weak and competing for mating rights.

They are a social animal but not so social as humans, it has only been discipline and

intelligence that have allowed them to build their civilization.

The species has been civilized for, perhaps, a hundred thousand years, though the Kur are unsure due to having lost a great many records. While a hundred thousand years of history stretch back, it has been forty thousand years since the Kur were at their technological peak and twenty-eight thousand years since they left their home system.

On their home world the Kur evolved living in caves cut into cliffs and their apartments and dwellings retain those qualities, warmth and darkness, along with climbable walls and ceilings with bars and beams for them to move around.

Kur hate to sleep exposed and will even burrow into the ground to avoid it.



Their tents are long, tubular, curved structures fifty or sixty feet long and low to the ground.

Now they live in the 'steel worlds' which orbit Hersius (Jupiter) and hide amongst the rocks of the asteroid belt.

Kur are at least as intelligent as men and more technologically advanced. Few Kur can speak Gorean well but most can form a few growling, snarling words. Otherwise they rely on technological translators to convey their meaning. They have trained sleen, bred humans, and are organized and disciplined.

Even the barbaric Kur, exiled to Gor, show technological prowess and the ability to form communities, despite the technology laws of the Priest Kings.

In spite of both being sentient beings, Kur have no compunction about eating humans and Gorean humans, in their turn – though perhaps for revenge – have no reservation about eating the flesh of Kur.

Even without clothes the Kur are fond of decoration and will wear arm rings, pendants and earrings as decorations, often made of a reddish metal which cannot be cut by Gorean technology. The arm rings often represent military or civil rank. The Kur organise their forces along the basis of their number of digits, which is six.

- A Kur squad is six warriors, or a 'hand', one of which – the leader – is called the 'eye'.
- Two hands make a 'Kur' which is commanded by a 'Blood' (there is an ancient, superstitious belief amongst the Kur that it is the blood, not the brain, which is the thinking organ).
- Twelve 'Kur' make a 'Band', twelve 'bands' a 'march' and twelve marches a 'people'.

The Kur are not a sentimental species. Their form of burial is only to sprinkle a little dust or dirt upon the body and, for them, that is an end to it.

They do not usually help their wounded, leaving them to survive - or not. If they survive they are Kur, if they do not then they are not Kur, and their deaths are not worth mourning. A brutally amoral approach to survival of the fittest.

The Kur are not a united species despite their united plight and they often war amongst themselves, squabble and split into factions over how to approach the problem of conquering Gor and removing the Priest Kings.

They take great pride in preserving and promoting their animal nature as well as their intelligent nature and see no contradiction between the two. They hide much of their technology, make it invisible, their scientists working in privacy to protect their sense of nature. Their aggressive character and powerful technology is what desolated their home planet and forced them to leave through the blackness of space.

As well as sleen, tharlaron and other animals and plants the Kur have also domesticated humans. They keep human pets to groom their fur and have created other sub-species as 'cattle' for their flesh, as creatures to hunt and creatures to fight for their entertainment.

They still, to this day, do not know what the Priest Kings actually are or the full extent of their power, but they have learned to be cautious and to move largely through agents.

After many failed attempts to act directly the Kur have settled into a long term project to usurp the human powers on Gor and to take control in that way. They resent humans, thinking of them as weak and unworthy to hold such a glorious world and they prize Gor as a natural world far more than Earth in which they see the warning signs of what happened to their own home world.

Defeated Kur who survive a campaign or war are culturally expected to commit suicide or submit to surgery so that they cannot breed – depending on the scale of their shame.

Amongst them the cause is the leader and the leader is the cause and the one cannot succeed without the other and each must be held accountable for the other.

In relatively recent times with greater cooperation between Kurii and men the Kur have begun to adopt some aspects of human culture - such as slavery. Female Kur defeated in battle or whose Steel World have fallen may well now find themselves wearing chains and serving as human slaves do.

Kur Crossbow: The Kur crossbow is enormous and cannot be used by any human because of its sheer size and weight.

It carries a stack of tiered bolts along four grooves and has four triggers and four cables to fire them. These can be fired with great rapidity and are virtually as grievous in their wounding as spears.

Kur Dagger: Kur daggers are nine-inches long and grooved to allow the blood to flow away from the cutting edge, so as not to foul the blade.

Kur Rifle: Ship Kur have access to rifle-like weapons which are light and small enough to be wielded by humans.

These weapons use a great blast of heat to burn and sear their enemies and carry many shots from a single charge.

Kur Spear: A huge weapon with a twenty pound head and an enormous shaft, the Kur spear is a devastating weapon in the primitive combat of Gor.

Kur Trials: When the Kur are not settling their differences by means of combat they hold trials.

Ten senior Kur consider the verdict and a majority decides the fate of the accused. In cases of high treason nine out of ten must agree on guilt (indicated by drawing their knife).

The accused awaits the verdict in a pit before those who are deciding their fate.

Kurdah: The kurdah is a frame, carried atop a pack kaiila, used to transport slaves.

It covers them with a curtain of white cloth so that any raiders or bandits cannot immediately see whether the slave flesh being carried by a caravan is worthy of being stolen or not.

Sometimes guards may hide within kurdah, waiting to ambush bandits, or some may be empty, distractions to confuse them during a raid.

Kurii Slavers: The Kurii operations on Earth follow a typical pattern. Five man teams disguise themselves as or are recruited from the men of Earth and spread out, throughout a city to find targets.

Various means are used to capture, trick and otherwise get hold of their targets which are then drugged, placed in capture tubes and taken to Gor, twenty or more at a time.

Avoiding computerized technology – save for lock-picking devices and similar – they use code books and Gorean writing to avoid being found out.

Barbarians are trained on Gor to varying degrees and then scattered amongst various auction houses to be sold, funneling money into the various projects of the Kur and their allies.

Kurtzal: Kurtzal is a small village, upriver from Kasra and north of Tor. The settlement is little more than a loading and unloading point for goods.

Kusk: Kusk is an accomplished Priest King scientist specializing in the study of humans.

He has developed and refined wireless learning apparatus for humans and has accomplished the synthesis of artificial human duplicates.



Laager: A laager is a defensive fortress of wagons used by the Alars.

They circle their wagons –
sometimes into several circles
– with women, children and livestock safely
ensconced in the middle.

Given time they chain the fronts of the wagons
together so that they cannot be moved from one
another.

Labienus: An officer of Ar who was stranded
in the Vosk Delta during the betrayal, Labienus
was blinded and, consumed with bitterness. He
swore revenge upon the man who had ordered
them there - Saphronicus.

During the long march out of the delta
Labienus salted and toughened his hands like
old leather, tearing apart wood and grasping
rocks until they were little more than talons.
These claws he used to exact his revenge,
strangling Saphronicus and tearing out his throat
with his fingers before being slain.

He died with honour.

Lace: Lace is not that common on Gor, though
its commonality in Earth undergarments is
taken as further proof that Earth women are
natural slaves.

It is relatively expensive and silks are generally
preferred, and - since it is mostly seen as slave
garb - slaves that are worth the price of lace are
rare.

Some free women use lace, but only as a trim or
as part of their veil, perhaps only on their most
intimate layers of robes.

Lady Mira of Venna: An agent of the Kur,
Lady Mira led a band of mercenaries into
the barrens, along with several hidden Kur.
Ostensibly this was to negotiate hide contracts
with conquered tribes. In practice they were
seeking Half-Ear, disgraced Kurii general.
Her mercenaries were broken and scattered,

the Kur escaped the slaughter to seek Half-Ear
and she ended up enslaved and turned over to
the Waniyanpi to become a 'same' and to grow
vegetables for the tribes.

**Lake Bila Huruma, renamed Lake Shaba,
Grand Lake of the Ua:** Lake Shaba, as it is
now named, is the grand source of the Ua River
and the water that fills the other great lakes of
the interior.

Named for the explorer who found it (before
his death) the Ua has a great, ancient, city on
its bank and many carven statues rising from
its waters. The city's architecture is grand and
unlike that found anywhere else on Gor but its
great mosaics depict a slave-taking nation with
the capacity to capture and process hundreds,
even thousands, at a time.

It evokes some echoes of lost South American
societies on Earth. Where these people went is
a mystery, whatever disaster overtook them has
left no sign.

Lake Ias: Lake Ias lies between Argentum and
Corcyrus and has been an important strategic
site in their rivalries.

Lake Ngao: One of the great lakes of the
interior, Lake Ngao is as big as Lake Ushindi.

Lamp flies: Lamp flies are brightly glowing
insects with a reddish glow. Some species are
found here and there on land, but over the Vine
Sea swarms of hundreds of thousands can rise
from the watery plants. Their combined light
makes the horizon seem ablaze with fire.

Lamps: Goreans have a love of the warm light
that comes from a flame, preferring it to the
cleaner light of a bulb and regulating their day
by the ebb and flow of the light of the sun.

Lamps are the preferred means of providing
light and these can be as simple as a wick in a
bowl of oil or as complex as a lantern.

Tharlaron oil, extracted from the great beasts, is the preferred fuel, long burning and relatively clean.

Land Claim: By convention of civilized Gor, land can be claimed if you drive a yellow stake into the ground and guard it for one whole day. If you are unchallenged over that period, your claim is honoured.

Lang Gim: A flightless, owl-like bird that prowls the jungle floor. The lang gim actively hunts insects and other tiny prey, hopping from log to log and branch to branch.

Language: Gorean is a fairly fluid sounding tongue with many borrowed words from other languages. 'Axe' is the same word in English and in Gorean for example.

Other Gorean words and phrases include:

- Bana – Jewels
- Bina – Beads
- Canjellne – Challenge
- Da – These are
- Ela - An exclamation or similar sound, used for emphasis.
- Falarina – Un-penetrated
- Glana – Virginity
- Har-Ta - Faster
- Kan-Lara – brand
- Ki – Those are
- Ko-lar – Collar
- Kurt – whip
- La - 'I am'
- La² – 'You'
- Metaglana – After virginity
- Profalarina – Penetrated
- Rarii – Warriors
- Rarius – Warrior
- Sirik – Chain
- Tal – Greetings
- Tu - 'You are'
- Var – where
- Veck – kneel

Observations on Gorean Language:

It's a curious tongue that, when translated or described, can seem somewhat stiff, flowery and overly formal. When spoken on Gor however none of that feeling comes across. It is a fairly easy language to pick up and can stand being mangled and still convey meaning (in much the same way as English). Slaves and other 'immigrants' from Earth – such as myself – can pick up the basics with relative ease.

Lar-Torvis: Lar-Torvis is the Gorean word for the Sun. The words literally mean 'the central fire', an old way of naming a hearth fire.

Lara: A city on the Vosk and a member of the Salerian Federation. Lara sits at the strategically important junction of the Vosk and Olni rivers.

Lara works hard to fight river piracy on the Olni with great success.

Larl: The larl is a great, predatory cat, clawed and fanged with saber teeth a foot long and standing some seven feet at the shoulder.

The larl has a broad head – two feet across – triangular and pointed. Most commonly they have red or sable-black fur, especially in the mountains. Black larls have manes, both male and female alike, while the red larl lacks a mane. All larls have four nostrils and a tough, bony ridge running back from its nose to its neck.

White larls are even bigger, dangerous, tundra animals with snow white fur and some black markings. Their tails are tufted and used to signal other larls with whom they sometimes hunt in prides, also signaling to each other with cries that they pick up on their large, triangular ears.

Larls have a powerful homing instinct that leads them back to their whelping grounds in the mating seasons, an instinct that frequently overcomes attempts to tame them.

Larls are powerful and fierce, in combat they are even more fierce and unstoppable than tharlaron, powered by their massive, eight-valved heart.



When they are hunted it is by lines of men with spears. The last man holds a sword and should the beast charge through the line the man with the sword sacrifices himself while the others finish the beast.

Famously untamable the only people known to have managed to domesticate the beasts are the Pani, who use trained larls as fierce guard animals.

Larma Fruit: Larma fruit are a juicy, red, sweet fruit ripe in the symbolism of slavery on Gor.

Most famously and best grown in Tor, larma can be found elsewhere though they are of lesser quality.

Larma are a common staple fruit everywhere and much beloved.

The soft, segmented interior is protected by a 'crunchy' shell, almost like a nut, but the interior is more akin to a citrus fruit.

The hard larma is more like an apple in its flesh and has a single, large, pit within.

Laura: Laura is a city that lays on the the banks of the Laurius River.

A small trading city and river port it is mostly made up of wooden buildings, many of which are taverns and warehouses.

The city is a clearing house for wood, salt, fish, stone and slaves - many of which are traded with Ko-Ro-Ba, which lies southwest of Laura.

Laurius River: The Laurius River passes around the city of Laura and flows on down to Lydius. The Laurius is a winding, low, gentle river that flows slow and calm.

The ferry to cross the river is a silver coin for a free person and a copper for a slave or an animal, an extortionate fee.

Leading Chain: A leading chain is a light chain used to lead prisoners and slaves from one place to another.

Lacking weight the chain is easier for the handler to carry and use and does not exhaust the one bound in it. It is more breakable than a full chain but stronger and less vulnerable to being cut than a leash.

Leaf Urt: Leaf urts are small, tree-climbing urts that hop from leaf to leaf in the jungle canopy of the interior.

Leech Plant: The leech plant is a dangerous, and all too common, predatory plant found across much of Gor.

A thorny plant, low to the ground, it grows pods with fang-like thorns that can whip out and strike a man, drinking his blood to nourish the plant.

A single plant is not a worry, but a patch of leech plants can kill a man or weaken even a large beast like a bosk or tharlaron.

Leem: The leem is a small, northern rodent that hibernates in straw and moss lined nests in the winter.

Observations on Leech Plants:

I'm not entirely convinced that the leech plant is truly a plant. There are no other plants on Gor that are able to move so aggressively and while there are other predatory plants such as pitcher plants and fly traps there's nothing else even remotely like this on either planet. Perhaps the Priest Kings or the Kur brought it here or it's some hold over from whatever stars or worlds the Priest Kings have visited before.

In the Voltai I saw a verr jump into a patch of these things and get drained to death. The herder shrugged and said he would return later with fire to burn out the patch, but it was a horrible, ghastly, thing to watch.

Leem weigh about five to ten ounces each and are prey for a great deal of northern wildlife.

Lelts: The brine pits of the Tahari have a peculiar ecology of their own. The salty water is hostile to many forms of life but others thrive here.

Amongst these creatures are the lelts,

eyeless lizard-like fish with fern-like vibration sensors on their heads.

Lelts are five to seven inches long, pale white, long-finned and the main diet of salt sharks.

Lelts feed on isopods and flatworms, some of the few other sizable forms of life in the pools.

Liana vine: Liana vines grow all over the jungle of the interior and are an excellent source of water when severed, though the water can taste a little 'green'.

Linen Paper: Rence paper or vellum is more common elsewhere on Gor, but in Ar paper of quality is made of linen and rence paper is looked down upon as cheap and disposable.

Linen paper is strong and crisp and made in mills under the control of Ar's great families.

Lipstick: Given the significance of the veil in Gorean society it is, perhaps, little wonder that lipstick is considered a slave cosmetic and not something to be worn by free women.

Lipstick is usually found in suitably bold and alluring colors because of this, and many forms are flavored to sweeten the kiss of a slave.

Liqueur: Turia produces fine and strong liqueurs that make their way across Gor. Sickly sweet and strong they are an acquired taste to the Gorean palate, save in Turia itself where the taste is familiar.

Living Wand: A sport amongst the wagon people where a tospit is lanced from the mouth of a slave girl at speed.

Lock Pen: The lock pen is a small device, that can pass for a fountain pen.

It is given to Earth agents by the Kur and used to magnetically undo locks, even from a short distance. This only works on mechanical, metal locks.

Lodge: The Red Savages travel with hide tents but sometimes have need of larger, covered buildings.

Observations on Love:

Gorean men are strange about the idea of love, especially with a slave. When they meet or purchase a slave and realize they have actual feelings for them many seem to panic.

One of my guides, Kazan, in the Tabari, left us because he had sold a slave at Nine Wells. A slave he abruptly realized he couldn't live without. He'd sold her precisely because of those feelings, believing that it somehow made him weak. Romantic self-torture is seemingly evident even on this world, where you can buy comfort and have lovers without shame.

The lodges are larger, hide-covered, movable dwellings that can be broken down and moved on kaila back, split between several of them.

Long Billed Fleeer: A nocturnal, predatory bird of the jungles of the interior. The long-billed fleeer hunts urts and other small creatures and can plunge its beak deep into leaf litter in pursuit of the creatures.

Longbow, Pani: The Pani longbow is an outsized bow of peculiar shape, more sharply curved at the bottom than the top. Arrows are fired from the lower third of the bow. This allows for a longer bow with greater range without having to be turned to the side.



Love Feast, The: The Love Feast takes all five days of the fifth passage-hand, Gor's late summer. It is a time of feasting, games and celebrations culminating in grand slave sales on the fourth day and the most anticipated races and games on the fifth.

Love Slave: It is thought, in Gorean lore and romance, that there is a perfect woman to own for each man and a perfect master for every woman.

This 'love slave' is a woman a man will kill and die for and a man for whom her submission is perfect and involuntary.

Love War: The Love War is a game played amongst the wagon people, between the various tribes.

Important women of high standing are raised to be worthy captures – haughty and royal.

The War takes place every spring with trading between the cities and the various wagon tribes.

Warriors, the champions of the different groups, fight for the women and the honor of their tribe or city.

Ludmilla: Ludmilla is, or was, a brothel owner in Ar of great wealth and great mystery. It has even been suggested that 'Ludmilla' was a covert identity of Talena.

Ludmilla has a street named after her upon which she owns five or more brothels including: The Tunnels, The Chains of Gold, The Silken Cords, The Scarlet Whip and The Slave Racks.

Luma: Freed after Kar's victory over the navies of Cos and Tyros, Luma was a slave who had been a scribe.

She was brilliant, but unattractive and scrawny by Gorean standards. Freed by Tarl she became accountant to the house of Bosk of Port Kar, a task she accomplished with brilliance.

Lure Girls: Lure girls are used to tempt men into alleyways and ambushes in order that they can be captured, enslaved and put to work on chain gangs or on ships as oarsmen.

Gang masters will pay around a single silver tarsk for each man captured but the slaves used as lure girls put their lives in jeopardy by doing so (not that this matters to their masters).

Lurius of Jad: A living embodiment of the wealth of Cos, Lurius of Jad is Ubar both of Jad and of Cos as a whole.

Corpulent and sagging, dripping with gold, gross and excessive in his hungers, Lurius is nonetheless a great schemer and tactician on the political stage with the united cities of Cos and Tyros working to his schemes.

The war against Ar – despite its success – has cost him dearly even though the wealth of Ar now lines the treasuries of the islands.

Lydius: Lydius is a free port, administered by the merchant caste. It lies at the mouth of the Laurius River where it empties into the Thassa.

Lydius is one of the most cosmopolitan of Gorean cities with mixing from all over the known lands and cities. It is a port of paradoxes; luxuries and roughness, north and south, wealth and poverty.

Despite its wealth and importance, most of its buildings are wooden houses with high, pointed roofs.

Lyre: The lyre is a common Gorean instrument with just as much diversity in design and size as the ancient instruments of Earth.

There are typically four, seven or ten strings and they can be small and hand-held or large enough to have to stand like a harp for a louder, deeper, richer sound. The small lyres are favorites of the traveling musician.



Mace: The mace is a relatively uncommon weapon in civilized Gor as soldiers fight in close order and use the phalanx which favors stabbing weapons.

A mace is more likely to be found amongst cavalry, where it can be swung from the back of a mount, or in the hands of skirmishers such as bandits.

Gorean maces are most likely to have a heavy, rounded, studded head.

Machine of Truth: 'The Machine of Truth' is a somewhat euphemistic name for a device used by the Kur to torture a subject and read their mind through the pain.

The subject will often die, but it is virtually guaranteed to extract the necessary information.

Magicians of Anango: Entirely made up but still well known everywhere but Anango itself. The 'Magicians of Anango' are the mysterious source of fictional magic and artifacts that show up to try and con people, or which appear as plot devices in Gorean plays and stories.

A favorite is comparable to the story of the Emperor's New Clothes, a cloth fashioned by the Magicians which can only be seen by refined free persons and not by slaves, natural or legal, which is then used to trick free women into nakedness.

Magicians: Stage magic is popular on Gor but amongst the lower castes is often genuinely believed to be real magic. A magician who fumbles a trick in front of a group of peasants or whom is believed to be a dangerous sorcerer may well find himself impaled either as a huckster or a warlock.

Itinerant magicians also have been known to use their slight of hand for matters of thievery, which adds to the general air of distrust. It's a rather risky business to be in.

Magistrates: Magistrates are the enforcers and executioners for the law of the initiates, distinct, separate and more ideologically motivated than the civil praetors, with whom they often clash.

Male Slaves: Male pleasure slaves are relatively rare as submissive men - silk slaves - do not often arouse mistresses and do not often appear on Gor.

Nonetheless, some are found and some are even bred for, though even the most submissive male slave may 'revert' and turn upon his mistress.

Men are also bought by other men and while Gorean society is largely not judgmental on sexuality, some of the practices to produce male slaves for other men – especially from boyhood – are regarded with distaste.

Most male slaves are war captures, prisoners or debtors.

Male slaves are not valuable and are mostly sold cheaply for labor. They most often serve naked or in a breech-clout, which doesn't make them stand out too much from free prisoners working off their debts.

Without being distinctively marked – save for a collar – it is hard for slaves to determine their numbers and to organize.

Mamba: The Mamba are a jungle tribe with filed teeth and predatory, cannibalistic practices.

The name is one also given to a predatory river tharlarion which is the totemic beast of the tribe.

Marchers: Marchers are an enormous, mobile nest of ants.

A yard or two wide the river of ants can be pasangs long. When they find food they spread out, widening to five-hundred feet to consume all their prey. They leave nothing but bones in their wake when they're done.

Their numbing, stinging, bites by the thousand paralyze their food so it can be devoured alive.

They climb any obstacle in their way and even form living bridges to cross water. They shy away from fire – barely – and in the rain they scatter for cover. Otherwise they are nigh unstoppable.

Each ant is two inches long, with soldiers and queens larger still. Glossy black in their carapace they can look like a stone path until you realize they are moving.

Margin of Desolation: The Margin of Desolation was a defensive tactic instituted by Ar.

A thick strip of land around the city of Ar was denuded of crops, wild fruit and hunting animals so as to deny any invading army the comfort of being able to live off the land and supplement their supplies in any fashion.

This practice became less important with increased tarm transportation and after Marlenus regained power he allowed the land to revert to its natural state – though it is not yet fully recovered even decades later.

Marine Saurians: Tharlarian are found far out to sea and some of them are truly monstrous in size, posing a significant threat to ships.

Sea tharlarian are spotted somewhat rarely, perhaps because few ships venture that far onto the Thassa. Of those that are seen many resemble the terrestrial plesiosaur while deeper and even more rarely seen are those that resemble other, more fish-like saurians from Earth's past.

Mariner's Cap: The Mariner's cap – a badge of honor for Gorean sailors – is a cloth cap with a brim to shield the eyes.

In style it is similar to a Cornish fisherman's cap or a Greek sailor's cap.

Marketplaces: Gorean marketplaces are boisterous, noisy places full of flirtation, shouting and the smells of perfumes and cooking food. Slaves scurry with money in their mouths, men and women carry their goods to and fro in a hurry - and often guarded.

The market is a great mixer of the castes of the city, a place for the younger men and women to congregate, for children to play, for washing to be done in the fountains and wells and for the city or town to forge a sense of identity.

Observations on the Margin of Desolation:

Even after what must be forty or fifty years the Margin of Desolation is still noticeable, a great ring of younger, patchier growth around Ar with layers of ash and crusts of salt only a few inches down into the soil. Some peasants have moved into the area, working hard to dig out the tainted soil and replant, but it is laborious work that won't pay off for decades.

Elsewhere the plant growth is stunted, weak, young and thin, and vulnerable to depredations by animals. There's little cover for miles and miles. This advantages Ar's tarm patrols, which are often seen flying over the Margin.

Buying and selling is also a social occasion with extensive haggling and mock insults going into every purchase.

Marking stick:

Akin to a pencil, the marking stick is used for most temporary notation.

Grease pencils of a similar type are used

to temporarily mark the bodies of slaves.

Marlenus of Ar: Marlenus of Ar is, perhaps, the most widely known and successful Ubar in Ar.

Despite having suffered setbacks he has always returned to rule, and commands the absolute loyalty of many of Ar's soldiers. Marlenus remains the Ubar of Ar despite civil war, being deposed and Ar being conquered by Cos. Seemingly nothing can depose him, or defeat Ar, for long.

He retains his ambition to extend Ar and create an empire but is, now, more patient and careful, content to bide his time and rebuild Ar's strength.

Grievously wounded in a punitive raid on Treve, Marlenus lost his memory and his wits in the prisons of that mountain city. How much he is himself again now, with the liberation of Ar, remains to be seen. His wrath, however, is not in question and bounties lie on many traitors and collaborators from the occupation of Ar, including his own daughter Talena.

Recovering from this latest defeat will be the hardest task that has ever faced Marlenus.

Marshall, Jason: Jason Marshall was a man of Earth who came to Gor, but whose circumstances and experiences could not have been more different to those of Tarl Cabot.

Where Tarl inherited a position in a high city and was trained by the finest of tutors, Jason was taken as a slave and learned everything about survival and the ways of Gor the hard way.

Jason was brought to Gor due to his involvement with a woman called Beverley who had been targeted by Gorean slavers. His presence complicated her capture and resulted in him being taken as well, as a safeguard and an experiment.

A large man, six feet and one inch tall, a hundred-and-ninety pounds and the age of twenty-five he did not fit very well within the society of Earth or the university subculture (where he studied Greek history). A blunt and forthright man, especially in regard to gender relations, Beverley only gave him the time of day because he was large and intimidating and she feared she was being followed as, indeed, she was.

Returning from a restaurant meeting they were both gassed, injected and transported to Gor, Jason only at the last minute after they were more inclined to kill him.

In the end they judged that a quiescent man of Earth might be a good sale to a woman and decided to see what might happen.

On Gor he was trained, intended to be a silk slave, uniquely suited to his Earth conditioning and his presumably submissive nature towards women.

Sold and caught up in the rivalry between two free women of Vonda, Jason ended up not living the life of a pampered silk slave, but working in tharlarian stables and fighting in boxing matches between stables. He was chosen because of his size and strength, the things that had intimidated Beverley and made him a poor fit on Earth.

He became an accomplished fighter and toughened up, champion of the stables until the conflict between Ar and Cos came to Vonda. This gave him his chance to escape.

Traveling on the money his fighting skills could earn, Jason tried to track Beverley down and followed her to the river and the pirates there.

He came to the town of Victoria where she was being kept. There he bought Beverley and freed her, settling into life as a guardsman of Victoria, living under Beverley's thumb as she reverted to Earthly ways, compounded with the arrogance of a Gorean free woman.

When the pirates began to move against the towns to take more direct control and rule them, Jason ended up being part of a conspiracy to unite the towns to resist them. The eventual defeat of the pirate fleet came through forging an alliance between the Vosk River towns that were to become the Vosk League, the pre-eminent force on the river.

Battle forged Jason into a true man of Gor and Beverley ended up his slave again.

He remains a guardsman in Victoria and a respected soldier.

Marsh Moccasin: A venomous snake, found swimming and slithering through marshes, swamps and the Vosk delta.

The marsh moccasin is dangerous but lacks the reputation, or the sheer killing power, of the ost.

Marsh Sharks: No less dangerous for being relatively small and flat, marsh sharks slip through the murky, shallow waters of swamps and deltas looking for prey.

Normally they take small fish, unwary water birds, lizards and snakes but they are not averse to larger prey that ventures into the water.

Especially if there's blood.

Marsh Spear: The marsh spear is designed for spearing fish, lizards and snakes in the water.

It comes with two or three prongs to make it easier to strike small prey through the distortion and disruption of the water.

Marsh Tharlarian: Marsh tharlarian come in several forms from creatures analogous to crocodiles or alligators, to squat, brutish amphibians. All are strong predators with great appetites and all are happy to attack men if they are hungry.

They can be as big as thirty feet long, the water of the marshes helping to support their weight.

Marsh Turtle: The marsh turtle is a very large reptile that swims and plods through the Vosk delta.

Very well armored and of surly temperament it is safe from most predators and very long lived.

Marsh Vine: Marsh vines are ubiquitous wherever there are swamp trees. The vines form nets, tunnels and coverage, reducing visibility and making fast movement impossible.

They must be laboriously cut or clambered through in order to make headway.

Masks: Masks are worn throughout Gor by incognito travelers, brigands, highwaymen, free women and gangs of ne'er-do-wells out for a fun evening. They can be worn by men in disgrace and couriers or messengers who need to hide their features.

Masks are, then, a reason for caution but not absolute distrust.

Observations on Masks:

Goreans live quite public lives and have little or no body shame. Slaves are used in the street with only a sniff of disdain from free women as they wander past, and there's a great deal of boisterous street culture.

Living so publicly and openly most of the time, when someone does invoke privacy it is generally respected. A mask is a public sign that one is seeking privacy and so, even though masks are abused, they are generally respected and given the benefit of the doubt.

This was useful to us while we explored the world.

Matok: Matok is a term found in the Nest of the Priest Kings, translated from their pheromone signals.

A 'matok' is a creature that is in the nest, but not 'of the nest'. Anything alive that is not a Priest King but which is supposed to be there.

Humans in the nest are matoks, as are many of the other creatures such as the golden beetle.

Mattock: A tool that makes a reasonably effective improvised weapon, the mattock is a sort of combination pick and entrenching tool, used with a chopping action to break up and drag soil.

Mead: Only found in any quantity in Torvaldsland, mead is made by fermenting honey in water with other ingredients depending on the maker.

It makes a heady, fragrant, sweet brew much beloved in the north.

Meadow of Salerius: A flowering meadow site on the northern bank of the Olni, the Meadow of Salerius is the site of the signing of the treaty which formed the Salerian Federation.

Medicine: Rather than medical care, this is the approximate term for the spiritual 'magic' that the Red Savages engage in. By taking signs and portents, adhering to certain rules of conduct, counting coup and many other little rites, rituals and behaviors they can feel cursed or blessed.

They believe so strongly in this that it can have a genuine, psychological and even physiological effect.

Men Below the Mountains: This awkward term is used by the caste of initiates to refer to mortal men, those who are not Priest Kings. The Priest Kings live in the heights of the Sardar Mountains, so everything that is not a Priest King must live below.

Mercenaries: Mercenaries are found all over Gor and in the squabbles between cities and towns there is usually plunder to be had and pay to claim. Indeed, looting is seen as part of the pay for a mercenary company.

Many mercenary forces are specialized, such as tarnsmen, cavalry or crossbowmen. These bring their specific, well-practiced skills for a better price in the conflicts where their elite status may be a deciding factor.

The better organized and wealthier companies have uniforms, but most require those who sign with them to supply their own. Less well organized groups may be little more than bandits and may press men into service by force.

Merchant Camp: Merchant caravans of a certain size have protocols for when they make camp. They set their camp in concentric circles with the guards at the outside, slaves, animals and goods in the middle and the merchants and their personal bodyguards at the center.

Merchant Compounds: Permanent settlements by the merchant caste these fulfill a similar role inland as the exchange islands do at sea. They also provide periodic safe harbor for merchant caravans.

These compounds are defensible stockades, a day apart along busy routes. They are ruled by merchant law, protected by double walls and tarn wire and defended by mercenaries and the guards attached to the caravans that stop there.

Message Collar: Slaves used as messengers may be placed in a message collar. This high necked collar wraps around the slave's throat and holds a scroll or piece of paper in the same shape. The collar is sewn shut around the neck to be cut open at the other end.

Message Ribbon: Message ribbons, also known as scytales, carry secret, coded messages. The ribbon is wound around a spear or other round object and is then written upon before being unwound. It can only be read by winding around an object of near identical size.

These ribbons may be hidden as a slave's hair tie or in supplies of textiles to further avoid detection.

Message slaves: An extreme method of passing messages and information in secrecy, though one that takes some time, is to tattoo the message onto the scalp of a slave and to then let their hair grow back over to cover it.

When received the slave can then be shaved in order to reveal the message.

Messenger Vulos: Domesticated vulos, bred for meat and eggs, are descended from pigeon-like birds.

Messenger vulos, found on the Pani islands, are much closer to their ancestors but with heightened homing skills which makes them useful as messengers.

Metal Fan: The metal fan used by the Pani as a defensive, parrying weapon can be hidden in the guise of a normal fan.

However, it is tough, strong and can also be used with the edge to slash and cut.

Military Roads: All Gorean roads are well built, intended to last for many years and to carry a lot of traffic, but Ar has pioneered the idea of military roads even stronger than the norm and protected by small forts every forty pasangs along their route.

Milk Bosk: The milk bosk is a smaller, less irritable breed of bosk, bred over generations for the production of milk and found in many peasant small holdings.

Mills: Mills produce cloth in large amounts and also produce some basic clothing, though most is sold on to be made into clothing elsewhere.

In Ar the major mills produce linen or material made from fiber taken from the swamp spiders. Elsewhere more traditional silk and other forms of cloth are made.

In the mills, whip masters oversee chains of slaves and make sure that they work hard to keep up the output. It is exhausting labor but most of the slaves therein are female – from the cheaper end of the chains. The better of these earn special treatment from the whip masters, much to the annoyance of their slave sisters.

Milo: Born into slavery, Milo was a pretty youth who was raised to appeal to and serve men. Abused, denied access to girls, warned and scolded about them, he grew into a handsome man with a talent for acting.

Bought by Appanius the slaver for his personal delight, Milo was also put on the stage and became a fast favorite of many free women whom he was then used to seduce. So enticed, the women could be legally enslaved in order to line Appanius' pockets.

Eventually freed, Milo overcame his abuse and found joy in women and freedom.

Mindar: The mindar is a bright red and yellow tropical bird with short wings. It lives in the interior, in the jungle, hiding in the blossom of flowering trees and scouring the bark for insects and grubs.

Mint Sticks: Mint sticks are slender sticks of minty candy which are often served with black wine.

Observations on Labour:

Labour on Gor, at any scale, is mostly performed by slaves, and the great mills of the cities are no exception.

Large numbers of slaves, debtors and prisoners perform the repetitive, sometimes dangerous work and all under the watchful eye of gang masters with whips.

It's strange to look at one of these factories at work and realize there's no machinery – not even windmills or water wheels.

Mintar: Mintar is a powerful merchant from Port Kar, though not one who takes to the Thassa for his profits. Powerful, rich, guarded by many mercenaries, Mintar is a mammoth, fat, toad of a man with a round bald head, a thin straggle of beard. and

birdlike, perceptive eyes. He has a peculiar sense of honor, albeit a merchant's sense, despite coming from Port Kar.

His slave caravans – the goods in which he primarily deals – can be as many as four hundred slaves strong.

Mintar has a fearsome reputation. He maintains a personal army of around a thousand men and will pursue anyone who steals from any of caravans with relentless ferocity. He has teams of special bounty hunters 'The Sleen of Mintar' who track down and bring to justice those who cross him.

For these reasons, amongst many, the caravans of Mintar are very rarely attacked.

Mirus: An agent of the Kur, originally from Earth, Mirus had attended gender studies classes – a cruel irony given where he ended up. He organized slave taking from Earth, especially from higher learning institutions.

On Gor he learned some modicum of honor, despite his Earth-like jealousies and concerns, and left the service of the Kur to find his own path.

Misk: A noble Priest King and friend to Tarl Cabot, Misk organized the resistance to the insane ambitions of Sarm – which threatened the nest.

Misk is a thoughtful philosopher and scientist and was second in rank to Sarm until Sarm was killed.

Hidden away Misk had a secret control chamber and a male Priest King, the first born in eight-thousand years. With a female egg hidden amongst the men of Gor and a captive male under his protection, Misk was able to use Tarl and other human agents in order to found a new nest upon the death of the mother.

Since that new founding Misk, and the rest of the Nest have been suspiciously quiet.

Money: Exchange rates vary but in much of civilized Gor a Silver tarsk is 100 copper tarsks.

Each copper tarsk is 10-20 tarsk bits.

Ten silver tarsks to one gold tarn.

Monster: The 'Monster' from the company of Boots Tarsk-Bit, hidden in his hood, scarred and burned, was in truth Scormus of Ar, a renown champion of kaissa.

Moons: Gor has three small moons two larger, one smaller, which is called the Prison Moon and is a base for the Priest Kings to hold those they find dangerous - but useful.

Mountain Goat: Mountain goats lurk in many of the mountains of Gor.

Agile and bellicose they are hard prey to hunt with an ability to climb one would not think existed in a hoofed beast.

Mountain that does not Move: A Kur base disguised as an iceberg in the far north, The Mountain that does not Move was the staging ground for a potential invasion of Gor by the Kur.

The base was filled with many rooms with furred walls, floors and ceilings for Kur to grasp, hold onto and climb. Everything beneath the surface was hard steel and much of it barred and closed off as prison cells.

Observations on the Moons:

Lacking any astronomical skills whatsoever and going purely on eyesight I would speculate that all three moons of Gor are smaller than our own moon. Perhaps as large as Mimas, Charon and Europa respectively. If The Prison Moon is artificial, it is either truly enormous, or smaller and in a very close orbit.

Men and Kur alike within it were armed with compressed-air, dart-firing guns with explosive darts. This was a way of skirting the Priest Kings sensors and laws with more effective weapons than are typically permitted.

The Mountain was eventually destroyed via self-destruct but provides an example of the capabilities of the Kur to shield even large activities from the perception of the Priest Kings - at least for a time.

Mul-Al-Ka & Mul-Ba-Ta: Male mul slaves from the nest, who are twins.

One is synthetic, a cloned and created version, the other natural.

The pair represent the Priest King concept of human perfection, extremely loyal and alien in thinking to natural humans, being unable or unwilling to lie.

The twins were used to spy on Tarl by Sarm during the intrigues and the Nest War though, lacking the ability to lie or deceive and were too honest to be of much use.

Mul-Fungus: An almost tasteless fungus, grown in the Nest, Mul fungus is used to feed the muls.

It is almost a complete meal but is supplemented with mul-pellets to make up for any slight lacks in nutrition.

Mul fungus can be served in the form of porridge, diced pieces – raw or cooked – or intermixed with the pellets. It can also be pressed into salted cakes, which have more flavour and are much preferred and even fought over.

Mul-Torch: Mul-Torches are chemically fueled flare lights. They burn very brightly and without heat.

Muls: Muls are the human slaves of the Priest Kings.

Kept bald, or made so in order to encourage cleanliness, they are dressed in purple, reflective tunics.

The muls are honored to be the slaves of the Priest Kings though they've known nothing else in their lives.

Muls are not allowed to mate or love and their insular culture is one of quietness, fatalism and servitude.

Muls subsist on mul-fungus, which is so bland that muls have been known to kill each other for a handful of salt to lend flavour to their terrible meals.

Their tunics are impregnated with Priest King scents so they can be easily identified and their work understood, though a mul wearing the wrong tunic may well be easily mistaken for another by a Priest King.



Messenger muls take machine tapes and other small items around the Nest, but if they are late five times they are killed.

Priest Kings are none too attached to their servants and slaves and have no reticence about killing them when they are no longer useful. At least, this was the case prior to the Nest War.

The muls were not completely subjugated however, they had built an alternative power supply over five-hundred years to take their independence from the Priest Kings. This refuge was hidden in the old Nest.

In the Nest War the muls proved loyal to the side of Misk and the new founding, and were rewarded with freedom and better treatment. Some escaped the Nest during its near destruction and have found their way into normal, Gorean society.

Their fate in the new Nest is not clear, but the Priest King's ability to synthesize copies of humans may mean they have all they need without needing to induct outsiders.

Music: Music on Gor is primal and ever present, especially at slave auctions and within the taverns.

There are no bowed instruments on Gor and no known notation – though the Caste of Musicians may have a way to do so that, they keep it to themselves. Songs and tunes are passed within the musical castes, master to pupil, or made up and created by the musicians themselves.

Gorean music is percussion heavy and there are a huge variety of different drums and percussion instruments.

Myteline: A mythic 'further island' which may or may not actually exist.

Many Kur agents, and Kur themselves, claim to be from this island as a cover for their dealings with men.

Mythic Creatures: Goreans use many of their own native and impressive animals in heraldry and stories but others appear only in legend. These mythical animals include horses, dogs and griffins.

Observations on Gorean Mythology:

The creatures of Gor may seem exotic or monstrous to us but the same is true in reverse.

Horses and dogs are regarded with the same awe that we might regard tales of unicorns or the phoenix. The loyalty of the dog in particular seems to fascinate the Goreans. They domesticate sleen and other creatures but they seem to, at heart, remain wild and can turn on their trainers or owners quite easily. In comparison the dog – in their stories – is loyal to a fault, following men across the world, remaining at their graves and even being able to talk in some stories.

Horses fascinate them because they're a non-predatory mount, something one does not normally see on Gor and again, they have been imbued with a legendary degree of loyalty and understanding of their owners.



Nameless One: The Nameless One is the 'god' of the Kur, an organizing force in the universe, a creator, maker and shaper.

The Kur refer to many faces of the Nameless One and some powerful Kur, such as Agamemnon, take on the mantle of one of those faces.

Nar: Nar is a member of the 'spider people', the swamp spiders who live in the swamp close to Ar. These spiders provide their webbing for the mills of the city, albeit not entirely willingly.

The spider people are peaceful, intelligent, value rationality and appear to have been placed on Gor by the Priest Kings, perhaps having been brought from elsewhere, or having once been part of the nest. They communicate with translator boxes, slung around their bodies.

Needle Flies: Needle flies are vicious, stinging flies found in the Vosk delta.

They breed in massive numbers in regular cycles and emerge in enormous clouds to feed and mate before they die.

They are attracted to the eyes and sting the flesh whether attacked or not. Stings swell rapidly, several of them cause the victim to be nauseous but it will take huge numbers of stings to kill.

Needle Trees: Needle trees grow in the far north and their flexible, resinous wood is relatively light and easy to work.

As one of the few available tree types in the north it is widely used and valued by Torvaldslanders.

Needle-tailed Lit: A jungle bird of the interior with a long, thin tail.

Nest Mother: Hatched before the stabilization serums for the long-lived Priest Kings had ever been developed, the old Nest Mother was aging and dying.

Her last and only female egg was hidden so that Sarm and his conspirators could not take control of the Nest completely after her death. A pyrrhic, insane scheme in the first place.

Dark brown rather than gold, leathery with age rather than crisp with youth, the death of the Nest Mother precipitated the Nest War as the eldest Priest Kings warred for control of what remained of their civilisation.

The new Mother, golden and everlasting - thanks to the serums - has since been hatched and has taken control; a far more conservative and distant control than her predecessor, perhaps due to being taught by memory tapes and having little personal experience. Along with her comes a new generation of fresh-hatched and tape-taught Priest Kings.

Mothers fly, once, for their mating flight and then shed their wings leaving nothing but stubs.

Nest, The: The Nest is the home of the Priest Kings, buried beneath the Sardar Mountains. It is an enormous structure built alongside and over a previous Nest. Elevators carry men, Priest Kings and others between levels and to massive tunnels that riddle the mountains.

The Nest itself is situated in a massive, circular, underground canyon, lined with bridges and terraces and dotted with geometric buildings in the shapes of domes, cones, cylinders, cubes and spheres. These buildings come in all colors and illuminations, though everything is slightly 'off' to human eyes.

There are pastures for various creatures, farms for fungus, dissection chambers, storage chambers, technological wonders (observation devices and the fire of the Priest Kings) ships and everything else one might think of.

Before the Nest War perhaps a thousand Priest Kings lived in the Nest. This structure was substantially destroyed in the Nest War and the Nest has not been visited by outsiders since.

The new mother may have changed everything or started construction on a new Nest under the mountains.

Nigel: One of the vying 'Ubars' of Port Kar until he was deposed. Nigel was tall and long-haired, resembling a warrior of Torvaldsland.

Night Axe: The night axe is a small throwing axe, by Kur standards, much like a metal tomahawk. It is used for taking out sentries silently and quickly.

Night Singers:

Night singers are a much prized, singing bird found in the Pani islands. Gardens are even designed with the intention of bringing the birds to them so that they can sweeten the night sounds of the holding.

Nim Nim: Nim Nim was one of the urt-people. Captured and imprisoned, he tried to strike a deal with his captors in order to be freed, but had lost the smell of his urt pack, which ate him when he tried to rejoin it.

Nine Wells: Nine Wells is an important oasis in the Tahari, protected by a kasbah fortress and claimed by Suleimen of the Aretai. It is a seat of immense power in the desert.

Nodachi: The name of a greatsword used by the Pani, 'Nodaichi' is also the name of a great sensei of the sword.

Fierce and bearded, Nodaichi is virtually matchless in combat and trained many of the enemies of Yamada, with whom he had a personal feud.

Nodaichi was a missing son of Yamada, who normally kills his sons. He had sworn to kill his father and used the rebellion and civil war to try and get to him.

Nomad Tents: The tents of the desert nomads lie ten feet deep and are made of woven kaiila hair.

Pegged down into the sand facing east, the interiors are floored with mats and goods are kept to the back, in fringed bags ready to be transported again.

Observations on The Northern Forests:

The Northern Forests are truly enormous and form a natural barrier between Torvaldsland and the rest of the north, and civilized Gor to the south – at least by land. The forest seems to be a blend of needle trees and broad leafed trees depending how far north and how close to the coast that you go.

We didn't spend too much time there for fear of Panther Girls and outlaws but all that ancient woodland made me think how ancient Britain must have looked when so much of it was forest.

Here was something familiar to someone who knows the forests of Europe, right down to the smell of the leaves and the green dust in the air. You could hide cities in this forest and on the maps of Samos it is larger – much larger – than the jungles of the interior. There must be secrets there.

Despite their size they can be packed relatively small and carried on kaiila-back.

Nomads: While of the same blood as the people of Tahari who live at the oases and border cities, the nomads live a very different existence. They eat little meat, survive off the desert as much as possible and travel between the oases for trade where they can.

Tea is important to them, drunk sweet for

energy and stimulation, three small cups at a time. Drinking tea is almost a ceremony of acceptance and expected when making deals.

The nomads are also not above banditry, though different oases and merchants align with different bands for protection.

Northern Forests: A huge swathe of dense, old woodland, the Northern Forests are practically impenetrable to large armies which lose order rapidly.



They are the haunt of bandits, outlaws and panther girls, the runaway slave bands of the forests, skilled archers and hunters who spar – often – with the outlaws who dwell there.

Where the forests meet the water, neutral trading grounds are found where outlaws and panthers alike trade and sell slaves and furs.

Nose Rings: Many domestic animals on Gor are fitted with nose rings to mark that they are owned and to make them easier to lead.

Some cultures have women in nose rings as well, free or otherwise, and some like to pierce the noses of their property. Pierced and tattooed women captured on Earth are exotic, but exciting to some men and the trend may spread.

Nyuki: Nyuki is an inland village near the equator, which is noted for its production of honey.



Oar Dance: Returning from a raid the sailors of Torvaldsland celebrate by dancing and leaping from oar to oar as they come in to dock. It is a feat of daring and great skill and more often

than not means a dip in the sea - to laughter and cheering.

Oases: Besides the main oases there are many other, smaller ones.

The Oasis of the Lame Kaiila is a tiny, barely notable oasis while the Oasis of the Sand Sleen is claimed by the Kavars and is of reasonable size.

The Oasis of the Stones of Silver is another small oasis while the Oasis of Two Scimitars is an out of the way place held by the Bakah tribe, vassals of the Kavars.

Two Scimitars welcomes bandits – by night – to add to their income.

Gorean oases in the Tahari are rich centers of trade and favored targets for bandits. Caravans from Tor, Kasra and Turia thread them together and bring them the goods they need to survive (cloth, silk, rugs, metals, jewels, ivory, perfume, hides, wood, leather, salt, spices, weapons, tea, slaves) and in exchange they export dates, pressed date bricks and vegetables.

Oases settlements are built as forts but cannot protect the farms that depend on the oasis – and irrigation – to work, rendering those vulnerable to bandits. Most settlements side with one of the nomad tribes for increased protection, paying them in food and shelter.

Oasis of Nine Wells: The Oasis of the Nine Wells is one of the larger oases with a population of twenty-thousand people.

Of the larger oases it is typical, with a fortress kasbah protecting the agricultural land around the oasis itself and its many wells.

Oasis of the Battle of Red Rock: The Oasis of the Battle of Red Rock is claimed by the Aretai. A mirage on the sand reflects and magnifies the image of the oasis at a distance, making it hard for those unfamiliar with the route to find.

Red Rock itself is a large shelf of red sandstone behind the oasis.

This oasis is the last major supply point for two-thousand pasangs, beyond it lays the dreaded, deadly, dune country.

Old Gorean: Old Gorean is the ancient Gorean language, equivalent – perhaps – to Latin on Earth in its significance and importance. Now it is only spoken and understood by the initiates who use it as a sort of code.

Old Gorean is written in pictographs, much like Sumerian or Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Old One: A gigantic salt shark, lurking in the pits of Klima, the Old One was a notorious man eater, stalking the slaves who worked the salt pits.

Blind and with a scarred fin, the Old One had a head a yard wide and was intelligent and cunning, having learned how to tip rafts and splash water to extinguish lamps.

It was killed but other sharks as big – or bigger – than the Old One are likely out there in other salt pits.

Olni: The River Olni is the defining and linking feature of the cities within the Salerian Federation and provides a trade route and common 'front' between them.

One Name/Two Name: Amongst the Pani being a 'one name' person is to be of lesser rank than a 'two name' person.

One Way Mirrors: In slave training houses one way mirrors are common, allowing slaves to be observed under training or when they believe they have their privacy.

One way sound can also be accomplished with baffles and other tricks, allowing them to be listened in on and conversed about without the observer being detected.

Onions: Onions are a staple food on Gor, widely grown and used to add flavor to a great many dishes.

Opals: A common enough gemstone on Earth, on Gor they are much more rare and much more precious, making them a popular commodity to be shipped from Earth to Gor.

Ost: The ost is an unspeakably venomous snake found across Gor in various species.

The most common, found in the temperate climes, is orange and black while the jungle ost is red and black. The ost grows up to around twelve inches long with banded stripes.

Its bite turns flesh a blackish orange and peels back the skin. The poison is deadly within seconds unless the stricken limb can be swiftly amputated.

Ostraka: Ostraka are tokens, often made of pottery, in various shapes and colors used as tickets for attendance of events, as proof of ownership and to determine fate or luck when drawn from a bag or bowl.

Outlaw: Outlaws live beyond the system of honor and law, outside the cities and outside the caste system. Their status makes them punishable by impalement and they have generally been exiled or stripped of caste for some infraction or other.

Hated by most, outlaws are welcomed by peasants. The peasants see them as potential protection against bandits (though they might be bandits themselves) and as people who might be able to trade with them or sell them meat.

The corpses of bandits are often strung from trees as a warning to others, and they can only really hope to avoid detection through disguise or hiding (often in the northern forests).

Of the cities only really Lydius turns much of a blind eye to the presence of outlaws.

Observations on Ost Venom:

Bandits attacked a caravan we were a part of, moving from the coast to Ar. They were targeting a free woman traveling in the wagon ahead of ours and were bold enough to make their attack during the day.

One got close enough to try and grab her at which point she stabbed him with a pin taken from her robes. The pin was prepared with ost venom.

The man was instantly shrieking and it looked as though he had thrust his arm into a fire, skin blackening and peeling back, blistering and bleeding until he fell dead mere seconds later.

After that the bandits retreated, little wonder that they did so.



Pa-Kur: Once the Master Assassin of Ar, Pa-Kur was a thin, gray, lean man of great cruelty and inscrutable features.

A master of the crossbow he was less good with a sword, losing a duel with Tarl at the climax of the siege of Ar.

Pa-Kur was once incredibly powerful, able to incite and lead an alliance of cities to challenge the walls of Ar. His failure and loss struck a blow that weakened the caste of assassins for decades and from which they only now truly begin to recover their power and prestige.

He leapt from the side of Ar's Cylinder of Justice when he lost his duel and he is presumed dead, though no body was ever found.

Paga Tavern: Paga Taverns are found in all but the smallest and rudest of settlements in civilized Gor.

They are a sort of bar and cheap brothel, all in one. A paga tavern serves alcohol – typically paga – simple food, and provides entertainment in the form of slaves and musicians.

Paga taverns typically come with alcoves – small pleasure rooms at the back of the main area and upper area – with curtains that can be buckled for privacy. These come with furs, cushions and basic chains for the securing of slaves.

The use of a serving girl comes with the price of a drink; there is a square of sand for fighting, and drinking and many low tables for meeting friends.

A drink – and the use of a slave – may be as little as a tarsk bit, while the use of a tavern dancer may be as much as two copper tarsks, on top of the cost of the paga.



Paga: Paga is a very strong beer-like drink, made from fermented grain. It can be served cool or warm – in the fashion of sake, albeit in larger portions.

Paga is drunk from small bowls and while many taverns brew their own there are also particular kinds made by particular makers that are valued and sought after.

Paga is the standard, alcoholic, drink of choice of most of Gor.

Panga: The panga is a two foot long, heavy, curved-bladed knife, used for chopping through the bush in the interior.

Pani Islands: An archipelago many pasangs past the Further Islands, the Pani Islands are warm and wet with high humidity and frequent rains coming in from the warm seas.

The land is fertile, but limited and it supports no kaiila, no tarns and no tharlaron mounts. Battle is accomplished on foot only and armies move at that slow pace.

Pani: The Pani are an isolated race on Gor, living in the Pani Islands far from the mainland over waters that have only been crossed in the last few years.

Of Japanese descent they have a transplanted culture, similar to that of feudal Japan.

The Shogun rules over all with there being numerous clans – or houses – underneath the shogun.

These houses feud and squabble and fight but so long as they do not threaten the security of the land this is permitted.

Pani culture is very distinct from the culture of mainland Gor in aesthetics and conduct. Black teeth are, by some, reckoned beautiful and they take the heads of their enemies as trophies in combat or execution.



Failure is cause for suicide amongst their warrior caste, who follow a code even more strict than the caste codes of the mainland. They are painfully conscious of rank and status and failing to account for it is, usually, a grave insult.

Money is one aspect of this with peasants resorting to barter, and coinage only truly available to the higher status members of society.

Observations on Taverns:

Paga taverns are more like pubs than bars. They are places to meet friends, drink, eat and spend much of your day if you are not working. They're a home away from home for Gorean men and a safe respite from their free companions or the worries of the day.

The addition of slaves never hurts, even if they are not the specialized pleasure slaves to be found in proper brothels. It is the girls of the paga taverns that will have their names graven into the walls of bath houses, and good slave stock will bring business to the taverns in droves.

The noise, heat and boisterous hubbub of the paga taverns made them homes away from home on our travels.

War is, normally, a thing for the high castes rather than the common man, who is only impressed into service as an ashigaru when the battle requires it.

Free women in the Pani lands have lower status than elsewhere on Gor but slavery is less common – replaced by contract women. Recently though, this has begun to change as a result of proper contact with the mainland and the shipping of slaves beginning to take place.

Use slaves did exist, kept in huts out of sight, shameful, chained to a central pole and slavery was punishment for crimes, or captures from rival clans.



Isolated for so long, the Pani are a xenophobic breed who consider themselves to be superior to those from the mainland, unless repeatedly bested. Many disdain slaves, despite their value in the Pani islands (especially blonds and redheads).

Peculiarly they speak understandable Gorean, which is said to be because the Priest Kings sent initiates to teach them, far back in their history.

Panther Girls: Panther Girls are escaped slaves and outlaws living wild in the Northern Forests, their equivalent in the interior are called 'Talunas'.

In both cases they are amazonian huntresses, gone virtually wild and seeking to live as freely as possible from men.

An arrogant breed they have no respect for female slaves that fall into their hands, despite their common origin. They hunt, enslave, thief, fight other band and outlaws, and otherwise make the forests as dangerous as the forest panthers they take their name from.

When they do capture men they usually sell them but some, sometimes, they keep for their moon festivals when they dance, become savage and dominate the men under their control. In this way they – sometimes – replenish their numbers amongst themselves.

Panther Girls keep a semi-permanent camp where they keep their dancing circles, and several other temporary camps.

Panthers are frequently underestimated and even sometimes manage to sneak into Laura and Lydius disguised as free women or slaves, in order to trade or steal.

Panther Girls use light weapons, suited to a woman's frame, such as short bows, light spears, clubs and daggers.

They claim to hate all men, though many, when broken, are claimed to make excellent slaves.

Some go so far as to scar themselves so as to be less appealing to men.

Their bands are relatively small and taking a place in a band is usually done through the death of another. Small bands are easier to hide and move within the forest.

Panthers, Forest: A tawny creature, the forest panthers move in prides of three or more when hunting and try to attack – in turn – from different directions in order to bring down their prey.

Stealthy, deadly and quick it is easy to see why panther girls would take their name.

Parade of Slaves: The parade of slaves is not unlike a fashion show, called for by the patrons of a paga tavern.

Slaves are prepared and paraded before the audience to let them see all that the place has to offer, at their best, made up and dressed to entice.

Parasol: Free women in warmer climes, and some amongst the Pani, use parasols to protect them from the sun.

Robes of concealment can be heavy and hot and a parasol allows the worst of the sun to be kept from falling on the parasol.

These parasols can also be used for many elaborate, flirtatious signals and can also house poisoned spines for a free woman's self defence.

Parp: Parp was a man intended to be a false Priest King, a last line of defense against those who made it up to the peaks of the Sardar Mountains.

A whiskered, round, fat fellow dressed like an initiate he smoked a pipe (unknown on Gor) and was fond of jokes, tricks and confounding people.



Red pupils and glowing eyes betrayed his status as a puppet and monitor of the Priest Kings, implanted with a golden web.

Originally of Earth he had long been in the service of the Priest Kings until his death at the hands of a snow larl at the end of the Nest War.

Parrots: The parrot is a common jungle bird in the interior, coming in many different breeds with many different colorations, some known on Earth, others extinct or new.

Parsit Fish: The parsit fish is a slender, striped fish that gathers in great numbers in spring and autumn, when its abundance makes it easy to catch.

Parsit fish need vegetation and congregate close to land, making them a good sign to sailors that they are close to shore.



Pasang Stones: Along the better maintained roads, pasang stones mark the distance to the nearest city and are found every pasang.

Pasang: A pasang is a measure of distance, equal to about seven tenths of a mile, or a little over a kilometer (1,120 meters).

Passion Slaves: A form of bred slave, the passion slave is bred for beauty, heat and responsiveness in a process taking generations.

A passion slave can usually be spotted by their particularly fulsome and pouting lips – a trait strongly selected for by breeders.

Path of a Thousand Arrows, The: The path of a thousand arrows is a means to send messages great distances, quickly, from one place to another.

A message is tied to an arrow and shot to the next messenger who does the same, and again, and again until it reaches its destination.

Pay Wagons: Larger cities such as Ar have wagons for rent, or drivers who will take you around the city for a fee.

Pear, Gorean: The Gorean pear is yellow, juicy, small and otherwise the same as those found on Earth.

Peas: Peas, fresh or dried, are a staple food on Gor and widely eaten wherever they might be grown.

Peasant Bow:

The peasant bow is a huge, powerful longbow, capable of shooting an arrow straight through someone.

Crossbows are more widely employed but

peasants and rencers make good use of the peasant bow and its quiver of twenty to thirty arrows.

Peasant Staff: The peasant staff is an iron-shod, thick quarterstaff that peasants use for fighting, dueling and in their day to day work and walking.

It is not a sword, but a skilled peasant can jab, parry and smash with both ends of the staff with a skill potentially as good as any warrior.

Penalty brands: Repeated bad behavior in slaves or crimes in free persons may be punishable by a brand.

The most common may be the thieves' brand, now a badge of honor in Port Kar, but there are others to mark runaways, pickpockets and other troublemakers.

Peppers: Sweet and spicy peppers are grown in Gor's more southern climes, most especially in the city of Tor.

Pertinax: Disguised as a forester of Port Kar, Pertinax was waiting to meet Tarl when he returned from the steel worlds, along with his 'slave' 'Constantina'.

Pertinax is actually a man of Canada on Earth, named Gregory White and the woman pretending to be his slave was named Margaret Wentworth. Both of them had been recruited as agents from Earth.

Through the campaign in the Pani islands Pertinax became more a man of Gor, learning the sword and taking 'Constantina' - truly - as his slave.

Pierced Ears: On Gor only slaves have pierced ears and it is said that doing so makes a woman a slave forever.

Men on Gor find earrings extremely provocative and have fetishized them. Their commonality on Earth is seen as proof positive that Earth women are natural slaves. The Kur have never brought a woman with pierced ears to Gor precisely because of this.

They have more uses than slavery for the women that they employ.

Pikes: The pike is an extremely long pole arm used primarily to defend against cavalry and low-swooping tarns.

They are rarely seen outside of massed battles where they are usually given out to the peasant levy.

Pillar of Exchanges: Outside of Tharna is a great stone pillar, surrounded by stones.

This place has a long tradition of being used to make exchanges for goods and for kidnapped people.

Pillow, Pani: Pani pillows are blocks of wood with rounded tops, used to rest one's head. They can take a lot of getting used to for someone from the mainland.

Pirates: The Thassa directly off the mainland is plagued by pirates, most of which hail from Port Kar - though it also conducts legitimate

sea trade as well as

raiding. Other pirates, privateers really, sail from Cos and Tyros to attack other sea trade from rival or neutral cities.

Pirate ships are most often painted green to hide amongst the waves and built to attack swift and hard, to board merchant vessels and pilfer their cargo.

Observations on Penalty Brands:

In a seedy paga den in Port Kar a pirate sailor was happy to show me the collection of different criminal brands he had collected across Gor. I was surprised he hadn't been executed but he explained that he had always been a very successful criminal and so always had money to bribe the magistrates and praetors.

It made quite a collection and the different shapes and designs told a story all their own. The only one he didn't explain was the 'K' branded just below his ribs. That needed no explanation and it would have been impolitic to ask.

Pits of Klima: The Pits of Klima are the most notorious and productive salt mines in the Tahari. Hidden deep in the desert, its location previously only known to the Salt Ubar, they were also the most feared pits for any slave to work in. No slave sent there was said to have ever returned until Tarl and Hassan escaped them.

No kaiila were allowed there and it had the only well for pasangs, using the desert itself to kill those who might try to escape in desperation and madness.

Slaves would toil, bound in leather to protect against cuts, to break up the salt crusts and carry them to the surface.

No female slaves were allowed.

The Pits of Klima were subject to an uprising and now run themselves as free men, living better, able to leave and no longer working themselves to death as they once did.

Pits: In Treve, in tunnels in the mountain, are The Pits, which are run by a monster of a man called 'The Tarsk'.

It is a foul dungeon and workspace with virtually no escape, kept dark for most – save the guards – and with watery pits filled with ravenous urts, spikes and pit traps to dissuade invaders or escapees, along with many blind alleys and dead ends.

Marlenus was held here for a time while his memory was gone.

Pity: It is taboo in the culture of civilized Gor to show pity. It is deemed to shame both the person being pitied and the one doing the pitying. To help or endure are only proper responses.

Plains of a Thousand Stakes: Some pasangs from the gates of Turia stand the competition grounds in which their trade and games with the wagon peoples take place.

The name comes from the wooden stakes to which prizes or banners might be affixed.

Plains of Eteocles: The Plains of Eteocles are a key battle site close to Corcyrus where Corcyrus and Argentum have met in open battle many times.

Plains of Turia: The Plains of Turia, also called The Lands of the Wagon People, are enormous plains of sweeping grassland and home to many herds of bosk and other creatures.

Plank Collar: A plank collar, as the name suggests, is a single plank of wood with two or more openings for slaves to be locked into it together - like a portable stocks.

Planting Feast of Sa-Tarna: The Planting Feast is celebrated across civilized Gor at different times in different cities early in the planting system.

The celebrations vary but all are petitions for a good harvest and honor and peace in the rest of the year for all the castes.

Plays: Goreans love entertainment but actors and roustabouts are not well regarded.

Gorean plays tend to tell well worn and familiar stories and many of them are bawdy comedies.

They draw from a series of stock characters that include:

- The Golden Courtesan
- The Pedant
- The Comic Father
- The Timid Captain (with huge mustache and comedy sword)
- The Young Lovers
- The Desirable Heiress
- The Saucy Maidens
- The Comic Servants
- The Pompous Merchant
- The Swaggering Soldier
- The Fortune Teller
- The Parasite
- The Wily Peasant
- The Physician
- The Slave.

The Magicians of Anango are often invoked to provide some fairytale qualities to the stories and the parts of women are usually played by slaves.

Wandering companies of actors include sideshows and other acts, Kaissa players, acrobats and stage magicians and one member of a troupe may have several skills.

Pleasure Gardens: A pleasure garden is a rich man's building and tended garden in which he keeps his collection of slaves, whether for personal use or purely to show his wealth and power.

The gardens of Saphrar, for example, had seven or eight hundred girls in them while other, smaller holdings might only have a handful or a dozen.

Pleasure Racks: The pleasure racks are often set up publicly at festivals, celebrations and on market days for slaves to be used.

They are adjustable, movable frames with many strap points, nets and configurations into which a slave might be put.

Pleasure Slave Kneel: The kneel of a pleasure slave, or any slave seeking to be used for such purposes, is to have their knees wide apart and their hands either crossed behind them or resting on their thighs, palms up.

Pleasure Slaves: Pleasure slaves are slaves that have been trained and devoted to the arts of providing – and taking – sexual pleasure.

While any slave can be used in such a way and free women think of all slaves as sluts, pleasure slaves are a minority compared to working slaves and are much sought after.

Pod tree: The pod tree is native to the jungles of the interior and is important to the tribes there as its fibrous bark can be stripped and pounded to make cloth.

Point Alfred: Point Alfred is a small river town on the banks of the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Observations on Theatre:

To me, many of the plays in their bawdy and trickster sense of humor reminded me of Chaucer's stories or some of the older, naughtier versions of fairy tales. They are not particularly highbrow, but they are fun little farces and often the audience participates as much as the actors. I think the Gorean distrust of traveling entertainers is similar to their distrust of magicians. To dress up or appear to be something that you are not is as unsettling to them as making a coin vanish.

Observations on Pleasure Slaves:

Nothing can really prepare you for the sight of a fully trained pleasure slave. Everything they do is intended to project sex and sensuality and it hits you with the force of a weapon.

While there are cultural differences in cues and signals, some things cut through all of that and trainers – and slaves themselves – have devoted endless study over centuries into what entices and pleases.

It was explained to me by a pleasure slave named Bina, in the private pleasure gardens of an agent of Priest Kings in Tyros, that there are hundreds of different ways a slave can learn simply to enter a room. The mind boggles.

Poison Needles:

Poisoned needles are hidden weapons, capped and otherwise made safe, hidden – usually – on a free woman's body or in her hair.

Ost venom is the favorite, though paralytics are also sometimes used.

Poison Pellets: To preserve honor and to hide their plans, warriors are sometimes given poison pellets to kill themselves if they are captured.

This also insulates them from the shame of being enslaved, a warrior being supposed to fight to the last.

Suicide is always a last resort, however, unlike amongst the Pani where it is expected.

Poison: Poison is considered a woman's weapon, for a man to use it – is considered a huge breach of honor and against the codes, punishable by death.

Other than women the only ones who use poison are conspirators, merchants and the desperate.

Whether assassins can or should use poison is a subject of some debate and differs between black courts. Some see it as dishonour and unsporting, others as just another tool.

Pomerium: When cities or colonies are founded it is done within an area marked by a cord, a spear, a plough or similar. This is the land claimed by the city in its founding.

Sometimes - as cities expand - they grow beyond this point. Sometimes certain laws differ depending on which side of the boundary you are on, even if you are still within the city.

Porcupines, Climbing, Long-tailed: These spiny mammals climb trees in the interior in search of grubs, fruit and leaves.

Their spines protect them from attack and their long tails help them to balance and climb. Their quills can be employed to tip darts.

Port Cos: Port Cos is a town on the banks of the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Settled over a century ago by immigrants from Cos, Port Cos is now independent of its parent state.

Other than Ar's Station, Port Cos is probably the largest settlement on the Vosk. It has a great pharos (lighthouse) colored red and yellow, a keep and a significant number of river vessels.

Despite being founded by Cos, Port Cos' relations with Ar's Station are good and Port Cos even sailed in defense of Ar's Station during the Cosian invasion of Ar.

Port Kar: Port Kar is a great, somewhat ramshackle, city built on the coast at the mouth of the Vosk delta. It is a den of thieves and pirates, smugglers and merchants and is one of the few cities to lack an Ubar or Administrator, instead being ruled by a council of its pirate and merchant captains.

Crowded, squalid, malignant and – unusually – built by the labor of slaves Port Kar has also been known as the "Tarn of the Sea". Also unusually, for Gor, Port Kar has always welcomed strangers to its gates to spend gold – or to have it stolen from them.

The men of Port Kar are a rough lot of rascals, notable by the knotted ropes they wear over their shoulder to show loyalty to their city.

It is a city without the pretense to civility and honor that the rest of Gor succumbs to and this makes it chaotic and vibrant. The city is divided between holdings, each a fortress, each separated from the other by filthy, crowded canals and defended as much against its own city as any potential invader.

Kar is known for its dancing slaves, a fact of which the city is justly proud, even more so since it gained a home stone on the 25th of Se'Kara.

Between its captains it fields a massive fleet, matched only by Cos and Tyros but fractious and divided. Its merchant fleets include the grain, oil and slave fleet, amongst others, making honest trades for these essential goods and acting as storehouses for them.

Since the city resisted the joint attack of Cos and Tyros it has been secure, protected by its fleets, its new sense of purpose, and the dangerous delta that prevents an easy attack over land.

To be on the council which took control and which is currently around a hundred and twenty captains, you must have at least five ships, which must be merchant ships or ships of war of medium class. Captains are permitted a crest of sleet hair on their helmets to mark their status and you can take what a captain owns if you kill him in single combat.

Kar does not recognize free companionship and its free women lack the protection of such status, many of them – stripped of such regard – are reduced to foraging and begging around the canals as 'she urts'. Other women work the shops and the market stalls along the canals, one of which is a floating market in the arsenal district where a monument to the 25th of Se'Kara rises from the water.

The honor of men of Port Kar is an odd thing, loyalty is to one's captain more than the city, even though now it has a home stone of rough granite in its council chambers, and many have taken a caste.

A man of Port Kar desires to die in sight of the Thassa and from violence over any other cause.

The actual port is run by the Port Consortium, four magistrates that report to the council and take care of the docks and piers. Given the current weakness of Ar and Cos, Port Kar is – frighteningly – one of the most powerful cities on Gor and the virtually unopposed master of the Thassa.

Port Olni: Port Olni lies on the northern bank of the river and is a founder city of the Salerian Federation.

Power Axe: Double-headed, like all Kur axes, the power axe can be activated to create a vibrational field around the blade heads that allow it to cleave through virtually any material.

Power Rifles: A Kur weapon, extremely unwieldy for a human, power rifles carry five shots, four in the magazine and one in the breach. They are terribly, horribly effective.

Powered Sleeping Mat: The powered sleeping mat is similar to an electric blanket. It can be set to be warm at night but to turn freezing cold at a certain time to get you out of bed.

Pox: Variations on the pox emerge every so often. The last outbreak of it occurred in Bazi some years ago, but the city was cordoned off and the slaves with the disease were killed.

A seeming outbreak in Schendi failed to take hold with the same force.

Praetor: A praetor is a sort of policeman and judge found in the streets to settle affairs and dispense justice. Slave praetors specialize in problems to do with slaves.

Praetors keep the civilian law, usually without recourse to a court and are empowered to enslave, punish and kill in the name of the law.

Prayer Rings: The caste of initiates uses prayer rings in much the same way as prayer beads and rosaries are used, to mark and count prayers.

The rotating rings, the mark of the Priest Kings, are twisted as the prayers are made.

They also use knotted strings for a similar purpose, but the rings are more prestigious.

Prey Slaves: The Kur bred a type of slave specifically for the hunt, to be cunning and dangerous even to Kur.

They use nets, spears, traps and ambushes and, despite being weaker, can pose a significant threat to the stronger, larger Kur.

Priest King, Male: Priest King males are smaller than the 'workers' or the nest mother and are rarely born. Their eggs are normally taken away and stored or destroyed in order to preserve the stability of the single nest.

On golden wings they are capable of taking to the air on the mating flight, which is sufficient to provide for the mother to lay eggs for her whole lifetime.

Males are as intelligent and aware as any other Priest King and do not immediately die off after mating, but without serums do not live anywhere near as long as drones or mothers.

Priest Kings, Drone: Priest King 'drones' are biologically female but are infertile and 'sexless'. Only the mother and males are developed for sexual activity.

Drones are capable of affection but can seem distant and almost robotic. It takes much more stimulus for them to show emotion.

Priest Kings: The Priest Kings are the undisputed masters of the solar system, extending their protection over both Earth and Gor. Even more advanced than the invading Kur, their technology is virtually indistinguishable from magic. To the men of Gor they are truly gods.

Priest Kings are a race of huge, ant-like, pseudo-insectoid, pseudo-eusocial creatures of incomparable intellect and alien mindset.

Despite their resemblance to insects they breathe with lungs through eight breathing holes in their abdomen. Golden in color, the Priest Kings are armored with chitin and nocturnal by preference.

They have six legs, the forelegs resembling those of a mantis and with blade like appendages they can extend. Their heads are a yard wide with feathery antennae and compound, disk-like eyes. Up to eighteen feet long they wear their translators or other tools in slings around their body. When they are hungry they drool an acidic spittle, when thirsty their bodies stiffen and slow.

Priest Kings have a nest scent that they use to identify each other and everything that belongs in the nest; this is their natural smell which is something like the smell of an expended bullet, with the personal and naming scents an undertone. Humans and other creatures of the nest are marked with this same scent to identify them as being of the nest, or their clothing is similarly scented. Priest Kings communicate by these complex scents, made up of seventy three scent 'phonemes' which can be impregnated

into scent ropes in order to convey messages. Longer ones are recorded into machines and played back in puffs of scent.

Technology is ubiquitous in the nest, everywhere, from the blue metal foil that preserves and protects the food to the floating, anti-gravity transport disks that are used to move from level to level.

Everything is watched, everything observed and monitored. The Priest Kings can even code

impressions of a human mind, a signature of them, onto plates to scan and identify them, even to transfer memories and to teach skills and knowledge out of the ether.

A selfless, technological, communistic society on a biological level.



Their thinking process and their lack of self-regard, despite their intelligence and personality, is hard for humans to grasp. In part this is because they have no central brain, but rather eight nerve clusters spread throughout the body.

The Priest Kings operate something like a caste structure with the Nest Mother at the top and the five oldest Priest Kings forming the upper caste.

The Nest rotates around a series of festivals, Tola, Tolam and Tolama. These are, respectively, the Anniversary of the Nuptial Flight (celebrated with wreaths of aromatic plants), the Feast of the Deposition of the First Egg and the celebration of the Hatching of the First Egg.

Priest Kings have an aesthetic love of complexity, which is why The Nest has so many different shapes and designs to it.

Immortal, thanks to stability serums, immensely tough and resilient, green blooded and capable of slow regeneration they are hard to kill in the extreme. The most common death for a Priest King comes from the Golden Beetle, a natural predator with narcotic pheromones they are powerless to resist. They welcome and even long for this death with a romantic fixation that appears perverse to humans.

Prition by Clearchus of Cos: A manual on the domination of slaves and their training, written for Masters, especially young men who have not owned a slave before.

Prition is considered the definitive work on the subject, though there are many.



Processing Room: Before anyone or anything is admitted to The Nest it must be processed. Robotic arms grasp the subject, snip away their clothes and force a purging pill into them that makes them lose all their waste and stomach contents.

They are then submerged in solutions and sprays, dried and subjected to yellow, red and green beams as well as invisible spectra beams to eliminate bacteria, viruses and other threats to the Nest.

Observations on Pseudopolis:

As a joke I would occasionally claim to be from Pseudopolis to explain my strange accent and lack of familiarity with certain customs. This would normally get a laugh but occasionally someone of low caste would take me seriously and begin asking detailed questions about the city.

The Priest Kings take their cleanliness seriously indeed.

Professional Companions: In more refined cities one can pay for the company of a free woman, refined, witty, intelligent for an evening.

This is considered fitting work for a woman and no indication of slave tendencies, but it is still frowned upon within some cities as deceitful.

Pseudopolis: Pseudopolis is a fictional city used in stories and plays as a generic city and the origin of strangeness, odd characters and peculiar artifacts.



Public boards: In many cities there are public boards to supplement the criers. Bills and news announcements are posted there, along with advertisements and proclamations. For those who cannot read there are usually some in the crowd who can and they are usually willing to oblige.

Punishment Position: A slave position for correction, the slave stretches out their arms, kneeling, bent forward, their back exposed to the whip.

Put to the Oar: A punishment in Torvaldsland, the subject is tied to an oar and dipped in and out of the water with the strokes. Slaves can be used in this manner as bait to draw sea-sleem and sharks, though only the least valuable slave is used.

Pygmies: Pygmy tribes of tiny men and women are found deep in the interior along the Ua River.

Diminutive in size they use cunning and knowledge of the jungle to survive more than brute force. Tribes have fallen into slavery under Talunas but even pygmies rebel on occasion.



Qualae: Qualae are small, rabbit-like creatures, with stiff and brushy manes of hair.

Qualius: Qualius was a great player of Kaissa.

In a match he beat Cernus – the wealthy slaver and agent of the Kur – and was blinded and branded for his trouble. He continued to play for coin, despite his blindness and acted as a tutor for Hup the Fool.

Quirt: A quirt is a stiff, flexible whip, sometimes with one or two short strands of leather at the end. It creates a sharp, snapping strike much used for encouraging slaves and steeds. The kaiila quirt is especially long compared to other quirts.

Quiva: The saddle knives of the wagon people are around a foot long. Traditionally seven of them are sheathed in their saddles of their steeds while one – or more – are carried on their person in separate sheathes.

Quiva are perfectly balanced for throwing and this is what they are notorious for.

Observations on Quiva:

Quiva seem too large to be accurately thrown but the weight gives them force and makes them fly true – albeit over short distances.

In a paga tavern in Turia a merchant who had traded with the wagon people and learned to use the knife demonstrated this by striking a grape held between a paga slave's lips. They were grazed and bled a little but it was still impressive and he wasn't even one of the Wagon People.



Ragnar's Hamlet: A river town on the Vosk River, Ragnar's Hamlet was founded by settlers from Torvaldsland. It is a member of the Vosk League.

Despite its name it is a full town, the name comes from its founding and the tiny seed from which the town grew, and continues to grow.

Ram Berries: Ram berries are small, reddish, fruit with small and edible seeds. They are somewhat like a plum, and used similarly.

Rape Rack: The rape rack is a series of beams and ropes to secure a slave for use, often as a prize for some game whether in usage or as a commodity.

Rarir: Rarir is a tiny village, south of the Vosk, near to the Thassa.

Rarn: A copper mining town southeast of Tharna.

Rask of Treve: Rask of Treve is one of the most feared tarnsmen on all Gor, leading his men on daring raids into cities and fearless of even Ar and Ko-Ro-Ba.

Young, audacious, ruthless, powerful, brutal, bold, resourceful, brilliant and elusive it is said he never buys a slave, only keeping those he takes for himself by force.

Long haired, handsome and merciless he is a master of the sword as well as the tarn and has an enormous, contemptuous, appetite for women, branding them with his name after he uses them.

Treve, in its high position, is all but immune to retaliation and even Ar's tarnsmen and Marlenus himself have failed to take revenge upon it.

Readers of bones and shells: The Pani consult fate through the form of scattered shells and bones. These soothsayers are well regarded and noble houses will pay a great deal to bring a noted reader of auguries to their house.

It is not unknown for the readers to be bribed into giving false information as part of spy networks and conspiracies to bring down those in power.

Red Grasshopper: A jungle insect, the red grasshopper is a huge example of its kind, bright red and weighing four ounces it can leap considerable distances.

Red Hunters: The Red Hunters are of similar stock to the Red Savages but born with a bluish spot at the base of their spine and a different, squatter, build.

Few in number – limited to the thousands – they live north of Torvaldsland where the land turns to ice.

With strong traditions and demands upon their people they are a tough, hardy folk, well suited to the harshness of the land.

There are, perhaps, forty camps of the Hunters and perhaps one and a half thousand men of fighting and hunting age. These men are supposed to be able to sing, carve, hunt and track to be useful members of their tribes.

They sleep in halls and tents, snow shelters if they have to build one, sleeping on platforms so as not to lose their body heat to the ground.

When hunting they have enormous respect for their prey, talking to them and their spirits with reverence. Of all the creatures they hold the tabuk to be most sacred and valued.

Reluctant to reveal their names, regarding them as having great power, they work around and about them, talking in the third person or using use names. Gifting is ceremonial and practical and they are extremely prideful, despite pretending to self-deprecation. Base commerce somewhat offends their sensibilities.

Squat, broad and warmly dressed in boots, parkas and lart-skin, they are a good humored and optimistic people who make great use of lances, spears and horn bows (wood would shatter in the cold).

Red Olives: Red olives are grown on tyros and pressed for oil as well as being soaked in brine and served to eat.

Red Salt: Red Salt is dug from pits and mines in secret places, an expensive and much valued luxury.

Red Savages:

The Red Savages rule the Barrens in several, clashing, dangerous tribes that make the Barrens virtually a no-go area for any other people. They raid and burn settlements they feel are encroaching on their territory, carrying off slaves and massacring people.

Their lives are devoted to war and hunting skills, sparring between tribes and fighting their enemies from civilised Gor. They keep their skills up with games such as firing arrows through hoops, spearing fruit and counting coup against other tribes through daring. Hunters pride themselves on their ability to take down their prey with a single arrow, a terribly difficult shot.

Actually cutting and butchering the meat is considered a woman's job, or that of children and disgraced warriors.

When it comes to large scale war, rather than skirmishing, the Red Savages often hamper their effectiveness by fighting for honor and to count coup, rather than to win. They also hamper themselves by not fighting at night – fearing the power of the medicine world.

The Red Savages have many different chiefs with different responsibilities for areas of their lives. There are war chiefs, medicine chiefs and

civil chiefs – though you can only be one kind of chief at a time to prevent too much power being incorporated in any one person.

The warriors have a preference for large breasted women and taken slaves are sometimes held in herds in common ownership at the edges of the camps, personal slaves being brought

within the camp with their men, though the free women hate them.

Red Savages try to outdo each other in the giving of gifts, honor demanding a valuable trade – like for like. Another peculiarity of their culture is that stories can be owned by people with some being personal and some being owned by a tribe. Ownership of a story is of great value and it cannot be told by another.



The Red Savages speak a bewildering array of different languages between their tribes and use hand sign to trade with each others and with 'whites' (outsiders to the plains, typically European descended Goreans), though some know a smattering of Gorean.

Their control over the barrens is absolute and past the borders they set the rules for white men. No more than two kailla per man, no more than ten total. Very few who enter the barrens are permitted even that and it is no immunity from being killed or stolen from to follow the rules and only the Dust Legs have any real dealings with white traders.

The divided tribes are only united by a hatred of whites, down to what they call 'The Memory', a carried folk concept of the white genocide of the Native Americans on Earth. The hate runs so deep that Red Savages will kill white men without warning, take their scalps and trophies from their bodies and leave guards to kill survivors and stragglers.

Red Silk Girl: A red silk girl is a slave that is no longer a virgin, and while this is its official meaning it is also used – somewhat informally – to refer to a pleasure slave of any kind.

By tradition, dancing slaves are all red silk and only red silk dancers are said to reach their highest, potential, level of skill.

Releaser: Releaser is a delicious, sweet beverage that counters the effects of slave wine or, if taken while already off slave wine, greatly boosts the chance of conception.

Observations on the Red Savages:

The Red Savages must have been transported to Gor during the nineteenth century making them, so far as I can work out, the most recent culture to have been transported from Earth to Gor under threat of eradication or extinction.

The Memory that they speak of seems to me to be the genocide and repeated victimization of the Native Americans on Earth and a promise of 'never again' which is why they are so adamantly and brutally against settlers or invasions of their territory of any kind.

I think back to Earth and I speculate that the Priest Kings have already begun to transport threatened Polynesian cultures to some remote part of Gor, piecemeal, as global warming threatens them.

Observations on the Rence:

There are a few things on Gor that are just far too strange, and useful, to make sense as having evolved naturally. Especially given Gor has not had humans long enough for things to evolve into a symbiotic relationship.

One of these is rence; the other is sip root, the plant from which slave wine is made.

Rence has too many uses and can virtually support people all by itself. Sip root is just too perfectly safe and useful. I suspect Priest King bioengineering is responsible for both and I wonder if there was an Egyptian culture here on Gor at some point in the past as well.

Rence: Rence is a plant very similar to papyrus.

A relative of sedge, it grows in the marshes and the deltas, burrowing deep with a long, thick, woody root before emerging in a long stem that ends in a tuft of leaves or flowers. It is a plant with many uses and which the rencers practically subsist on.

Most famously rence paper is made from it, by splitting soaking and pressing the stems but the rest of the plant has uses as well.

The root's wood is good for some tools and burns well – once it is dried. The stem can be woven to make very buoyant boats and rafts. The stem can also be twisted or split into fibers to make ropes or cloth and the pith

is edible as well as being usable as a caulking agent.

Eight different grades of paper can be made from the stems and rence paper is the cheaper and more abundant alternative to rag paper or vellum.

Rence Beer: Steeped, boiled and then fermented from the crushed seeds and pith of rence, rence beer is the only commonly available beverage found amongst the rence villages.

Rence Flowers: Rence flowers are simple, white, pretty flowers much favored by the girls of the marshes.

Rence Islands: Rence islands are the homes of the rencers of the Vosk delta. They are artificial islands, normally only two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet across, square and eight to nine feet thick with three feet of exposed surface. They float on the surface of the delta's water and are tethered in place with vines to strong roots or sturdy marsh trees.

The rafts are mobile, poled around by their populations when they need to be moved while others move ahead and cut a path. Four rectangular 'wells' in the center of the island allow for more poles to be used and as rubbish pits for the island.

Rence huts top the raft island, low ceilinged and similarly woven.

Sometimes islands need to be abandoned, in which case they are burned before a new one is built. Because they are constantly rotting away underneath, new surface is woven and added all the time.

Perhaps fifty to sixty people can live on a raft and each village is its own community, exchanging goods, men and women whenever they meet.

For special purposes and to work large fields of rence, rence island villages sometimes combine forces.

Rence knife: The rence knife is a curved, two inch knife used for cutting the stems of the rence.

Rennel: Rennel are small, crab-like desert insects with a poisonous sting.

They live in nests like ants and, if disturbed, pour out en masse to attack.

Rep: Rep is a fiber found in the seed pods of a bush which grows south of Ar but north of the equator.



The resulting material that is made from it is called 'rep-cloth' and is similar to linen, hemp or rough cotton.

Ribbon Alley: The Ribbon is one of Port Kar's better known canals and Ribbon Alley runs alongside it.

Several paga taverns – well frequented – back onto the alley and canal and, as a result, the city's she-urts (free, female beggars) gather there to fight over the trash and to beg for scraps.

Rite of Submission: Between free and slave status is the standing of 'captive'. A free person may submit to their captor's mercy without – necessarily – being enslaved. This appeal must either be accepted or the person must be slain or enslaved. Captives may be bound and stripped – within reason – must walk behind their captors and must do their bidding but if taken captive the intention is for trade or random.

Ritual Knife: The Pani have a ritual knife which they employ for their suicides, and in emergencies as a weapon.

It is built to the same style and aesthetic as their swords, but with a more tapered tip.

Rive-du-Bois: A civilised city, Rive-du-Bois is, perhaps, best known for its infamous son, Raymond of Rive-du-Bois, a notorious mercenary.

Given the name of the city it is virtually certain it was settled by men taken from France in relatively modern times.

River Chain: River chains are used to protect ports and to control rivers. They are strung across from pylon to pylon to control the passage of boats for protection or for customs and taxation.

The chains can be cut or broken, but it takes a great deal of time and effort which can render such efforts futile or make those who attempt it vulnerable.

River Dragon: The River Dragon is a large, commercial and war ship of the Pani, the first ship to make the return voyage from the Pani islands to the mainland.

River Sharks: Sharks are hugely prevalent on Gor and are found in virtually every environment.

River sharks are dark black with tall, dorsal fins that protrude from the water.

Roaches: Roaches are present in many buildings on Gor though the other wildlife can keep their numbers down a little. They are especially a plague upon the insulae slums in the larger cities.

Roads: Gor is criss-crossed with roads. Some are little more than a dirt track, others - such as those of Ar - are gleaming pathways of stone, sand and gravel.

Whichever they are, Goreans travel on the left, to have their sword arm facing those who approach them.

Road of Clearchus: The Road of Clearchus goes to the Sardar Fair site from north of Cyprianus.

Road of Cyprianus: The Road of Cyprianus goes to the Sardar Fair site from the south west.

Road Pirates: 'Road pirate' is the Gorean term for highwaymen, a natural extension of the pirates of the Thassa or of the rivers.

Road pirates are, perhaps, more organized and thoughtful in their depredations than bandits or brigands might be. They plan their attacks carefully, or at least more so than outlaws who happen to stumble upon suitable prey.

Robes of Concealment: 'Robes of Concealment' are the formal name given the layered clothing expected of free women to protect their modesty and to make them a less appealing target to tarnsmen and other raiders.



The full outfit consists of layered robes, layered veils and gloves to cover everything from head to foot. The richer the woman and the higher the caste, the more elaborate the robes.

Rock Spiders: Rock spiders garland the jungle with giant webs. Their bodies are covered in thick, horny chitin which, when they fold their legs under them, looks like stone.

They mostly eat birds and rodents but will attack larger prey when they're present in larger numbers.

The average rock spider is about a foot across but giant versions exist, hunting birds, jungle wildlife and people.

Ronen: Ronen are the 'masterless warriors' of the Pani. While they have no master they are not outlaws or rogues and may sell or pledge their swords to any cause.

Round Ships: Round ships are not, actually, round but they are broader across than the galleys used for warfare and piracy (1/6 rather than 1/8 in proportion) and deeper in the draft.

With both oars and sails they make more stately but constant progress than the fleeter ships used for war.

Rune Priests: Torvaldslanders do not worship the Priest Kings, a fact the Priest Kings seem to not be upset by, despite the frequent attempts of the initiates to convert the Torvaldslanders. Instead they worship the old gods and their mythical founder, said to rest in the mountain for when he is needed.

Rune Priests are supposed to intercede with Odin and his compatriots and to read the signs the gods send.

They make sacrifices – though never thralls which are considered unworthy – mark augers, determine truth contests (trials by feats or combat) and when they do make sacrifices, it is usually of bosk.

Running of the Slaves: A game amongst the wagon people the running of the slaves is used to practice capture and to show a warrior's skill over his compatriots and between tribes. A group of slaves sprint for a distant lance while riders attempt to capture them.



Sa-Tarna: Sa-Tarna means 'Life daughter', it is the staple grain of Gor and used primarily to make alcohol and bread.

It produces a slightly yellow flour which results in slightly yellowy bread.

Sa-Tassna: Sa-Tassna means 'Life Mother' and is used to refer to meat of any kind and, further to mean food in general in much the same way 'bread' might be on Earth.

Saber: The saber is a rare weapon, only really being of proper use on tharlarion or kaiila back where the spear or lance is preferred.

Slightly curved and weighty the saber is looked down on by most swordsmen.

Sais: Sais is a small river town on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Sake: Sake is a heady, fragrant, alcoholic drink made by the Pani from rice, their staple grain.

Salerian Federation:

The Salerian Federation is an alliance of four cities, Ti, Port Olni, Lara and Vonda; ruled from Ti by its high administrator Ebullius Gaius Cassius of the warrior caste.

This federation, especially under the control of a warrior, is a source of worry and consternation to Ar and to other powerful city states across Gor. With absolute dominance over the Olni River and the meadows of Saleria – fertile land – the Salerian Federation is a rising power.

Salt Guards: The guards of the Salt Ubar are fanatically loyal to a fault, or were until his fall. In their duties they operated behind hoods, veils and scarves to hide their features so that - should they need a disguise - they could go bare faced.

What they do now – with all their training in intelligence gathering and their skill at arms – is not known.

Salt Leech: A type of leech found in the Vosk delta, the salt leech is used to the salty water and cannot be removed with salt, only fire.

Observations on Sa-Tarna:

While other grain crops are grown on Gor, such as rice, it's sa-tarna which is ubiquitous and found virtually everywhere.

It is able to withstand a huge range of conditions – though it prefers a temperate climate – and to produce a considerable crop yield.

On Earth we would be very worried to have so many fields of exactly the same kind of grain for fear of disease or pests but while there's some spoilage and certain pests still eat their way through sa-tarna, overall everything seems to be in balance.

Is this down to Gorean physicians and scribes selectively breeding the grain or is this another case of suspiciously useful biotechnology? Perhaps I'm just paranoid and – rightly – fearful of the Priest Kings.

Salt Ubar:

The Salt Ubar was the most powerful person in the Tahari, controlling all of the salt trade coming out of the desert. The Salt Ubar was the de facto ruler of all the salt pits and the kingpin of the entire region.

With the fall of the last Salt Ubar and rebellion in the Pits of Klima, trade is less central, more fair and more expensive but the situation is also more unstable.

Salt-Shark:

Salt-Sharks are nine-gilled, long-bodied sharks that live in the salt pits in the Tahari. They hunt at dusk and dawn; ghostly white, smooth skinned and covered in bacterial slime, hunting for whatever creatures of size can be found in the salty waters.

As long as the salt pits have been exploited by men, they have supplemented their diet with the flesh of people and have grown even larger and more dangerous on that diet.

Salt: Salt is found in various forms throughout Gor.

Red and yellow salt is found in the south from salt mines and pits, while white and black salt is found in the north, made from the water of the Thassa or from burning seaweed.

Sames/Waniyanpi: The Red Savages no longer farm, which is a rare case of a society moving away from farming and back to hunter-gathering.

In place of farming they periodically collect grown produce from the communities of the Sames (Waniyanpi as the Red Savages call them).

Sames are agricultural serfs who adhere to an ideology extremely peculiar for the world of Gor, one that disapproves of mating – especially between different sexes – calling it the 'ugly act'.

The Sames are a cult that follow teachings that men and women are the same (though in practice women are considered a little superior). It is blasphemy to examine or criticize the beliefs, and members of the cult take the names of vegetables and wear gray, shapeless robes.

The cult is reinforced with pacifism, acceptance and ritual behavior and phrases such as 'Peace, light, tranquility, contentment, sweetness and goodness unto you'. They regard life and death as unimportant and lack the taboo over the dead as some – including the Red Savages do – so are used to clean and clear the sites of battles.

Waniyanpi means 'tame cattle' in the Red Savage language.



Samnium: Samnium is a city to the southeast of Brundisium and a continental ally of Cos. Despite this alliance it remained relatively untouched by the war between Ar and Cos.

Samos: Samos is a cunning and Machiavellian agent of the Priest Kings who, despite his expertise in tactics and double-dealing doesn't follow

Kaissa – preferring the Kaissa of men and cities.

First Captain of Port Kar's council and First Slaver he has been a member of the council since long before the twenty-fifth of Se'Kara.

A man who has seen a great deal and earned a massive amount of experience, Samos has white hair – rare on Gor – and a red, sunburned face with skin cracked like leather and gold hanging from his ears.

His grand quarters have many levels and at its heart a map room with a grand mosaic depicting all of known Gor.

Sand Flies: When it does rain in the Tahari the desert bursts – briefly – into life to make good use of the water. This includes the sand flies which rise in huge numbers after the rains to mate.

Stinging, biting flies they leave wounds which can become infected if they are not treated and the usual treatment is a poultice of kaiila dung, which is surprisingly effective.

Sandals: The usual Gorean shoes in civilized Gor and all points south, sandals are found across cultures and geography.

Boots tend to be more specialized wear for riding and so forth, though they're more common in the north for warmth. Sandal ties can also be used as improvised thongs to secure captives, another reason that they're popular.

Saphronicus: Saphronicus is a small but well defended merchant fort which takes tribute from the villages around it in exchange for the protection of its mercenaries.

They also enforce a ban of the longbow amongst the villagers, to make life more difficult for bandits and to ensure the peasants don't try to change the nature of their arrangement.

Observations on Samos:

Samos is an intimidating figure but I spent some time with him in Port Kar, talking. Our shared distaste for Kaissa and his fierce curiosity gave us plenty to talk about.

This is a man who probably knows more about the state of Gor as a whole than anyone else, other than the Priest Kings themselves.

His white hair is a curiosity which would suggest, to me, that he might genuinely be very, very old, from a time when the stabilization serums were less effective. It might, also, be down to bleaching by the sun out to sea, I didn't dare to ask.

He was disturbingly interested in Earth.

Observations on the Sardar Fairs:

Gor is becoming more cosmopolitan and open than it was fifty years ago, judging by the records Tarl Cabot kept and what I have heard from people in every city. It's the only thing that has made my travel across the land as 'easy' as it has been.

Before that time Goreans rarely mixed save in times of war or at these Sardar Fairs. If you want to see all of Gor, you'll see it here, but everyone is so busy on their business that it is hard to find anyone to talk to except late at night.

The 'show' belongs to the initiates but it is the merchants who are really running things and making good money off the pilgrims and traders that come here. What was most interesting to me was to spend time with the scribes sharing stories and arguing extremely obscure points of grammar. There was a treasure trove of scrolls from across Gor for copying and that was extremely instructive to me.

Sardar Fair: The Sardar Fairs, held at the gates to the Sardar Mountains, are considered peaceful, neutral ground and are held four times a year on the solstices and equinoxes.

At these times the initiates perform their rituals, sacrifices, observations and have their squabbles over theology and rank. The knowledgeable high castes also use the fairs to spread information amongst one another (especially the scribes).

Treaties and trade take place on a grand scale and the fair celebrates and entertains with many feats, entertainments and grand kaissa matches.

The fairs are governed by merchant law and supported by booth rents and small taxes on sales. It is considered a crime against the Priest Kings to bloody your weapon at the fair and the truce extends to enslavement, which is not permitted either.

It is a convention, held to by Goreans, that all must make the pilgrimage to the Sardar once in their life.

Between the fair site and the Sardar itself lies a timber wall of sharp logs with an iron gate, open only to those seeking death with the Priest Kings as none have ever returned.

Sardar Mountains: The Sardar Mountains are dark mountains of hard and ancient rock, crowned with ice.

A strange field, created by the Priest Kings, stops animals from entering the area and sends compasses spinning. Even tarns grow confused and turn away, unable to navigate in the field.

Any who would leave the grounds of the Sardar Fair to enter the mountains must pass the initiates who challenge with the phrases:

"Do you wish to speak to the Priest-Kings?"

"Do you know what you do?"

If they answer yes a windlass is pulled by a team of blinded slaves to open the gate and a hollow metal bar is rung to mark their passage beyond.

Stairs rise up the mountain to the halls of the Priest Kings with bones along the path and messages cut into the stone.

The new Nest is a complete unknown but the old one was masked with trickery and protected by chained beasts.

Only the desperate madmen, fools and the arrogant who consider themselves invulnerable enter the Sardar. The sick come in search of cures, the narcissistic in search of true immortality and many more come to the mountains seeking power.

Sarm: One of the Priest Kings, Sarm was the first-born and considered himself untouchable and important.

Arrogant and controlling, with the impending death of the old mother, he ordered female and male eggs to be destroyed to perpetuate his rule and to take over once the mother died.

Insane by any standard Sarm, caused the Nest War and in sabotaging the power source of the Priest Kings almost destroyed all of Gor, leaving the Priest Kings weak and disordered.

Saru: A Gorean 'tailless monkey', found mostly in tropical areas. The word is also used as a mildly disparaging name for slaves.

Sayings: Goreans have many sayings and idiomatic phrases. A selection are presented here:

- *"No more than a sneeze' – A trifling, easy thing.*
- *"Do not ask the stones or the trees how to live; they cannot tell you; they do not have tongues; do not ask the wise man how to live, for, if he knows, he will know he cannot tell you; if you would learn how to live do not ask the question; its answer is not in the question but in the answer, which is not in words; do not ask how to live, but, instead, proceed to do so."*
- *"Steel is the coinage of the warrior. With it he purchases what pleases him."*
- *"Superstition proclaimed as truth, will always conquer truth, ridiculed as superstition."*
- *"Within the circle of each man's sword, therein is each man a Ubar."*
- *"A girl who allows herself to be captured desires to be a slave."*
- *"A good fight justifies any cause."*
- *"A handful of bread for a song."*
- *"A man returning to his city is not to be detained."*
- *"A Master takes no interest in the squabbles of slaves."*
- *"A pan of water, a crust of bread, a collar and a camisk—these are what every woman needs—and perhaps not the camisk."*
- *"A steel collar locked on the neck of an Earth girl is perfect."*
- *"A true slave begs to be freed."*
- *"A well curved slave is to be preferred to a well carved spoon."*
- *"A woman's vengeance is not a light thing."*
- *"All women are slaves, it is merely that not all of them are in collars."*
- *"Beggars speak with beggars, and Ubars."*
- *"Beware the sleep that seems to sleep."*
- *"Curiosity is not becoming in a Kajira."*

- *"For a man to be great, he needs great enemies."*
- *"Free women, raised gently, may be plucked like flowers."*
- *"Garbage, collared, ceases to be garbage."*
- *"Generosity is the prerogative of the free man."*
- *"Gold has no caste."*
- *"He who attacks a shadow plays with death."*
- *"He who can bend the longbow cannot be slave."*
- *"He who controls the roads, controls the cities."*
- *"Honor has many voices, many songs."*
- *"I have taken money." - The promise of an assassin.*
- *"I want only the width of my path for as long as it takes me to pass."*
- *"In every woman a free companion seeks her companion and a slave seeks her Master."*
- *"In the cupboards of Port Kar one is as likely to find gold as bread."*
- *"It is better for one man to die than many."*
- *"Kaissa is sometimes played for high stakes."*
- *"Let there be salt between us."*
- *"Many spears may mix the brew." - Things are becoming dangerous.*
- *"Masters do not have to know everything."*
- *"May your water bags never be empty, may you always have water."*
- *"Money has no caste."*
- *"More real than the law is the heart."*
- *"No man respects a woman who knows what else to do with her."*
- *"No musician can be a stranger."*
- *"No sleen may take the tarn road."*
- *"Only a fool buys a woman clothed."*
- *"Only a fool frees a slave."*
- *"Scavengers come to feast on the bodies of wounded tarnsmen."*
- *"She who courts the collar will likely have a successful suit."*
- *"She who identifies with slaves seeks a collar on her neck."*
- *"Something to stir in your wine." - To provoke someone and give them something to think about.*
- *"The chains of a slave girl are heaviest in Port Kar."*
- *"The desert is my mother and my father."*
- *"The gates of many cities have been unlocked with a key of silver."*
- *"The Law of Cos marches with the spear of Cos."*
- *"The laws of a city extend no further than its walls."*
- *"The mouths of rene girls are as large as the delta itself."*
- *"The sword must drink until its thirst is satisfied."*
- *"The wine of riches is a heady wine."*
- *"There are two kinds of women, slaves and slaves."*
- *"There is a time and a place for speaking and a time and a place for steel."*
- *"There is no friendship that can be jeopardized by truth."*
- *"There is only gold and steel."*
- *"Thus, you keep your head." - Pani saying to warn someone they're close to insubordination.*
- *"To a Tuchuk, courage is success."*
- *"To share the kettle of a friend is to dine with an Ubar."*
- *"Tonight, let us drink wine" - A fatalistic saying.*
- *"Warriors have a common home-stone, its name is battle."*
- *"Washing the Bridges in Blood." - To take a city*
- *"When one gains a victory one loses an enemy." - Said with regret.*
- *"Where weapons may not be carried, it is well to carry weapons."*
- *"Women who relish compliments are slaves in their heart."*
- *"Your companion is peril and steel."*

Scanning Room: A chamber within the Nest, four hundred Priest Kings spend their time in there, scanning Gor for information.

A network of small, silver ships and implanted humans and animals act as the scanning sources, rather than satellites.

The ships also carry flame-death projectors to enforce the law of the Priest Kings over the world.

The scanning room is a long chamber on four levels with two sides containing four-hundred, sixteen by sixteen foot cubes.

Scent Tree: A perfumed, flowering tree the scent tree has shocks of lavender leaves and fills the area around it with heady perfumes.

Schendi Gulls: A sea bird native to the land around Schendi. These gulls hunt in shallower waters closer to the cost and nest and roost inland at night.

Schendi: The port city of Schendi is known as the origin of the 'black slavers' to most, but it is a complicated city with more going on than piracy and kidnapping.

Built on a small peninsula called 'Point Schendi' the city is eminently defensible and has forty to fifty ships docked at any one time, including coastal and river ships.

Despite being next to the Thassa very little fish or other produce from the sea is eaten here, due to the prevalence of a poisonous seaweed that taints the flesh of local saltwater fish. For the city, fish are instead caught from the river and produce is traded from all over.

The city is ruled by a merchant council and merchant law presides over its courts. Besides the slavers, fishermen and traders the city is full of leather workers tanning kailiauk hide and preserving furs from inland. The city is also famous for its sapphires, dug out of the ground in the area and worked into animal shapes – most commonly the panther.

A bustling metropolis for Gor, perhaps a million people live in Schendi and frequent its many docks and wharves, its fine slave markets and its canals. Even fifty pasangs out to sea the scent of spices from its markets can be detected, along with the mark of dark sediment entering the water from the river. Notable locations within Schendi include the Golden Kailiauk paga tavern, the slave-selling Market of Kovu and Utukufu Square, a favored begging spot.

Schools: Parents, clans and castes tend to take care of the training and education of their own but more advanced and noteworthy schools for talented and intelligent Gorean boys exist in Harfax, Besnit, Venna and Brundisium.

Free girls in wealthy families may have private tutors but are almost never sent away to schools as this is considered unsafe.

Scimitar: A curved blade of the desert tribes, effective at parting the chain and cloth that they wear. Scimitars are kept as sharp as possible, sharp enough to divide a dropped scrap of silk.

Scimitarus: The scimitarus is a two-handed scimitar used from tharlaron and kaila-back.

Observations on Education:

Gorean education is very practical and while it is confined to the castes and the roles within them it does follow a child's gifts and desires as much as possible and if they are very much interested in the skills of another caste, they can change caste.

The private schools are for the elite of the elite and the skills taught there are general skills, mathematics, writing, leadership skills, politics, history and Old Gorean.

Scormus of Ar:

Scormus of Ar, despite his young age – only nineteen at the time – was the high champion of Kaissa.

After a defeat at the En'Kara fair he disappeared.

Scroll Reader: The scroll reader is a

mechanical device which winds scrolls through carefully and gently for reading. The device allows for rapid movement through a scroll and helps to preserve them from harm.

Sea Dragons: The Sea Dragons are mythical creatures, far more vast and dangerous than any tharlaron.

Myth would have it that they exist in the deep Thassa to guard the borders of the world.

Sea of Fire: The Sea of Fire is an area of ocean on the direct route to the Pani islands disturbed by a great amount of volcanic activity. Ash is thrown high into the air, the sea opens up like a hole, heat rises, water steams and boils and rock rises and falls from the deep, streaming and gushing with lava.

Sea of Stones: The Kur name for the asteroid belt, and similar areas within our solar system (such as Saturn's rings) within which hide the Steel Worlds.

Sea Snails: Sea snails of many kinds are found on Gor but without qualifying which type it refers to the kinds of sea snails frequently found in the bilges of ships.

These are edible – helping starving sailors to survive – and can also be used as bait.

Sea-Tharlarion: Sea-tharlarion come in many different types, fast and slow, vegetarian, mass eaters and predators.

The most common kinds are the large ones that attack shoals of fish and the shark-like predators.

Smaller ones swarm in packs, little more than teeth and tail, predatory shoals that can take down even large prey.

Secondary Roads: Graveled and rutted, sometimes paved with various materials, secondary roads are less important than military roads and so their upkeep and construction is haphazard at best.

They are also narrower than military roads and passing other travelers in wagons will require going onto the verge.

Goreans travel on the left.

Seduction Slave: Under the rules of some cities it is illegal – punishable by enslavement – for a free woman to have a dalliance with someone else's slave without permission.

Because of this many handsome male slaves have been bought and trained in the arts of seduction specifically to woo, and thus enslave, free women. This can be done for revenge or to fulfill contracts.

This is the law in Ar and the slave actor Milo was one of the city's most effective seduction slaves.

Semris: Semris is a small town known for its livestock market and famous for the quality of its tarsks.

Despite its small size it is relatively wealthy and has invested much of that wealth in its square with its commemorate statues, memorial columns, fountains, temple and civic buildings.

Serving in the Modality of the She Sleen/ She Quadruped: A type of slave service. A slave serving in this fashion must move on all fours, eat and drink without using their hands and is denied speech.

It can be a punishment, or for a Master's amusement.

Shaba: Shaba was a scribe and an agent of Priest Kings, but he was obsessed with exploration and finding the source of the Ua River.

His obsession was so strong that he fled both Priest Kings and Kur in his journey up the river, having fooled Bila Huruma into financing the expedition and building the boats he needed.

Tall, tattooed and confident he also controlled one of the Kur's invisibility rings which he wore along with an ost venom fang ring.

Shaba died of disease at the end of his journey, the lake that was the source of the Ua was named in his honor and his discoveries returned to his caste.

She-Tharlarion: To call a woman a she-tharlarion is an insult comparable to 'bitch' or 'snake'.

She-Urts: She-urts are the vagabond free women of Port Kar, though similar are found in other cities.

The women form gangs for mutual protection and to share the results of their thieving, begging and scavenging.

Different groups lay claim to different canals and alleys, sometimes whoring themselves for a bit of extra coin.

Shelter Trench: A survival technique taught in the Tahari, a shelter trench is dug to keep oneself shaded from the sun for the maximum amount of time possible.

Shield: Shields on Gor are mostly made in a Greek style and used alongside a spear or sword.

They are round, brightly colored and decorated with personal or city devices.

Torvaldsland shields are round with a central buckle, leather, hide and wood bounded with iron or bronze.

In the interior light hide shields are the norm, more used to turn aside attacks than absorb them.

Ship Lice: The close quarters in slave holds are ripe for the spread of parasites.

A particular form – ship lice – is frequently found and its eggs can wait in a hold for some time until warm bodies to feed on arrive.

Ship lice prefer hair, so many slaves are shaved before transit, or at the first indication of an outbreak.



Ship of Tersites:

The Ship of Tersites is an enormous fortress of wood, the largest ship ever built on Gor, with many innovations brought to the giant vessel by the mad shipwright Tersites - for which the ship is named.

It carries six light galleys as support vessels, can carry thousands of men and a hundred and seventy tarns beneath the decks.

The ship is a hundred and ten yards long, forty yards wide and nine decks high.

Ship Ritual: Before heading out to sea it is tradition for ship captains to make offerings.

The nature of the offerings varies by culture but in civilized Gor a typical offering is to pour oil, wine and salt into the sea and to dedicate it to the Priest Kings and the Thassa.

Ship, Tarn: Warships are known as the 'tarns of the sea' and the Dorna of Tarna is typical of this class of ship.

She is carvel built with two to six inch planking and a single mast. She has a single bank of oars and is a hundred and twenty-eight feet long at the keel and sixteen feet wide, standing five feet above the water. Her shallow draft means she can be beached and below the water line she has an iron-shod ram in the shape of a tarn beak. She has castles at the stem and stern, side rudders, two movable turrets, two light swivel catapults, two chain-slinging onagers, eight springals and sheering blades for destroying oars.

Ships of

Torvaldsland: The ships of Torvaldsland are famous for their seaworthiness and, while they lack the power of the ram ships of civilized Gor, the sight of them can bring terror to merchant shipping or coastal towns.

A typical ship of Torvaldsland would be twenty benches with forty oars, each with two men on the oar. Square sailed they're tarred to protect from water and ship worms. Their deck planks are loose and can be lifted to create additional space for cargo, covered with bosk hides to protect from rain and spray.

Men sleep on the deck or amongst the cargo in sea-sleen skin sleeping bags.

At the top of the mast is a circle of wood covered in sleen fur for holding lookout, it has rings you can tie or chain yourself to in order to remain secure.

A long boat is towed behind the ship for making landings or expeditions.

Ships Weapons: Ships are armed with various weapons to try and damage, disable or destroy each other. They arm themselves with springals, small catapults on rotating platforms, chain-slinging onagers, bowmen, javelins and burning pitch. Rams and boarding actions are some

of the most effective weapons, along with fire.

Ships: Ships carry three sails normally and sometimes a fourth sail. The fair-weather sail is for good conditions, tarn sails for combat (a balance between speed and maneuverability), storm sails for withstanding harsh weather and sometimes a tharlaron sail for slow and careful maneuvering.

Slaves are often tied to the fronts of ships as

figureheads, to taunt other ships and to display their goods as they come into port.

Shops: Shops use local produce to make their products, unless such is completely unavailable.

Shops open at dawn and close at sunset – or when a city's curfew come into effect.

Many shops offer refreshments to oil the wheels of commerce and lots of them also serve breakfast for the first few customers of the day to encourage people in to buy the new stock.

Observations on Ships:

The Ship of Tersites has caused a degree of uproar amongst the naval powers and coastal cities. Knowing they can sail further and that many of the innovations Tersities came up with are valid – despite his madness – seems to have led to something of an arms race to build their own larger ships. Port Kar seems to have an advantage here, having many craftsmen who worked directly with Tersites.

The Pani already had ships capable of making the voyage, they simply hadn't tried often, or achieved success.

Everywhere the survivors of the crew of Tersites ship are sought out to help with the construction of new vessels and Tersites himself is still out there somewhere with his floating fortress. Gor may be about to enter the age of sail, only without cannons.

Short Bow, Northern: The northern short bow is much stockier and heavier and fires short, heavy arrows. It has a short range but hits hard within that distance.

Short Bow: The short bow is a light, easy to use bow that is typically used by women to hunt small prey.

Siba: Siba is a small river town on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Siege Weapons: City sieges are the final stages of any Gorean conflict, the city state being the usual form of governance and seat of power. Cities are, as a consequence, heavily defended with great walls and within those walls each cylinder and compound is its own fortress.

Gorean sieges are long affairs and cunning tricks are generally of far greater use than brute force.

Siege weapons include tall, wheeled, fireproof towers, giant grapnels which can be used to tear down walls or capsize ships, mines, trenches, counter-mining, catapults, ladders and mass attacks by fighting slaves offered freedom in exchange for service.

Signal Bars: Signal bars are used to mark time and other events in cities.

Personal chronometers are rare – through choice and lifestyle as much as cost, so the signal bars allow for a whole city to keep proper, if loose, time.

Signature Perfumes: Signature perfumes are made for specific women by skilled perfumers with unique recipes for each woman.

Different houses have their own unique reputations and types of perfumes and ingredients that they specialize in.

Signs: Many signs for roads, shops, areas of the city are symbolic – though there is rarely any commonality to the meaning of a particular icon or sign.

As many lower caste Goreans and slaves are illiterate the colorful, painted, stylized signs help them make their way around a city and contribute to the sensory delight of a Gorean metropolis.

Silk Girl: Silk girl is a disparaging term used to refer to the slaves of the south. It is said with particular venom by the bondmaids of the north who regard 'prissy' silk girls to be useless and weak.

Silk War: Two hundred years ago there was war in the Tahari over control of the caravan routes and the lucrative trade in Turian silk.

Observations on Time:

Gorean life is slow and unburied by Earth standards. Time is a fluid concept; everyone takes their time about what they are doing. It is somewhat surreal to sit in the center of a bustling metropolis and to see people taking their time, paying attention to each other and not merely hurrying from meeting to meeting or home to office.

Silk: Silk-like fibers can be found from native Gorean animals but true silk is made from silkworms found on mulberry bushes, both of which were brought from Earth.

Silken Sleen: Silken sleen are miniature, smooth-coated sleen kept as pets – primarily by free women.

They are predatory but lack the same killer instinct as the wild breeds.

Silver Leaf: The silver leaf is the mark and sign of the city of Treve. It appears on their shields and livery and is used as a tag to mark their captures.

Silver Ship: The space ships in the service of the Priest Kings, the silver ships are broad, silvery discs with entrances and exits on the side. They are bulbously curved, silent and leave no trace of their passage or presence.

Their top speed is unknown, but it takes little more than a day or two to fly from Earth to Gor. Many of these ships are controlled remotely from the Sardar, rather than piloted.

Silver Tube: More of a construction tool than a weapon per se, the silver tube is a device of the Priest Kings that unleashes a disrupting force that can break apart solid matter, disintegrating it. Denser material takes longer, but all things come apart under its beam eventually.

Sim Plants: Sim plants are large, tangled rambling vines with huge rolling leaves.

They are grown in the Nest in order to feed the domesticated arthropod 'cows' that produce Gur. Sim plants are sticky, sweet smelling and full of sap.

Sip Root: Sip root is a bitter tasting root found in the Barrens. Slave wine is made from it.

In its raw state, chewed and sucked, it can make a woman unable to conceive for four to six weeks while when it is refined into slave wine the effect is indefinite.

Sirik: The Sirik is a light chain favored for female slaves.

A Turian ring collar is fitted and connected with light chain to wrist and ankle rings, the chain about a foot longer than needed to allow for play of the chain and the sound of it dragging and sliding.

Sista: A musical instrument.

Sixty: The number 'sixty' is thought of as the 'greater number' or the 'Priest King's number' due to the high number of factors contained within it. This is also why it is used in the most popular deck of cards – though this is mildly sacrilegious.

Skerry of Einar: The Skerry of Einar is a small, rocky island marking the traditional border between Torvaldsland and the south.

A rune-stone here acts as the historical marker of the beginning and founding of the land.

Skjern: An exchange island, technically falling under merchant law, Skjern owes more to Torvaldsland's culture than the more civilized merchants of the south, but makes a good site for the exchange of prisoners and the sale of goods between north and south.

Slave Auction: Slave auctions are theater, commerce and community. The main block is the centre of the action where the best slaves are put up for sale with the most pomp and ceremony while the side blocks are where bulk sales and bargains might be found.

Slaves are traditionally sold barefoot and branded – selling a slave without a brand is illegal in many cities.

Traditionally the auction houses are treated like livestock markets, with straw on the floor and the 'produce' sold from wooden blocks before tiered seats. Slaves are brought to a height of sexual arousal or fear before being taken to the block, the better to sell them on their charms.

Private auctions are held in closed chambers to sell controversial high-caste women who have become slaves.

Slave Barge: Slave barges are used to move stock along rivers and canals. They are tall – and somewhat unstable – shuttered with stocks and bars for chains.

Slave Bells: Slave bells are lightly jingling bells, attached to anklets, bracelets and chains that emphasize a girl's movements. Popular indoors and in paga taverns, they are rarely worn outdoors as they frequently enrage free women and result in the slave girl being attacked.

Slave Box: The slave box is a punishment for slaves, an iron cube that grows hot and stifling in the sun.



Slave Bracelets: Slave bracelets are cuffs for slaves, light but functional, sometimes ornate and bejeweled, but always strong enough to hold a slave. Men's slave bracelets are heavier and stronger, without ornate designs or jewels, and are often made from simple, black, iron. These heavier manacles are the preferred slave bracelets for men and women alike in the north.

Slave Feed: Slaves can be fed with normal food, but are often fed with plain gruel, food pellets, biscuits and fruits and vegetables. Slaves are also fed scraps from their owner's table – if they are feeling indulgent.

Diets are carefully controlled by owners to make slim and fit slaves (by Gorean standards, which prefer fitness to slenderness).

Some owners prefer larger slaves and create diets accordingly. Men of the Tahari in particular prefer larger, plumper slaves.

Slave fights: Male slaves are put to hand to hand combat with one another, often in addition to their other duties.

These fights are fought with wrapped fists,

punching, kicking and holds but are not fought, intentionally, to the death.

A referee is always present with a whip to break up the fights should the slaves get carried away.

Female fighting slaves also exist, but their fights are usually - but not always - gentler, more like wrestling matches than boxing or to the death.

There are exceptions.

Slave goad: Operating on the same principle – but lower power – than a tarn goad, the slave goad shocks and causes the sensation of hot pain when struck against skin.

A dial can be switched up or down for different levels of pain. The slave goad is generally only used by professional slavers, most Goreans preferring to stick to more traditional methods, like the whip.

Slave Gown: A longer slave garment, sleeveless but hanging to the ankles, is sometimes worn by slaves when serving a mixed company of free men and women.

This gives the men some hint of their loveliness, while sparing the worst of the free women's blushes.

Slave Hood: Slave hoods are dark cloth or leather hoods that are placed over slave's heads so that they cannot see. Hoods are used to lead slaves, keep them ignorant and to stop them recognizing their mate during breeding.

Slave Litany: There are many slave litanies, prayers in effect, or pledges. The most common comes in the form of a call and response between slave and master.

Q: What is that on your neck?

A: A collar.

Q: What sort of collar?

A: A slave collar.

Q: Why is it on you?

A: It is on me because I am a slave.

Q: What is a slave?

A: Property.

Q: And what are the duties of such a property?

A: To please her master, in all ways, to the best of her ability.

Q: Whose collar do you wear?

A: I wear your collar, Master.

Another example of a slave litany runs:

I know nothing of what it is to be a slave.

I will be taught.

I will learn.

am now worthless.

That is true, and I acknowledge it freely.

But I may be permitted to attain some minimal worth, as a slave.

That is my hope.

It is the only hope for me.

Accordingly, I beg to be a slave.

I beg to be permitted to serve masters, in all ways, instantly, perfectly, and unquestioningly.

I am a slave.

Embond me, legally, that I may serve openly, as the slave I am.

Slave Manuals: Prition is the most famous and well regarded guide to the training, breaking and care of slaves, but there are others with their own considered value. Amongst these are the Manuals of the Pens of Mira, Leonora's Compendium, the Songs of Dina and the Nature and Arts of the Female Slave.

Slave Orgasm: A slave orgasm is a multiple, layered, forced deep orgasm induced in slaves by their masters. A slave is allowed no shame and no restraint and as slavery deepens, so does access to the deeper levels of sexual pleasure.

Slave Paces: Slave paces are ways of testing a slave girl's capabilities and worth.

Orders are called out and the slave transitions between the positions and movements called to her.

Floor movements are those made in a prone position upon the floor while other movements are made standing.

Slavers and experienced buyers can tell the potential worth of a slave by how she moves.

Slave Veils: It is rare in most of Gor for a slave to go veiled, though some free women veil their personal body slaves and attendants.

In the Tahari it is much more common and most, if not all, slaves wear veils there. In both cases these veils are nothing like the layered veils of free women, but are scanty and thin instead.

Slave Vest: The slave vest is a Tahari slave garment, considered exotic or costuming elsewhere.

This is a tight, high garment that leaves the slave belly bared.

Slave Wars: The Slave Wars were a series of great, historical battles fought between the middle cities of Gor in order to acquire slaves from each other.

The Slave Wars formed the basis of merchant law regarding slaves and much of the codification of slave conventions in general.

Slave Whip: A standard slave whip is designed to cause more pain than actual, physical harm.

It has five straps and lays those strands over much of the body. Whips for true punishment may be thicker, longer or even have sand or glass glued to their loops.

A female slave will rarely, if ever, be whipped with such a device as it would reduce her value through scarring.

Slave Wine: Processed sip root, called slave wine, is used to prevent conception. Older versions lasted a few months while newer versions last indefinitely.

Bitter, black and foul tasting, slaves resent having to take slave wine and it is sometimes administered purely as a punishment.

Slave Wire: Slave wire is a thin, sharp wire that can cut skin and flesh.

It is made similarly to tarn wire but is a little less strong and a little less sharp.

Slave wire also has barbs and blades attached to it in order that it be visible – essential to its purpose of keeping slaves in their pens.

Slave Yoke: Slave yokes are usually reserved for male slaves due to their weight.

They are used for punishment and control – especially of dangerous slaves.

Typically made of wood, shod in metal there are some more exotic kinds such as those in Tharna, made of silver.

Some are fitted with horns or blades and slaves are made to fight in them.

Observations on Whips:

I haven't been able to stomach the application of the whip to a slave myself yet, fortunately those I have had dealings with have not put me into a situation where a Gorean would resort to it.

There are those on Earth who find pain pleasurable to inflict or receive, but there would be little punishment to it if that were the case here.

Goreans believe in the utility of the whip and will often subject a new slave to the whip as one of the first things they do, but they do see it as a punishment. Even so, I have heard slaves beg to be whipped, if they are 'displeasing'.

Observations on Earth Slavery:

When you learn of the slaving operations of Kur and Priest King agents on Earth it's shocking. How could they get away with this? Surely someone would notice? I'm given to understand, however, that they have contacts with government, police and other groups trading who-knows-what for free pickings.

Given the number of people that simply go missing every year it's easy enough to account for the slaving and that's just the recorded ones. With government and industry on side there could be many more that we never hear about.

Slaver's kiss: A so-called 'slaver's kiss' is a bruising, biting kiss to bruise the lips and taste the blood of a slave.

Slavers on Earth:

Slavers – mostly from the Kur since the fall of the old Priest King Nest – operate on Earth. There they employ masks, fake uniforms, networks of informants and traffickers, bribery and corruption to access the women they seek to enslave.

They use psychological hounding, tracking devices and intimidation to sway their targets and then capture them with tranquilizing drugs and place them in transport tubes for transportation to Gor.

In some remote places and secret compounds slaves are traded on Earth and a select few are brought there from Gor to serve the agents of the Kur.

Slavery: Gor is built on slavery as its core institution.

The reason for this universality is not known but it could be anything from the designs of Priest kings and their view of human nature, to Gor's status as an enforced, pre-industrial society.

A man who saves a woman's life can claim her as property and oath breaking, contract breaking and legal penalties can all accomplish the same aim. Otherwise slaves might be taken in caravan raids, tarn raids or in war.

Freeing a slave is deserving of reward from their parents, though many parents still disown those who have been enslaved and, if her captor desires, she can be his free companion, without the need for a dowry.

Similarly many of these conditions apply to male slaves, but in this case most are taken in war as prisoners, and subsequently enslaved.

Slaves: Slaves are the defining feature of most Gorean societies and, of the slaveries that exist; it is institutionalized female slavery and attitudes towards it as a natural state of affairs that differ from Earth-bound, historical slavery.

Despite this, the slave population is not as high as one might suppose.

Perhaps two percent of the total female population in civilized Gor is enslaved (with exceptions like Tharna where it is much higher) and there are perhaps one tenth that amount of male slaves.

More recently the conflict between Ar and Cos has flooded the market with slaves of both kinds but sooner or later the old equilibrium will be reached again.

Slaves are considered livestock and are completely under the authority and control of their owners in every regard, even to life and death. Diet and exercise are controlled and enforced, disobedience is cruelly and creatively punished, and the position of pleasure or silk slave is a rare one – most slaves toiling in relative anonymity in kitchens and businesses.



Relationships between slaves are frowned upon, though friendships and rivalries are tolerated. When slaves are bred it is usually with another slave for the purposes of creating bred-slave bloodlines but masters and mistresses will sometimes mate with their slaves, freeing them for the requisite time to make the resulting child fully free.

Slaves are rarely freed but it can happen for love, convenience, sentimentality or in times of war or need. Women who have been slaves rarely entirely recover

and many court slavery again.

Tastes in pleasure slaves vary by culture and region. The men of the Tahari and interior find pale, red haired or blond girls fascinating while darker skinned slaves are found fascinating in the north. The Gorean aesthetic tends to find the curvier body more attractive and in the Tahari this often crosses the line into genuine plumpness or fatness. Auburn hair commands a high price in any market and specialist training such as dancing also increases the value of slave flesh.

Intelligence is also a highly valued trait which makes slaves generally more useful and better conversationalists.

Slaves are branded and wear collars to mark their ownership.

Some slaves are not privately owned but are, rather, owned by the state or by businesses and used as workers, messengers and as tokens in trade or hospitality.

Men and women of Earth are regarded as natural slaves and the men in particular are regarded as weak and pliable, making them very popular as silk slaves for free women, far safer than males from Gor.

Slaves do not even have their own names, being named by their owners and this name being subject to change at any time for any reason.

Observations on Slavery:

Slavery is wrong.

This is an unquestioned tenet of modern, Earth morality.

We have divested ourselves, at least in some ways of it, and slavery today is more outsourced sweat-shops, war zones and a tiny amount of trafficking. Still, we never eliminated it.

On Gor it is a way of life and it is expected. Women are considered natural slaves and slavery is seen as a fitting punishment for a host of crimes. Those who lose in battle expect to be taken slave; those who win expect to take slaves.

It is the whole society, the whole expectation and there is nowhere to run because in terms of slavery at least, Gor is virtually a monoculture and considers it right and proper that the weak give way to the strong.

Sleen: The Sleen is a six-legged, serpentine-bodied, mammalian carnivore.

Fast and dangerous it exists in many different forms but the most usual is a stinking creature with a scent not unlike that of a weasel or ferret.

It snuffles and grunts, emits dog like whines and tastes the air with its whiskered snout. Young ones may be up to eight feet long while fully grown ones may be as much as twenty feet long. Sleen

mate for life and raise four babies at a time in their burrows.

Various sleen are found all over Gor – save the jungles – and are hunted almost as much as they are domesticated.



Sleen are amenable to domestication and are trained and owned for use in war, guarding, herding, trailing and hunting.

Wild sleen are dangerous and can run in large packs that even domesticated sleen will revert to their wild state in the presence of. In the wild they live in burrows and will also dig into the ground to avoid bad weather.

Sleen are cunning beasts and, in a state of nature, live in capacious burrows. These burrows usually have at least three entrances so that the sleen always has different points to escape to, or to hunt from.

Sleen Knife: Fighting the sinuous and predatory sleen is difficult at the best of times and close combat with a knife is not the best circumstance, but the sleen knife is designed to both kill a sleen in close combat and to skin it after victory.

Sleen Tribe: The Sleen are a tribe of Red Savages whose totem is the sleen and who often wear sleen skins, as Red Savage scouts of all the tribes do.

They consider themselves fierce combatants with more of a penchant for slaughter than counting coup.

The Sun Lances, one of their warrior societies, is particularly keen on fighting.

Sleen, Forest: Forest sleen are amongst the larger kind of sleen. Stealthy, dangerous and with the merciless tracking instinct of their brothers they pose a significant danger to anyone traveling the forests.

Sleen, Herd: Herd sleen are domesticated sleen that are used to police and protect herds and to guard encampments.

They respond only to the voice of their master and when their master dies they must be killed or they quickly revert to their wild state.

Amongst the wagon people the killed sleen are eaten as an act to honor the lost herdsman and to let the sleen die as usefully as it lived.

Sleen, Prairie: Seven feet long, furred, scurrying on six legs with broad, viper-like heads. Prairie sleen can lay low, hide in the grass and move with tremendous speed on the attack.

Observations on Sleen:

Sleen are grotesque and there's nothing else quite like them. They look like some people's idea of a basilisk in some ways.

They don't seem to fit with a lot of the rest of the Gorean animal life which might mean they're another transplanted creature, some time in the distant past.

Given their bulk it's amazing that they listen to anyone and I greatly admire the sleen tamers who train them to do so many different things without being attacked - most of the time.

Sleen, Sea: Black or brown, sea sleen are tusked and flat-nosed and are voracious and vicious predators, not unlike leopard seals.

Some are migratory, following their prey, while others hibernate under the ice in packs until the spring.

Slees: The slees is a small rodent found on the jungle floor of the interior.

Sleeve Dagger: Sleeve daggers are hidden blades, kept in the sleeves of the Pani and often used by assassins.

Slime Worm: The slime worm is a creature of The Nest and was – and is – used as a sewerage device.

Slime worms eat waste, reducing its mass and making it safer to use to cultivate fungus. Many of them are found near the golden beetle dens.

Smoke bombs: Barrels fired from catapults, smoke bombs are lit aflame before being fired and can fill a considerable area with smoke to cover an advance or hide an action from view.

The recipe for the chemicals contained within is a secret of the caste of builders.

Snow Lart: The snow lart is an opportunistic predator and scavenger of the north.

Four legged and ten inches high it survives by eating bird eggs and preying on leem.

Song Drama: Song dramas are a form of theatre similar to opera but sung in common Gorean.

Special amplifying masks are used and character importance is shown by height and size with this being enhanced through costume such as shoulder frames and platform shoes.

Spear: The standard Gorean spear, used in civilized Gor by the phalanxes and soldiers of the city states, is seven feet long with an eighteen inch long tapering blade.

Spiked Gauntlets: Spiked gauntlets are a weapon used by slaves in deadly bouts or in the gladiatorial arenas.

They are heavy, leather gloves with sharp spikes driven through them, emerging from the knuckles and the back of the hand.

Sport Slave: Sport slaves are run for hunters to pursue. This is an opportunity to escape but the slave is typically naked and may be partially bound, while their pursuers are armed and often on tharlaron back.

Sport slaves may be recaptured or killed and being designated a sport slave may be considered a form of execution or punishment for crimes.

Stabbing Spear: The weapon that – along with changes in tactics – allowed Bila Huruma to build his empire was the stabbing spear.

This much shorter and broad bladed spear is wickedly effective in close combat, especially against the more traditional, longer, more unwieldy spears of the other tribes, fulfilling a similar role to the gladius in civilized Gor.

Stabilization Serums: Stabilization serums are the drugs administered to render Goreans physically immortal. They are usually administered in the early to mid twenties, eighteen is considered to be too young.

Observations on Immortality:

Immortality, at least physical immortality, has been available to the Goreans for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. At least since the days of Matthew Cabot in Earth's thirteen-hundreds.

Why then, is Gor not completely overpopulated?

Several reasons I think. War curbs their numbers, access to slaves and effective contraception means that birth rates are relatively low and with the ability to live a long time there's little of the sense of urgency that a shorter lived person might feel to make a family.

Gor is a plentiful world for the most part and on our own world we see how longevity, good living and contraception have cut our birth rates to the point where some populations are in decline. It must be much the same, humans are humans after all.

The effect varies, sometimes people begin to age again after a few hundred years, sometimes they still age, but very slowly. The effect is usually transmitted from father and mother to child, activating at around the right age, but this is not absolutely certain.

The drug arrests aging, replenishes and rejuvenates brain tissue and prevents senility as well as physical degradation.

There are other versions of the serums that can induce rapid maturation, age someone to death or reverse aging to bring someone back to the peak of their youth – or even further.

These age-reversal serums are used by slavers on Earth to find 'faded beauties' and to restore them to a condition worthy of enslavement.

Steel Worlds: The Kurii live in artificial habitats transported from their home world into the solar system or built since they arrived. These are called the 'Steel Worlds' and some are cylindrical while others are spherical or otherwise shaped.

They spin for gravitation and are planted with forests and other habitats as well as being stocked with animals – some Gorean, some from their long lost home world, some from Earth.

The Steel Worlds are kept with light and gravity similar to Gor in order to acclimate the Kurii to the environment that they intend to conquer. Each habitat is shielded from detection using technology and positioning, lurking behind asteroids and moons and using stealth technology to avoid detection by Earth based telescopes or radar and similar detection by the Priest Kings.

Mirrors are used to concentrate sunlight for heat, light and power along with other power plants of various types.

The Steel Worlds are surrounded by armour above their metal hulls made up of slag, stone and steel. Near the main worlds smaller satellites cluster for recreation, hunting, additional agriculture and so forth.

Automated shuttles link the worlds together, both the main steel worlds and their various subordinate structures.

Within the worlds the Kur live in artificial cliffs, in 'caves' with climbing frames and gripping surfaces. Internal weather control can be used as a weapon, and gravity varies within the worlds and can be increased or decreased. In low gravity areas it's possible to fly using harnesses, with only one's muscle power.

Steel: Despite being made by hand, Gorean steel is incredibly advanced, strong and holds an edge amazingly well.

The caste of builders can produce longer pieces of steel to high grade and that – along with the skill of stonecutters and the lower gravity – allows for the grand towers of the cities to be built.

Gorean steel weapons are tempered in wine, which is supposed to impart special qualities and waken the blade to a thirst for blood.

Stimulation Cage: A stimulation cage is a tool used in slave training and discipline. Ornately barred and low ceilinged, so a slave can never stand fully erect.

The stimulation cage is relatively roomy but kept secluded so that the slaves in there do not get to look at men at all until they leave.

The stimulation cage contains cosmetics, perfumes, jewelry, textured surfaces, all designed to take a slave to a high level of sensitivity.

Stones of Turmus: The Stones of Turmus is a Turian merchant outpost, licensed to store goods. It is defended by white walls, eighty feet high and six towers. Two gate towers and one at each corner.

The outpost is defended by a hundred guards and five officers, with twenty other support staff and thirty or so slave girls.

Story Skin: Story skins are used by the Red Savages to write down prompts in the forms of pictures to help tell a story.

Red Savage reverence for stories and fear of the medicine world means they never lie when painting stories on skin.

Strangers: The words for 'stranger' and 'enemy' are the same in Gorean. To name someone stranger is to name them your enemy and this is reflective of, justifiable, Gorean paranoia of unknown people.

Stream of Torvald: The Stream of Torvald is the name given to a current of warm water in the Thassa, moving against the north of the Gorean continent. This warms Torvaldsland making it far more clement than it otherwise would be.

Stun Beam: A weapon used by the Kur and some of their agents, the stun beam is a flashlight sized weapon which fires a ray that can render someone numb and unconscious.

Sul: Suls are a potato-like vegetable, thick and starchy, that grows as golden-brown tubers.

Sul Paga: Sul Paga is a distilled, strong alcohol made from suls. It is not dissimilar to vodka.

Sullage: A common Gorean soup/pottage made with suls, tur-pah leaves and kes shrub roots.

Sulport: Sulport is a small river town on the Vosk, named for its principle item in trade. It is a member of the Vosk league.

Sumomo: Shogun Yamada's sons were killed to preserve his rule, his daughters – however – were trained to serve the shogunate in various capacities.

Sumomo was trained as a spy in the house of Yamada, planted there to keep an eye on his opposition.

Her failure led to her being sentenced to execution from which she was saved – and enslaved – by the warrior Tajima who then renamed her Nezumi.

Sun Gates: Many cities have 'sun gates'. These gates are opened at dawn to admit visitors, traders and travelers and closed again at dusk. Under normal circumstances for strangers this is the only way to get into and out of the city and if you stay past dusk you will need to find somewhere to stay or be in breach of city laws.

Sun Sect: A small and uncommon cult in civilized Gor, the Sun Sect worships the sun, rather than the Priest Kings. The initiates would like to get rid of them but to most they are simply an amusing aberration.

Surrender: Placing down your sword and spear signifies that you are willing to parlay, a temporary truce. Breaking them and laying them down is what is required to mark a true and total surrender.

A city that surrenders to end a siege will have its male population decimated (one in ten men killed), its officers executed and a third of its women taken as slaves by the victor.

This seems harsh, but to a city about to collapse this formalized surrender and exchange can prevent further losses and damage.

Observations on The Stream of Torvald:

This works like the Gulf Stream on Earth, warm water flowing against the coast and bringing warm wet weather with it that makes Torvaldsland more temperate. Still, it is not as warm and wet as England, more like the north of Scotland or Scandinavia.

Swamp Forest:

North of Ar and bordering on that city, the Swamp Forest is home to the Swamp Spiders, intelligent, giant spiders that

weave great webs and tend the forest.

Swamp Spiders: Gentle, intelligent, arachnid-like creatures the swamp spiders live in the swamp forest to the north of Ar, spinning their webs and tending that sodden forest.

Educated and intelligent they speak through translation devices of the same sort used by the Kur and the Priest Kings.

Obsessively rational and logical the spider people do not harm rational creatures no matter how pressed.

The swamp spiders are treated poorly by the men of Ar, hunted on occasion and their silk farmed, stolen or traded with the city.



Observations on the Swamp Spiders:

Once I heard of the swamp spiders I insisted on seeing them, though nobody understood my desire.

The swamp spiders are not found anywhere else on Gor outside of the swamps near Ar. Despite this nobody seems that interested in them.

For my part it was a chance to hold a proper conversation with a truly alien species. The spiders are a strange lot, pacifist to a fault and obsessed with the puzzle of sentience and rationality. I can see why they would bore Goreans



Swamp Trees: Swamp trees rise out of the swamps on twisted mounds of roots, parasitically entwined with creepers and vines.

Clusters create islands of stable mud in swamps and deltas, a welcome respite from wading.

Sweat Lodge: The Red Savages use their sweat lodges for vision quests and to seek medicine helpers – personal spirit guides - that will help them in their day to day lives.

A sweat lodge is like a sauna, stifling and hot and those on vision quests fast and cover their bodies in white clay to mask their smell and show their commitment. The resulting hallucinations are taken very seriously indeed.

Sweat Scarf: A scarf worn by Goren labourers to wipe their faces of sweat and to keep the dust from their lungs.

Unfortunately these scarves also make good disguises for bandits and other ne'er-do-wells.

Sword Brother: Sword brothers are men who have fought together or against one another, drawing blood and surviving.

It is a sign of mutual respect and is grounds for strong friendship and alliance.

Sword Pledge: A sword pledge is an oath sworn to an Ubar to serve them for as long as they are worthy to be served and to kill them if they fail to live up to their honor and to be worthy of ruling.

Sword: The common sword of civilized Gor is some 20-22 inches in length with a double edge and a point for stabbing, somewhat similar to a Roman gladius. Larger versions more similar to a spatha are also found.

Gorean men prefer to sharpen their own blades, only trusting themselves to do it and slaves not being permitted to touch weapons under pain of death.



T'Zshal: A kennel master at the Pits of Klima, T'Zshal is a man of cruel humor and fondness for the whip.

Sarcastic and domineering he still has some traces of twisted honor despite his time in such an horrific place. He may once have been a warrior, since he refused to use poison to deal with The Old One (a gigantic salt shark that hunted his salt collectors) despite having been wounded by it in the past.

In the end he bested The Old One, suffering several terrible injuries. When the Pits were liberated he chose to remain as its master:

'Better to be first in Klima than second in Tor.'

T'Zshal led the rebellion that united the all of the salt pits and is now, effectively, the new Salt Ubar.

Ta Grapes: Ta Grapes are grown on the terraces of Cos. They are small, purple and somewhat tart, usable for making wine and for eating – typically with cheeses.

Ta wine, made from these grapes, is sought after but hard to get away from the islands.

Ta-Teera: The Ta-Teera is an artfully made 'slave rag', made to look ragged and threadbare but fastened at the side with hooks to tantalizingly expose flesh and to suggest that it can be torn aside and the slave used with ease.

Ta-Thassa Mountains: The Ta-Thassa Mountains border the sea in the south.

Tabor: Tabor is an island city, an exchange island run under merchant law and whose merchants are notorious for the extent and precision of their record keeping.

The island is named for its shape – that of a drum called a 'tabor'.

Because of the strict controls and record keeping undertaken by the merchants of Tabor it attracts less black and gray market trade, making it trustworthy, but one of the lesser exchange islands.

Tabor: The tabor is a small hand drum, held with one arm and played with the other.

Tabuk, Northern: A different breed of tabuk, the northern species stands ten hands at the shoulder and has a singular, spiral horn a yard in length protruding from their head.

Their fur is the warmest to be found anywhere with hollow fibers that trap air for insulation.

Observations on Tabuk:

Like much of Gor's animals the Tabuks are enormous, megafauna. Where they differ somewhat from the historical versions of this life on Earth is that they're not as 'primitive'. They have had far longer to evolve, develop and specialize.

How humans have ever managed to survive and thrive on this world, given its animal life, is beyond me.

Tabuk: The tabuk is an antelope or deer-like creature capable of leaping as much as thirty feet when fleeing predators at speed.

They can reach as much as ten to fifteen feet in height and have a single horn

protruding from them.

The northern tabuk is larger, with a spiral horn while the prairie tabuk is smaller and often lays down to hide from predators (in the long grass) than leaping and jumping away.

Tabuk prefer the cover of thickets – such as ka-la-na thickets, but will venture out into meadows and fields in search of other food.

Tabuk's Ford: Tabuk's Ford is a large village, worked by forty families. It is surrounded by a palisade and is at the centre of a broad circle of fields, forming the hub of them.

The land is rich but they are also known for breeding and training excellent sleen.

Tafa: Tafa is a small river town on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League.

Tahari Tribes: The strongest tribes are the Kavars and the Aretai, while lesser tribes include the Char, Kashini, Ta'Kara, Raviri, Tashid, Luraz and Bakah. These tribes may have vassal tribes, the Aretai, for example, retain the Tajuk, Zevar and Arani as vassal tribes.

Tahari: The Tahari is a unique region of Gor with many traditions and ways of its own. The border cities have one culture, the tribes of the desert another and the settled oases yet another – yet all are men of the Tahari.

Large tribes of nomads have subsidiary, vassal tribes due to the tradition that conquered enemies become allies, gaining strength and joining the winning side. Vassal tribes, however, that go to war do so without guarantee of being aided by their sponsors.

Much of Tahari culture revolves around food and drink. Travelers empty their water bags into an inn or home's cistern and draw fresh water from the well. Sharing salt, water or tea is a sign of trust, bonding and the status of guest.

Travelers in the desert are not allowed to make maps and any that are found are destroyed and their owners or makers killed.

Free women in the Tahari sometimes wear bells and it is not controversial or an invitation to the collar. Slaves, however, do frequently go veiled, even if it is a very thin veil, the mouth has a charged eroticism in the desert region that it does not elsewhere.

Slave brands are in the Taharic 'kef' a more floral letter in their own alphabet. Slaves from the Tahari do not use their hair for drying or wiping and to do so is considered a massive degradation and punishment, far more than elsewhere.



There is a fondness for plumper slaves and pale skinned, blond or red-headed girls from the north. A slaves stride and pace is also considered a key factor in her worth.

The Wastes is the name given to the worst regions of the desert, the windblown and near waterless emptiness where only very deep wells – two hundred feet or more – or the rare oasis provides water.

When the rain does come the dust of the desert is turned into knee deep mud with frightening rapidity and kaiila get spooked and panicked.

Tahari men have a loose and relaxed attitude to many things and a much more strict attitude on others. In measurements, for example, a 'tef' means a fistful, hardly a precise measure, while six 'tef' are called a 'tefa' – or tiny basket. Five 'tefa' is a 'huda', another measurement.

Taharic: Taharic is the Tahari alphabet. It is mostly a simple substitution cipher but has signs only for four of the nine vowel sounds found in standard Gorean. Purists leave out all the vowel sounds when writing in Taharic.

Tal: A greeting phrase, commonly used across Gor accompanied by a raised hand with a flat palm.

Talena: Talena is, or to the Gorean mind was, the daughter of Marlenus of Ar. A powerful woman in her own right thanks to her mastery of the kind of social politics that Marlenus himself disdained.

Admired for her beauty across Gor, her bright green eyes, raven hair and olive skin made her a classical beauty, while her status as a daughter of Marlenus made her haughty and arrogant.

Stolen, along with Ar's home-stone, by Tarl Cabot she was disgraced and disowned following her enslavement and her admission of her reduced status while held by Panther Girls. Marlenus disowned her as an embarrassment, as expected by tradition in Goreans of such high status.

Eventually she was freed and put, in disgrace, in rooms in the high towers of Ar by her father.

After Marlenus' own disappearance and the march of Cos upon Ar she emerged back into power, a cats-paw of the Cosians to weaken Ar and claim power over what was left of her once great city,

With the rising of Ar she again fled and was again enslaved, found and used as a tool of leverage over Tarl Cabot by the Priest Kings and their agents. Now she, once his companion and now his slave, is back with the man of Earth.

Talender: Talenders are common, yellow flowers associated with beauty and passion.

They're a symbolic flower for slaves with a deep association with slavery, being common but pretty. Worn in the hair as a symbol it shows a slave cares for her master and it is a popular name for slaves.

Tamber Clam: The tamber clam, found in the tamber gulf region, is much valued for its iridescent shell which is used a great deal in decoration.

Tamber Gulf: The tamber gulf is a part of the Thassa that carves into the mainland. The Vosk Delta empties into it and Port Kar and Brundisium both lie on its shores.

Tambor: A shaken, rattled or beaten musical instrument, something between a drum and a tambourine.

Tanagers: A jungle bird from the interior.

Tancred's Landing: Tancred's Landing is a small settlement on the Vosk and a member of the Vosk League. Tancred's Landing is named for its founder, Tancred.

Tapestries: Tapestries are a popular form of decoration in civilized Gor. They are made in the Renaissance style and depict events important to the city, family, caste or clan.

Tarl the Older: Tarl the Older was the man who instructed Tarl in the ways of Gorean combat and arms.

A brilliant teacher and master at arms, Tarl the Older is a huge, hulking, blonde viking of a man with a craggy face and fierce blue eyes.

He is a trusted confidante of Matthew Cabot – Tarl's father and Ubar of Ko-Ro-Ba – and a fierce defender of the city and his Ubar.

Tarn Cot/Cote: Tarn cots are 'stables' for tarns. Suitably roomy for their large occupiers they contain perches to which the tarns are chained along with walkways, stairs and cages to prevent the tarns eating their trainers and feeders.

The roofs are convex, with platforms for tarns to take off, land and get in and out of the cot.

Tarn Death: The tarn death is a mode of execution wherein the prisoner is tied with ropes to two great tarns which then take off to fly in two different directions, tearing the prisoner apart in mid air.

Tarn Drums: Enormous, powerful drums the tarn drums are used to signal tarnsmen during battle so that they can obey orders.

Tarn Lice: Tarn lice live in the feathers of tarns, most especially in the feathers around the neck where they cannot groom themselves. The lice are the size of large marbles when swollen with blood and are similar to ticks, though their grip is not as strong.

Observations on Tarn Lice:

Having seen tarnsmen do this to their mounts I can see how it's good for the tarn and forms a bond with the rider, but I have never seen anything so utterly disgusting in my life.

I suppose they must not bite people but still, the sight of a tick the size of your thumb, or a handful of them, is disgusting at a visceral level.

Tarnsmen and keepers scrape and pull these lice from the necks of tarns and feed them to the birds by slapping them against the Tarn's tongue as a treat.



Tarn Racing: Tarn racing is a popular sport with great team allegiance.

Specially bred tarns – chosen for speed – fly through padded hoops in a circuit, vying for position.

Nets lie under the course to catch riders and stunned birds but many birds suffer such injuries in crashes that they have to be killed.

Twelve rings mark the standard course, hanging from chains on supporting towers.

Tarn Saddle: Tarn saddles are affixed to a tarn's back to hold the rider through the bird's fast maneuvers and turns.

A five step looped ladder hangs to one side to climb aboard and the saddle is strapped around leaving room for the bird's wings to move.

There are six straps to steer the bird in six directions, each rein a different color and pulled through different rings.

A stirrup is commonly attached for the re-cocking of a crossbow and the rider is further strapped to the saddle itself.

Some tarns will recognize commands like 'one strap!' from training, meaning they can be steered with vocal commands.

Tarn Whistle: Tarnsmen carry tarn whistles which can blow a shrill, carefully tuned note that an individual tarn is trained to respond to.

This 'summons' the tarn from wherever it is. If man and tarn have been separated while hunting or fighting it can bring the steed back to its rider with great speed.

Tarn Wire: Tarn wire is used to protect cities and camps from enemy tarns. A great web or net of razor sharp wire, it can cut to the bone and has been known to strip wings from tarns flying at speed. Out of the sun it is virtually invisible.

Lassos of tarn wire are sometimes used as weapons but this is considered dishonorable and horrifying as it cuts to the bone and leaves crippling injuries for life if it does not kill.

Tarn-Goad: Forbidden to be used as a weapon, the tarn-goad is a metal stick with a switch that releases a shower of hot, shocking sparks when struck against a target. This is used to control and discipline tarns but its use against men is forbidden by the codes.

Tarna: Tarna was a bandit chieftain and agent of the Kurii within the Tahari desert, working to set the tribes against one another by masquerading her men as members of those tribes and committing atrocities.

She marked her male slaves with women's names and gave her own slaves anklets rather than collars.

A beautiful woman with pouting lips beneath her clothing, she was skilled with a sword and a shrewd commander but unwise in her leadership skills and her treatment of men. She was also too curious about her own sexual nature.

Ruined by Tarl and Hassan she fell slave with the thwarting of the Kurii plans.

Tarnburg: A mountain fortress city in the Southern Voltai, some two-hundred pasangs northwest of Hochburg.

Dietrich of Tarnburg, the famous mercenary, hails from there.

Tarns: Tarns are gigantic birds, their size and power made possible by the lower gravity and higher oxygen of Gor's atmosphere.

Powerfully strong, tarns can carry seven to ten men on a knotted rope beneath them along with their rider.

Vicious and predatory they fly in flocks of alpha males with an entourage of females and beta males.

Tarns vary in color from black to tan and white, with the most common being a greenish brown with a crest like a jay.

Jungle tarns are much more brightly plumaged, shimmering and colorful. In other capacities they most resemble hawks and can have their sharp claws and beaks shod with steel for combat.

Humans have bred several different kinds for speed, combat ability or to carry cargo.

Tarns are notoriously hard to control and train and will often turn on and kill people if they are not treated with careful, wary respect.

They are land birds and hate the water, refusing – violently - to fly over it, unless they are already out to sea. The use of tarns in naval warfare was an innovation brought by Port Kar, releasing tarns from covered ships only once land was no longer in sight.

Goreans believe the ability to master a tarn – or not – is an innate quality one is born with and cannot be trained.

In a dive, a tarn can exceed two hundred miles per hour and this speed and power is used to back the lance a tarnsman is armed with (along with his crossbow), a devastating strike that can shatter armor and kill the most powerful beast.

Tarnsmen: Tarnsmen are an elite group in Gorean combat, similar in prestige to a medieval knight or the trained samurai of feudal Japan.

A tarnsmen is anyone who can fly a tarn but it most commonly refers to those warriors who fight from tarnback.

A tarn must first accept its rider, then the training begins, especially in the lasso, lance and crossbow.

A tarnsmen's first mission is to capture a slave from a rival city and this is what confirms him to join the elite.

Tarnsmen are organised by group (two-hundred), century (one-hundred), squadron (twenty), flight (ten) and pride (five).

Tarsiers: Nocturnal jungle animals of the interior, tarsiers are greatly similar to the creatures found on Earth of the same name.

Tarsks: Tarsk are pig-like, bristled, shaggy-maned, four-legged, hooped mammals with multiple sharp tusks (as many as six).

Observations on Tarns:

Tarns are simply shocking to see up close. In the air they could be almost any other bird but once they land you get a true appreciation of how large and powerful they are. Such a bird could never exist on Earth with its lower oxygen atmosphere and higher gravity. They are even larger than the argentavis, the largest prehistoric bird to ever fly on Earth, a sort of gigantic condor. Like the buildings, tarns just seem wrong, like they shouldn't work or exist.

The small domestic variety is merely grumpy while the wild ones are viciously ill tempered and aggressive.

The giant tarsk, measuring as much as ten hands at the shoulder, is particularly dangerous and hunted with lances from tarn-back.

Tassa Powder: Tassa powder is a fast acting knock out drug when mixed with drink or food.

Reddish in colour when mixed with water it is usually mixed with wine to disguise it when it is used.

It takes effect within a minute or two and in old or unwell people has hangover-like effects.

Tasta: The tasta is a soft, sweet candy mounted on a stick and commonly served at fairs and other events. It is also a slang term for slave girls with the same sort of meaning as 'candy' or 'pudding'.

Taurentians: Taurentians are the elite palace guard of Ar, a hand-picked group of the best soldiers, loyal to the throne of Ar and marked by their purple cloaks and helmets.

Technology: Gorean technology is a mess of contradictions. The strict control of the Priest Kings ensure that military – and related – technologies are stagnated while medical and other technologies have developed to a much higher degree than on Earth.

Another factor is the caste system, which like the guilds of medieval Earth hide and protect their ideas and secrets within their own structures.

The value given to craftsmanship is another factor, valuing the individual craftsman, over the idea of a production line.

Teletus: Teletus is one of the merchant controlled exchange islands. Like many exchange islands it has a largely transient population and relatively few locals.

The law there is fairly strictly enforced, making it a lesser one of the exchange islands, more stable but less open to pirates and smugglers.

Telima: Telima is a rencher and became an agent of the Kurii in the marshes.

She is a cunning hunter, good with the throwing sticks used to hunt in the delta, pretty and vain.

For a time while Tarl Cabot was enslaved she was his mistress, calling him 'pretty slave'. She too was enslaved in her turn, but returned to the marshes.

Telnus: Telnus is the capital city of the island of Cos, home to the island's best harbor and the palace of Lurius of Jad, the ambitious, rich and gross Ubar of the whole island.

Its port is vast and encircled by great defensive walls, much like the city itself. Each entrance is guarded by two large, round towers, armed to the teeth against invaders.

The Chatka and Curla is one of 'Telnus' more notorious paga taverns, named and themed after the culture of the Wagon People.

Tem Trees: Tem trees are flexible trees of dark wood. They're especially flexible when young and very strong because of it.

The wood is often used for lances and spears as it will flex before snapping or shivering and leaving a man weaponless.

Temmu: Lord Temmu is a powerful lord on the Pani islands and stood in opposition to the Shogun.

His long rebellion was almost shattered, especially once the Kur joined forces with the Shogun, but his ancient familial fortress and the intervention of mainland Goreans arranged by the Priest Kings lead to a state of stalemate and shared power.

Temus of Ar: A brewer of paga, Temus of Ar is thought to make the best brew on all of Gor.

Tersites: Half mad, half blind, the legendary shipwright Tersites was responsible for many innovations in the construction of ships on Gor including the oar-shears used on warships.

Banished from various cities because of his insane ideas and his lack of respect for the Priest Kings (or, indeed, any superstition), he eventually washed up in Port Kar, the only city that might tolerate his madness.

There he built a great ship but burned it, arguing that it was 'wrong' somehow and so even his welcome in Port Kar came to an end.

He fell in with Pani refugees who, desperate to return to their lands and rejoin the battle against the Shogun, hired him to build his great ship to carry them back to the islands.

The enormous Ship of Tersites was the result, a floating fortress carrying men and tarns further out to sea than ever before and opening trade and relations with the Pani islands.

Brilliant, despite his madness, Tersites offered no oil or salt to placate the Thassa before his great voyage, regarding it as superstition but angering his sailors.

He used the curvature of Gor and the powerful northern winds to sail west faster and further than any before.

The Ship of Tersites had many innovations, a metal reinforced hull, four masts, twin rudders, a specialised tarn-hold, all ideas of Tersites that none would countenance before.

He, and his ship, have sailed on seeking further shores and stranger lands and some of his innovations are now being adopted.

Tertiary roads: Gorean tertiary roads are little more than dirt tracks, often without names.

Teslit: Teslit is a small village, famous only for the battle that took place there between Ven and Harfax in history.

The village has been abandoned in recent conflicts but the land is fertile, the water plentiful and the area an important tactical position so, no doubt, it will be re-occupied in time.

Test of Twelve Arrows: A form of Pani 'justice', the Test of Twelve Arrows has an archer fire arrows one after another at the man who protests his innocence or righteousness.

He must deflect them with a sword to prove himself. This is more an 'amusing' form of execution than a true test.

Tests: If leadership of a village is contested amongst the peasants and the matter cannot be settled by any other means it is settled by a fight to the death by the Test of Five Arrows, Test of Wood or the Test of Knives.

In the Test of Arrows the two combatants enter the emptied village from different sides with five arrows each and the one who emerges alive is leader.

In the Test of Knives both men enter a thicket with a dagger and again, whoever survives is leader. In the Test of Wood this is a staff fight, to the death.

Tetrapoli: One of the larger river towns on the Vosk River, Tetrapoli was once four towns, founded by four brothers. The towns (Ri, Teibar, Heiban and Azdak) grew until they ran into each other and were consolidated into Tetrapoli, which means 'four cities' in Gorean.

Tetrapoli is a leading member of the Vosk League.

Observations on Tersites:

Tersites demonstrates, I think, that innovation and change is possible despite the technology laws of the Priest Kings and that some of the restrictions are more to do with traditions and taboos that have grown up around them.

It takes a madman to challenge the established order to the extent Tersites did and to risk both the wrath of the Priest Kings and the initiates. I certainly wouldn't have the guts to push the envelope only to be struck without warning, out of the void, by the blue fire.

Tharlarion Boots:

Tharlarion have rough hides which can scrape and cut the flesh of their riders.

Tharlarion riders and cavalry wear thigh high soft leather boots to protect themselves.

Tharlarion Lance:

The Tharlarion Lance is a long, solid spear

used by mounted warriors.

Tharlarion Oil: Harvested from the glands and fat of tharlarion, this oil burns very well and is used in many lamps and lanterns.

Tharlarion Saddle: Tharlarion saddles are remarkably technical. The pace and movement of a tharlarion creates a bumpy ride, jolting the bones of those who ride them.

A shock absorber is built into the saddle on an hydraulic fitting that keeps the rider close to level. A thick leather belt also helps keep the rider in position.

Tharlaron, Broad: Broad, draft or 'low' tharlaron are monstrous, four-footed creatures yoked in braces to pull mighty wagons. They can be as wide as a bus and are herbivorous.

Tharlaron need a lot of tending and encouragement to move.

Tharlaron, High: High tharlaron are riding beasts, used by warriors who cannot tame tarns and as a heavier mount to the kaiila.

High tharlaron are sometimes shod with steel claws to aid in combat and are trained to respond to voice commands and smacks of the lance.

They move in a bounding, lurching fashion, twenty men's paces at a time.

High tharlaron are carnivorous but have slow metabolisms.

Tharlaron, River: River tharlaron are broad-bodied, scaly, web-footed creatures with long necks, using their bulk to ignore and avoid predators.

Tharlaron, Swamp: Swamp tharlaron are amphibious, frog-like creatures with long, brown, adhesive tongues that hook like tentacles. They have webbed feet and tooth ridges instead of actual teeth.

It is unlikely that they are actually 'tharlaron' in the manner that other beasts of that name are, but they are similar enough to be called such.

Tharna: Tharna is a strange city that has been through seismic shifts in its culture and nature.

Nearly fifty years ago the city was overturned by a revolution and changed dramatically.

Before then Tharna was known as an industrious and sober city, open to visitors of any kind – unusual for Gor in that period.

The men there wore gray tunics, their caste marked only by an armband, and all were watched by guards in the blue helmets and shields of Tharna.

Free women walked freely, unescorted, hidden behind silver masks. There were few – if any – slaves of either sex in evidence. The high bridges were railed, the men emotionally crushed and lacking in self respect, and the city free of music and paga taverns.



The city was a trap, men who came there found no place to stay and were captured and imprisoned to be put to work in the silver mines; Tharna's source of wealth.

Tharna was ruled, in this time, by the golden-masked Tatrix, a form of female Ubar, advised by a council of silver-masked women.

There were no pleasure slaves and all slaves were kept outside the city, owned by the state and worked on its farms or in the mines. The men of Tharna were forbidden to touch women and pregnancies were handled dispassionately by the caste of physicians, rather than by messy couplings.

A revolt that began in the mines spread to the men of Tharna who rose up and overturned this old order, reasserting and exceeding the old male dominance of Tharna's past. By the old tradition women were placed on a scarlet rug and bound with yellow cords to be brought into slavery with a recitation.

"Weep, Free Maiden. Remember your pride and weep."

"Remember your laughter and weep."

"Remember you were my enemy and weep."

"Now you are my helpless captive."

"Remember you stood against me."

"Now you lie at my feet."

"I have bound you with yellow cords."

"I have placed you on the scarlet rug."

"Thus by the laws of Tharna do I claim you."

"Remember you were free."

"Know now you are my slave."

"Weep, Slave Girl."

The woman is then unbound and taken for the first time to mark her new ownership.

Now Tharna is a proud, free city again, its men known to be strong and fierce warriors and valued as mercenaries. It is said that all women of Tharna are now slaves and are raised to be slaves from the very first while men are raised to be masters.

Men now make an oath of mastery on the home stone of the city and are given the yellow cords that mark a man of Tharna while women are symbolically bound and enslaved at their coming of age in a similar ceremony.

There are now virtually no free women in Tharna and women across Gor fear a Tharnan master for his uncompromising strength and lingering distrust of women.

The city is now ruled by a council and an administrator, Kron, one of the leading rebels of the mine revolts.

Thassa: The Thassa is Gor's ocean, respected and treated almost like a female deity.

The Thassa is supposed to have no further shore and to be cut off by mountains or sea dragons, or to have a far edge that spills into the void.

The discovery of the Pani threatens this long held superstition.

Theatrical Troupes: Theatrical groups and entertainers are rogues and outcasts, moving from city to city to escape those they owe money to or have offended.

Entertainers of this kind are denied funeral pyres or burial, considered unclean, but despite this are also thought interesting and even loved.

Entertainers must petition for permission to perform – save at the Sardar Fairs – and licenses must be given which only last a week. Bribes to ensure these permissions and the best performance spots are expected and demanded.

In more high class performances the roles are all played by men – often masked – while in lower entertainments women, especially slaves, are better represented.

Thentis: Thentis is a lofty Gorean city, high in the Thentis Mountains. The city is somewhat remote from the affairs of Gor, but is famed for the quality of its tarn flocks and for black wine. The black wine is grown on the slopes of its unassailable mountains and is much valued across Gor.

Clark of Thentis is a famous slaver of Thentis, powerful, rich and an agent of the Priest Kings.

Thera: Thera is one of the Farther Islands, beyond Cos and Tyros.

Thing: The Thing is a great meeting of the Torvaldslanders, their equivalent of a Sardar Fair, and a means to bring all of Torvaldsland together.

There are contests of wrestling, tug of war, stone tossing, feats of arms, arm wrestling, swimming, mast climbing, jumping, oar walking, spear throwing, poetry, rhyming, riddle guessing and bat and ball.

Talmits (headbands) are given to those who excel in these games and sports.

It is also an excuse for the jarls to meet and discuss politics, problems, alliances and other problems facing their people as a whole.

The Thing is under a binding promise of peace, but weapons are allowed to be carried. Duels are also permitted to take place but usually only do over big stakes such as ownership of a farm, a ship – or of women.

Thorstein Camp: Thorstein Camp, lead by Thorstein, is a settlement of fighting men in southern Torvaldsland claiming tribute from villages as much as fifty pasangs away.

Thralls: 'Thrall' is the term for male slaves that is used in the north.

Thralls are given a little more leeway in Torvaldsland as compared with the south and more often tossed a bondsmaid (slave girls are called this in Torvaldsland) to entertain them.

Many thralls are captured men of the south whom Torvaldslanders tend to regard as weak and pampered.

Throwing Knives: Besides the quiva, throwing knives are relatively rare, but there is a type used in Ar, small and tapered on one side.

Throwing sticks: Throwing sticks are similar to hunting boomerangs. A curved, wing-like stick used by peasant girls and rencers to hunt prey – especially gants.

Ti: Ti is the capital city of the Salerian Federation (Lara, Port Olini, Ti and Vonda) and its largest and most populous city.

Ebullius Gaius Cassius is the administrator of Ti and the High Administrator of the whole Salerian Federation.

Ti lies on the Olni and is the furthest city of the Federation from the confluence of the Olni and Vosk.

Two hundred years ago Ti and Port Olni were rivals and in their war Ti won. This is commemorated with a great statue of five warriors and two slaves, surrounded by a frieze that tells the tale of the war.

Tiffany Collins: A model from Earth, Tiffany was chosen to be taken to Gor because of her looks and because of her resemblance – almost perfect – to Sheila, Tatrix of Corcyrus.

Educated in many aspects of Gorean life, clothing and habits she was informed she would be pretending to be Sheila and was slowly brought into public life, albeit at a distance from the people.

Tiffany was being set up to take the 'fall' for the real Tatrix as unrest grew in Corcyrus and war broke out with Argentum. The war went poorly and Corcyrus began to starve. The people called for her death for leading them astray and the guards found it hard to protect her – not that this was truly their aim. Soon the enemy was within a hundred pasangs and Ar had joined their cause, rendering resistance futile.

Captured in the sacking of the palace Tiffany was placed in a cage before she was freed by mysterious agents.

Running for her life she fell into the slavery of Speusippus, a cruel and ugly man intending to hand her over for a reward. She tried to flee but again was caught, her vaccination mark and fillings showing her barbarian status and ensuring her fate of being chained, used, enslaved and sold as a work slave in the mills of Ar.

Catching the eye of Aemillanus, nephew of Mintar - the mill owner - she and a chain sister were trained up with thoughts of going into the business of providing feast slaves.

Proving her worth she was put to work and at one of these feasts discovered that a hunter pursued her – or rather Sheila – and had slean on her scent.

She also discovered she was now worth one and a half thousand gold tarns in bounty.

Later the sleen seemed to be on her scent but turned aside and rooted out the real Sheila who was then captured and Tiffany's place as a double was revealed.

Before Argentum's new council the truth of it was finally revealed and Sheila and her compatriots were exposed as agents of the Kur.

Tins: Sealed tins and boxes are used to store food when traveling and the tin boxes can be used to cook their contents in.

Toilets: Toilets on Gor are typically rather primitive. Chamberpots are emptied into vats which, in turn, are emptied into larger city pits, or put to industrial or agricultural uses.

Tomahawk: A stone-bladed weapon of the red savages, the tomahawk is suitable for both close combat and throwing.

Topaz: Undivided the Topaz was once the home-stone of Victoria. Broken it served as a symbol for the river pirates until they were defeated and the stone recovered.

Now the two halves serve as a reminder between Port Cos and Ar's Station that they are allies who fought together against the pirates.

Put together the stone's whorls and colors seem to form the image of a ship.

Tor: Tor is a great city on the northwest border of the Tahari, a gateway to the desert and its oasis communities.

Well fortified (in concentric rings about its wells) and well watered, Tor is filled with gardens and colorfully plastered mud brick buildings.

As a home to many great trade caravans it has fortified warehouses to protect them and their goods and also houses a great many craftsmen exporting their wares to the wider world and into the oases.

Tor is especially known for its dates, gold wire, rugs and fine, decorative cloth.

It is a hilly, rocky city with crooked narrow streets and huge numbers of cafés competing for business. Tor's guardsmen are identified by red sashes, turbans and sheathes for their swords. The Golden Collar and the Silver Chain are medium-priced, popular cafés in Tor, owned by Haran.

Torcadino: The city of Torcadino rests on the flats of Serpeto. It is a crossroad city on both the Pilgrim's Road to the Sardar and the Genesian Road that links to the southern coast.

Observations on Tor:

Knowing the originating Earth cultures as I do it is interesting to see what conventions and ideas remain and which fade away when transplanted to Gor.

The clothing constrictions found elsewhere on Gor are stronger here, extending even to slaves, and alcohol can be hard to find, though it is not explicitly banned as a whole and is more frowned upon. Gorean ideals held elsewhere, such as hospitality are stronger here as well.

During the war with Cos, Torcadino was allied with Ar but reluctant to get involved. Its loyalty – or at least its neutrality – was bought with Cosian gold.

Torcadino relies on two great aqueducts to supply it with water,

each more than a hundred pasangs long, great and admirable feats of engineering, guarded at their terminus by well fortified guard stations.

Torch: This 'torch' is a hand-held burner used by Earth slavers in the service of the Kur. It projects a beam like a laser which can ignite wood and paper, and turn metal to slag leaving little or no evidence behind.

Torm: Torm is a renown master of the Caste of Scribes. Long-suffering tutor to Tarl Cabot when he first came to Gor, Torm stands high in the councils of Ko-Ro-Ba.

Sandy haired with pale blue eyes, needle nosed and averse to the sun, Torm is a messy, disorganized, disheveled man with a constant feeling of being cold.

Brilliant in his way, loving learning for the sake of learning, he is shrewd and kind, hiding it beneath a wicked sense of humor.

Torvald: Torvald is the legendary hero and founder of Torvaldsland.

In tales he is the greatest, most fearless warrior and stories tell of astounding feats and great heroics and battles. He is a symbol for all the people of the region.

Torvaldsberg: The Torvaldsberg is a spear-tip shaped mountain beneath which Torvald is said to sleep until he is needed. It's a dangerous mountain some seventeen thousand feet high.

At very the top is Torvald's Tomb in a hidden cave. It is empty, but shows some limited signs of habitation and contains the War Arrow, symbolic to summoning all of Torvaldsland to war.

Torvaldsland: Torvaldsland is a relatively temperate zone in the north of Gor, warmed by the currents of the sea and with a climate similar to northern Britain or Scandinavia on Earth.

Its culture is peculiar for Gor, acknowledging but not worshiping the Priest Kings, forsaking them for their own gods of old.

Amongst Torvaldslanders giving honor increases one's own and they are great gift givers and praisers of each other, with the host expected to give the most praise and the greatest gifts.

Most Torvaldslanders, even the wealthy, are illiterate while rune priests and skalds have the gift of writing.

Men on most of Gor are expansive with their emotions but Torvaldslanders are more reticent, especially to cry or express sorrow.

Common amongst the men of Torvaldsland is The Fury, a battle madness that banishes fear and makes them stronger, tougher, able to suffer great wounds and fight on.

Torvaldsland itself is a bleak and harsh country with thin, patchy soil that means farms and settlements must be spread out and cities are not practical. Food is often short and famine is not unknown, part of the reason that the men raid to the south and that so much fishing is done. In times of famine Torvaldslanders eat bark, lichen and seaweed to fill their bellies and to try to survive until the harvest season.

Sailors of Torvaldsland, as a matter of pride, do not rely on the needle compass and find their way by knowing the waters and studying the stars.

Kaissa is a passion in Torvaldsland, perhaps even more so than in the south and on voyages it is played on special boards with pegged pieces so they are not disturbed or lost by the motion of the sea.

Torvaldsland was founded only a thousand or so years ago, around the year 970 on Earth and bears many cultural hallmarks of the far north from that time. Slaves refer to their masters as 'jarl' in Torvaldsland and 'jarl' is also the honorific for the leaders of settlements.

Torvaldslanders like their slaves to be sturdy and large breasted, suitable to their preference for rough lovemaking. In particular they look for a broad 'love cradle', the width of a girl's hips.

Considered crude and rough by much of Gor, Torvaldslanders appreciate their own crafts and ways deeply. They just hold the southern cultures in contempt and do not value their art, breaking it to pieces and valuing it by the weight of gold and silver, rather than the artifice.

Tospit: Tospits are small, wrinkled, yellowy fruit similar in appearance to a peach but about the size of a plum. They grow on bushes and are quite bitter – but edible.

They have an odd number of seeds – most of the time – and when they are chosen to be eaten they are eaten with honey or sugared syrup. They're especially good for vitamin C.

Tower Slave Position: A more 'demure' kneeling position for slave girls in non-pleasure duties or around free women, the tower slave position is to kneel with ones legs together and one's palms down, resting on her thighs.

Tower Slave: A tower slave is a servant of the high castes, serving in the high cylinders of the great cities. A tower slave is typically more of a maid and personal servant than a pleasure slave.

Translator: The translator is a device for translating different languages. The Gorean version is about the size of an old, mechanical typewriter and can translate between four different languages with a vocabulary of twenty-five thousand words in each. Subtle communication is impossible with such a device and it is rarely used save by scribes.

Smaller, portable versions with much more extensive vocabularies are used by the spider people, the Kur and the Priest Kings. Translators are typically only found amongst scribes, or slavers who regularly take fresh barbarians.

Transportation Disk: Used in The Nest, Transportation disks hover and fly by the power of volatile gas. The treated metal they are made from is partially gravity resistant allowing for extremely fast movement and turning.

Treve, City of: Treve is a proud, warlike city high in the Voltai range. The only way to get to it is on tarnback and it is a very fierce, very insular, very defensive city that lives a parasitic existence by raiding other cities. Without the food and goods Treve steals, and the small amount of wealth from their silver mines and verr herds, the city would not be viable.

Treve's tarnsmen are unmatched, most famous of all Rask of Treve.

They are almost aerial pirates, tossing goods to the crowds when they return to roost in the Seven Towers of War.

Beneath the city lies a warren of tunnels, pits and prisons filled with Treve's enemies and traitors.

The arrogant city has almost no free women and those few well defended, it even has its own brand, the 'T' of Treve.

Tridents: Small tridents are used in fishing, the extra points compensating for the distortion of the water. Larger ones are used to push ladders from walls and to attack climbers.

Tuchuks: The Tuchuks are thought the most fierce and powerful of the Wagon People tribes. Their standard is four bosk horns, which they also mark their slaves with.

Tufted Fisher: The tufted fisher is a river bird, found in the jungles of the interior. It has a tufted crest which it flashes to mark its territory. It dives in and out of the waters found in the forest, hunting frogs, small snakes and fish fry.

Tumits: The tumit is a large, vicious, flightless bird as tall as a man with a long neck terminating in a razor sharp beak as long as a forearm. The tumit also has vicious claws and can run at great speed.

Tundra: In the frozen north no normal bow or crossbow can be used as it would break. Only a bow made of horn can be drawn and even then is only of use out to around thirty yards.

The land in the tundra is very bleak with little cover and cold enough that urine freezes before it hits the ground. The cold, dense air means the slightest sound can be heard over great distances, making hunting even more difficult and the frequent auroras can light up the night making things even harder.

There is virtually no vegetation even in the southern parts, save in the spring and the diet of the Red Hunters is virtually all meat.



Tunics: The usual attire of men on Gor is the tunic, dyed in caste colors and tied at the waist. Tunics appear in various forms and at various level of quality but are worn at one time or another by men of every caste and station.

Tunnels: Goreans love tunnels and build many of them beneath their compounds, houses and under their farms, stables and business concerns. These provide cover and concealment during raids and sieges. and places to store secret supplies. They're excellent places for slaves and owners to hide.

Observations on Tunnels:

I think the love of secret spaces and of contingency plans is another aspect of Gorean immortality. They can afford to think long term and in thinking long term consider many possibilities.

Tunnels, chambers, secret doors, hidden panels all of these afford them extra options should things go wrong in their city or should they need to hide and survive. Gor must be riddled with more architectural secrets than any place on Earth has ever had.

Tur Trees: The tur tree is a lofty, red-wooded tree that can grow to two hundred feet or more in height.

Turia is named for the tree, which grows in large numbers near that city. The tur tree's size makes it useful for making the long timbers that are used to make ship frames.

Tur-Pah: Tur-pah is a parasitic vine-like plant that grows on the trunks and branches of Tur trees. Its round, scarlet leaves are edible and are used much like spinach or young cabbage.

Turban: Turbans are worn by lower castes in desert areas as head protection from the sun and as a cushion for loads. They are also popular to identify guardsmen (red turbans) and may be used by various castes to make them easier to identify in markets by their caste colours.

Turia: Turia is one of the greatest cities of Gor, rivaling even Ar in its grandeur, size and power. Behind its high walls, pierced by nine gates, it sits defiant in the midst of the wide plains that are claimed by the Wagon People.

Caravans ply their way to and from Turia, but avoid the Wagon People who have a fierce reputation. Turians, by contrast are stereotypically indolent and luxury loving. The fat Turian merchant is a favorite in comedic farces.

Turia's farms are tended beyond its protective walls, and proximity to the walls of the city puts up the prices of the land. The farms are vulnerable to raids by bandits, tarnsmen and Wagon People and are frequently attacked by one enemy or another.

Turian culture has some peculiarities all its own, while it has an administrator (Phanius Turmus) and council, it is the caste of merchants that truly controls the city.

Turians, rather than eating with their hands or a knife as elsewhere, eat using a two-tined 'prong' and will eat to excess, making themselves vomit with a feathered stick in order to eat more.

They favor sweet, syrupy wines that many elsewhere on Gor cannot stomach. Their feasts, as well as being awash with these wines, can have as many as a hundred and fifty courses.

Turians are much more likely to pierce ears and not just those of slaves. Men wear earrings as well, as a mark of wealth.

Observations on Turia:

If Ar is Rome at the height of its power and influence then Turia is Rome during its decadent decline.

Everywhere there is opulence, waste, sex, drink, narcotics and over consumption. Little wonder that Turians are considered fat, lazy, indolent and their stereotype is the fat, perverse merchant.

The orgiastic feasting is disgusting but the Turians are, at least, less uptight than many other Goreans and more flexible in their ideas on honour.

Their slaves are kept in a 'Turian collar', a looser ring than most, that the slave can turn around in but cannot remove, suitable for playing chains through. Turians have also popularized the camisk for slaves and use an oval shield in warfare, which has seen some popularity further north.

It is a luxurious city, filled with rare goods, innovative perfumes, skilled musicians, plenty of silk and gold and silver.

Visitors are preceded by criers who warn free women to cover themselves and hide so they cannot be targeted for capture – with good reason. Turia is a ripe target and has been conquered by the Wagon People at least once.

Turl Bush: Found in the barrens, the turl bush's smoke from its waxy sap impregnates hides and is used to waterproof and preserve them.

Turmas: Turmas is a Turian outpost, merchant fortress and kasbah at the southeastern edge of the Tahari. It primarily trades with Tor.

Turmus: Turmus is a river town on the Vosk at the eastern end of the river's great delta of marshes. It is the last major river port on the Vosk before the marshes and trades many goods with the rencer villages. Turmus is a member of the Vosk League.

Turnips: Turnips are a common, Gorean, staple food.

Two Veminiums: A small village in the Pani lands.

Tyros: Tyros is an island state, often associated – via alliance – with Cos. Tyros is smaller than its sister island with only two cities Kasra, its capital, and Tentium, its second city, but is still an important naval power.

Tyros has had bad blood with Ar for a century, financing the Vosk pirates to prey on the river trade that feeds Ar's coffers.

It is a rugged, mountainous island with many caves and large numbers of varts living within them, varts which the men of Tyros sometimes train for hunting and tracking.

The island's mountainous state gives it a great deal of protection both for its cities and the terraced fields that feed them, but there are also maelstroms to its south west that protect that side of the island from naval invasion.

Tyros is known for its ships, sailors and their combined ferocity, but also its fine perfumes and brocaded, floral cloth.



Ua: The Ua is a mighty river that carves through the jungle of the interior feeding into lake Ngao. It has many falls and cataracts along its length, which makes it unnavigable by conventional means. Its name means 'Flower' in one of the languages of the interior.

Ubar: An Ubar is the leader of a city in times of war. The Ubar's power is absolute and they wear a golden chain with the symbol of the city to mark their rank.

Some Ubars continue their rule in peacetime but rely on the loyalty of the warriors and their bodyguards in order to retain their power.

An Ubar's sworn bodyguards are bound by honour to depose or slay him should he act unjustly.

Ul: The Ul is a pterodactyl-like, winged tharlarion native to the swamps of the Vosk delta, and the only creature daring enough to show itself against the skyline.

Umbrella bird: A larger, heavier bird found in the lower canopy of the jungle interior, the umbrella bird has an umbrella-like arrangement of feathers atop its head from which it gets its name. It uses this plumage to attract mates and claim territory.

Umiak: The umiak is a canoe, made of hides and skins, which is used by the Red Hunters of the north to hunt sea-sleen and to fish. It is fragile and such work is very dangerous.

Urt Hunters: Urt hunters are a low caste who work to control the population of urts in cities, especially those with canals. Access to the water and trash of a city's canals allow urts to grow big and fat and to avoid predators.

Urt hunters swim slave girls in the filthy canals as bait and then strike at or shoot the urts from the safety of a small barge, raft or dinghy.

Urt hunters can sell the pelts and – sometimes – the meat, and will take a price from the owners of shops and taverns as well as a state reward per urt killed.

Urt People: The Urt People are a human subspecies, divergent from the main human line at some point in the deep past.

The Urt People move and migrate with the urt herds - large, moving carpets of social urts that are constantly on the move.

Observations on the Ul:

The ul is a pterosaur, or at least something very much like one. They're clearly related to some of the tharlarion but unlike any other tharlarion species that is known, can fly. There are no others like the ul and it seems to only live in the area of the Vosk delta.

I saw a dead one that had been brought down by rencers with their bows, and it was truly enormous, perhaps a thirty foot wingspan. They had already begun to cut the beast for meat so I couldn't get a truly close look at it but it definitely made me think of the speculative ideas about how the largest pterosaurs might have flown.

The Urt People are rational, but not as intelligent as normal humans. Sometimes they are kept as pets, but without being taught language communicate only in squeals, grunts and a smattering of old Gorean.

They can move with the urts by virtue of sharing their scent

but should they lose the scent the urt herds will devour them like anything else.

Urt Shields: Urt shields are small, circular disks mounted on ship's ropes to prevent urts from climbing up them and getting aboard.

Urt, Canal: A web-footed species of urt that dwells in swamps, marshes, rivers and most notably in the canals of Port Kar. The canal urt is a source of fear for slave girls and she-urts (beggars).

Urt, Common: The urt is a rat-like rodent, peculiar in that it is horned, the horns protecting the head and aiding it in digging and foraging.

The common urt is found in many sizes but most are small enough to fit in cupped hands.

Some grow huge, depending on the food available and the particular breed, swelling to the size of wolves or, in extreme cases, ponies. The canal urts of Port Kar are notoriously large, fat on the muck and detritus of their canals and the lack of care taken of the city.

Some communal species inhabit warrens, sewers or caves for much of the year, migrating twice – and the equinoxes – to find new territory. The urt people travel with this species.

Urt, Giant:

Urts of many different shapes, sizes and behaviors exist, many with very little in common with other creatures that are also called urts.

The type called the 'giant urt' is, however, a particular breed.

Sleek, fat, white-furred with three rows of teeth and horns upon its head the giant urt is found in Tharna, trained and kept for guard duties in the mines.

Urt, Tree: Tree urts are found in the jungles of the interior, scurrying from branch to branch and tree to tree. Some (gliding urts) can glide from one tree to another on patagia, flaps of skin under their limbs.

Urts, Forest: There are many kinds of urt to be found in the forests but the kind actually called the forest urt is the size of a cat, hideous in aspect and extremely adept at tree climbing.

Urts, Ground: Ground urts are a jungle rodent, running in the leaf litter and fallen branches of the jungles, searching for grubs, insects and fallen fruit.



Use Name:

A Gorean's public name is a chosen nickname, their true name is known only to themselves and their parents and – by superstition – can be used to give power over someone.

The high castes pay this little heed, but the lower castes take the superstition seriously.

Ushindi

Fisher:

The ushindi fisher is a tall, long-legged wading bird

that patrols the shallows around the great lake, hunting for food.

It is notable for its long, white, curling tail feathers which are much prized by the tribes of the interior for headdresses.



Varts: Varts are large, bat-like creatures that can reach the size of dogs. Sharp-toothed and carnivorous, some hunt in flocks, others singly.

Varts commonly carry rabies but despite this are trained and domesticated in Tyros for hunting and as living weapons.

Veil: In civilized and southern Gor the veil is incredibly important, especially to free women. For a woman to go unveiled in civilized Gor is an offense and unless the lady is of rank the guards will forcibly veil her. Repeated transgressions may lead to enslavement.



In the Tahari the veil is so important that even slaves are made to wear a thin, gauze-like version and the mouth is eroticized.

The number of veils varies by station, wealth and propriety. The richer and more important, the more veils are worn. High caste women may wear as many as ten, layered veils but the basic ones are, from closest to furthest:

- The intimate veil
- The freedom veil
- The pride veil
- The house veil
- The street veil

Each one thicker than the last.

The veil is, however, not commonly worn in the interior, in the north or in the Pani islands.

Velvet: The lighter fabrics of the south are unsuitable for the conditions in Torvaldsland and its bordering settlements and so, instead, the high-born wear velvet.

Veminium: The Veminium is a desert flower with purple petals and a fragrant, fresh scent.

There is a mountain species, greatly similar, with bluer petals. This kind is found mostly close to Thentis.

The oil from the flower is used to scent perfumes and added to water when washing one's hands and face.

Ven: Ven is a small river town on the Vosk with a busy market. It stands at the junction of the Ta-Thassa Cartius and the Vosk River. It is a member of the Vosk League.

Venna: Venna is a resort city, west of the Voltai and north of Ar. It is a favored place to visit for high castes with many small, fine shops. It is especially known for its tharlarian races and its grand baths.

The Shop of the Steel Bracelets is a slave perfumer in Venna, much sought after for their cheap and effective scents.

The Stables of Shandu is one of the larger tharlarian stables in the city, producing racing and draft tharlarian.

Verl: The Verl River is a tributary of the Vosk, passing close to Tabuk's Ford.

Observations on Victoria:

Victoria may well grow into a city as the Vosk League grows in power and influence. With the pirates all but eradicated much more money is being made – and kept – in all the Vosk towns and Victoria is reaping the greatest benefit.

Even many years after their liberation and the siege of Ar's Station there's an energy and optimism to the place that is hard to find in other cities after so much war and disruption. It's a place where things feel like they are moving forward and new fortunes are to be won.

Verna: Verna is a leader of a band of Panther Girls in the northern forests and the only woman Marlenus of Ar has ever considered suitable to be his Ubara. She chose to be freed and returned to the forest.

Verna is tall, amazonian for a

Gorean woman. She has long blond hair and bright blue eyes, shapely legs and a sinuous body.

Cruel, vicious and arrogant she rules her band with an iron hand and great cunning.

Verr: The verr is a spiral-horned, goat-like creature.

The domestic breed is more amenable to human contact and is raised for its milk and meat. The wild version, found in the mountains, is aggressive, agile and ill tempered.

Victoria: Victoria is a river town on the Vosk, once the 'capital' of the river pirates until its people threw them off.

Now the town is the capital of the Vosk League, but still a somewhat disreputable city of renegades, drunks and misfits.

The Tavern of Tasdron, on the Avenue of Lycurgus, is one of the common meeting places in the town and the centre of the uprising that threw off the pirates and led to the foundation of the Vosk League.

Other notable places in Victoria include:

- The Pirate's Chain tavern.
- The Sales Barn of Lysander (a slave market).
- The Street of the Writhing Slave – known for its coin girls.
- The Tavern of Cleanthes, a slightly more upmarket paga tavern.

Viktet Aria: The Viktet Aria is a great road, north of Venna, running to Ar. Its name means 'Triumph of Ar'.

Vine Sea Shark: The sharks found in the Vine Sea are long and sinuous like eels, squirming through the tendrils and roots of the tangled vines.

Vine Sea: The Vine Sea is an area of the ocean between the mainland and the Pani islands filled with a floating mat of plants and the wrecks of lost ships.

The vines erupt in sweet smelling yellow-purple flowers above the surface whose soporific scent slowly poisons men, sends them to sleep or drives them mad. It is this madness, along with the roots, that leads to the wrecks.

The vines swarm with parasitic fish hiding in the cover and lamp flies flit amongst the flowers while vine sharks squirm through the roots in search of prey.

Vints: Vints are tiny, sand-colored insects that feed on detritus and fruit peels.

Voltai Mountains: The Voltai Mountains are a great range of iron-rich mountains with many ancient granite caves. They are a hideout for bandits and outlaws as well as mining settlements.

The region is a relatively lawless, dangerous and hard-scrabble place to live.

Vonda: Vonda is one of the cities of the Salerian Federation along with Ti, Port Olni and Lara.

Vosk Carp: The vosk carp is a large, meaty fish found in the deep waters of the Vosk River and in the murkier waters of the delta.

Vosk Delta: The Vosk Delta is a huge expanse of swamps and rivers, dense with swamp trees and stands of reeds. It is a harsh place, full of insects and dangerous beasts.

The delta has, in the past, been claimed by Port Kar, but is now independently ruled by the rencers who call it home.

Vosk Gulls: Gliding sea birds, the vosk gulls migrate from the prairies of the Wagon People in the winter, to the north and Torvaldsland in the summer.

Torvaldslanders – and others – use their feathers to flight their arrows.

Vosk League: The Vosk League is an alliance of nineteen Vosk Towns, joined together. Ar's Station was officially left out under intense pressure from Ar, but unofficially are still considered allies and brothers to the League.

The League formed to defeat the river pirates that dominated the Vosk and since throwing them off have come together for mutual defense and trade.

Vosk League towns include:

- Fina
- Forest Port
- Hammerfest
- Iskander
- Jasmine
- Jort's Ferry
- Point Alfred
- Port Cos
- Ragnar's Hamlet
- Sais
- Siba
- Sulport
- Tafa
- Tancred's Landing
- Tetrapolis
- Turmus
- Ven
- Victoria
- White Water.

Vosk Sorp: The Vosk Sorp is a very large pearl-bearing shellfish. A single shell is large enough to serve as a seat if fully grown and the larger sorp may contain several pearls which are valued as gems.

The meat of the sorp is edible and its blue blood makes a vibrant dye.

Vosk Turtle: There are many kinds of turtle on Gor, but the vosk turtle is a fierce, tenacious, hook-beaked predator. It can grow to enormous size - large enough to threaten a swimmer if not a ship.

They are leathery and tough and their hard shells make them almost impossible to kill.

Vosk: The Vosk is a mighty river, up to forty pasangs wide at its widest points in the wettest seasons.

It runs past Ar into the Tamber Gulf, after splitting into the many smaller rivers of the Vosk Delta.

Voyages of Acquisition: The Voyages of Acquisition are, or were, the slaving trips to Earth undertaken under the auspices of the Priest Kings.

These declined while the trips made by the Kurii increased and have apparently, virtually stopped since the founding of the new Nest.

When the trips were made, they were to keep an observant eye on Earth, gather slaves and samples and to introduce more genetic diversity into the Gorean population.

Multicultural countries were primarily targeted and 'exotic' races were more common chosen. Men of Earth were recruited and brought to Gor in order to help train slaves and agents, while men of Gor were taken to Earth and trained to act as spies and agents there.

Vulos: Vulos are a domesticated bird, related to the pigeon. They're raised for their meat and eggs – much like chickens on Earth. Their eggs are small, a little bit bigger than quail eggs.



Waders: Along the Ua River in the interior, jungle river birds wander the rich mud probing for food. The yellow-legged and ring-necked waders are the most common.

Wages: A low caste worker of middling ability and worth can expect to earn around four copper tarsks a day for ten ahn of work with two ahn for the midday meal. Workers often finish an ahn early to drink, eat and discuss work.

Wagon Peoples: The Wagon People claim the prairie land around Turia from the Thassa to the foothills of the Voltai range and north to the banks of the Cartius. They have a fierce reputation for raiding caravans but also raise large herds of bosk, living on the meat and milk from the beasts that they tend and follow.

There are four clans to the Wagon People, the Paravaci, the Kataii, the Kassars and the Tuchuks.

The Tuchuk standard and brand is the four bosk horns, Kassars the three-weight bola, Kataii the bow and lance, and the Paravaci the bosk head, symbolized in a brand as a semicircle through a triangle.

Before a man of the Wagon People can be named they must learn to use the lance, quiva and bow, and to ride the kaiila. Wagon People men wear scars on their cheeks, dyed and symbolic, given to them as rites of passage, while the women, unveiled, wear leather dresses and have nose rings.

Prideful and scornful of city dwellers the Wagon People live in dome-like wagons covered with bosk skin. The march of their herds shakes the earth, their caravans moving along with the beasts, both protected by outriders. Besides the private wagons there are larger wagons for the heads of the tribes and for various other purposes, including public slave wagons which are virtually wheeled brothels and auction houses.

Most of the time the Wagon People kill strangers who try to contact them but occasionally a wanderer can prove themselves through cunning or force of arms and gain a certain amount of trust.

A thousand years ago the Wagon People united and conquered much of Gor, as far north as Ar and Ko-Ro-Ba where they were halted by the armies of those cities.

Their years are calculated from winter to winter, naming them after events to record their history. Every ten years is an Omen Year when the tribes come together to trade, talk and to take the signs. The women of the tribes keep their own calendars, based on the moons, fifteen moons for fifteen varieties of bosk. Amongst their number the caste of year keepers memorizes the years, their order and their meaning – sometimes for thousands of years.

The Wagon People prefer oral tradition, not trusting paper or carvings which can be stolen or destroyed and, as a result, very few can read. Another Wagon People caste, the singers, keep their tales, stories and history as poems and songs.

Like many less civilized people the Wagon People lack the same reverence for the Priest Kings that many have and, instead pay greater reverence to the sky, which they see as a spirit.

The Wagon People are greatly superstitious, though they often deny it, and are wild gamblers who take enormous risks with what they own.

The warriors of the wagons are organised into Or (tens), Orlu (hundreds) and Oralu (thousands) commanded by soundings of the bosk horns and the waving of war lanterns.

Wagons: The wagons of the Wagon People are colorful and big, the size of a large room. Each is drawn by eight bosk in two teams of four. The wagon's box stands six feet from the ground, made of lacquered planks and surrounded by a wooden frame covered in taut and varnished hides.

A walkway around the outside allows warriors to defend the wagon, as do piercings for the firing of arrows. The interiors are richly carpeted and hung with spoils of war and raids, silks and tapestries. They're lit by hanging oil lamps and heated by a fire bowl – which can be something of a fire risk.

Wagons in the rest of Gor are more practical and simple, drawn by bosk, tharlarion or even slaves. Slave wagons can carry as many as twenty slaves, cuffed to a central bar, and to each other.

Waiting Hand: The Waiting Hand is the five days before the vernal equinox. This is a solemn time for many Goreans, some homes are sealed with pitch and brak branches are nailed to their doors to ward off ill luck.

There is little conversation and no songs. It is a time of meditation, mourning and fasting. At dawn on the day of the equinox the head of the city greets the sun and the population breaks into festival.

War of the Sexes: Gorean legend tells of a time in the distant past when men and women went to war with each other. The men won, but in order to spare the women the Priest Kings made them beautiful, at the cost of them always being the slaves of men.

War Hammer: The war hammer is a rare weapon on Gor but is used in Hunjer to stun and kill whales, and as a weapon by those who are particularly handy with it.

Water Lizard: Water lizards are little scavengers found in swamps. They are carrion eaters and predators of small insects and other suitable prey.

Water Tharlarion: Water tharlarion are fast-swimming, swift-striking, yellow-coloured creatures with a slatted belly and thick scales. They resemble primitive, large crocodiles and are found in many rivers, especially in the south.

Weight: Gorean weight is measured in stones (four pounds), and weights (forty pounds). Weights are set as common between cities by the merchant caste with weights and measures – as standards – kept in a fort near the Sardar.

These standard weights are tested against local measures to ensure honesty. Fiddling weights is loathed by the merchant caste and they work hard to enforce honesty in weights and measures.

Whales: There are breeds of whale native to Gor, the best known being the Hunjer whale.

Whales are primarily found and hunted in the north where the cold dissuades the tharlarion that otherwise occupy similar niches.

Whip Knife: A weapon peculiar to the men of Port Kar, the whip knife is a thick whip with blades set into the last eighteen inches of its length.

This is most commonly twenty thin blades placed in sets of four. Some versions have double-edged heads, others a weighted lead tip for stunning targets.

Whip of the Furs: The 'whip of the furs' is a euphemism for a forceful slave ravishing. It is intended to show a slave her place in a more pleasurable fashion than a literal whipping or other punishment.

Whistling finch: The whistling finch is a small, insect-eating bird found in the jungles of the interior, notable for its loud, high whistling call.

White Ants: White ants is the name given to a species of termite found in the jungles of the interior.

They build nests of clay, drying it in the sun resulting in much tougher and more resistant nests than those made of soil.

White Crayfish: White crayfish are a blind white arthropod found in the brine pits beneath the Tahari.

White Sharks: White sharks are some of the largest sharks to be found on Gor, white bellied and pale all over they are dangerous predators that will even attack boats.

White Water: White Water is a river town on the Vosk, where the river runs faster over rocks. It is a member of the Vosk League.

White-Bellied Grunt: A large predatory fish that feeds on smaller fish such as the parsit, the white-bellied grunt is much valued as a sport and food fish. Its roe is eaten as a delicacy.

Wicker Shields: Wicker shields are used in naval combat to protect against arrows at distance. They are not great protection but are light, can cover relatively large areas and can catch and dissipate the force of arrows as well as preventing fire arrows from lodging in the deck.

Wind Scarf: The Wagon People wear a long scarf that can be wrapped around the face to protect from dust and the scouring, drying wind.

Woods of Clearchus: The Woods of Clearchus, two hundred pasangs west of the Sardar Mountains, are a haunt to bandits and outlaws.

Woodsman's Axe: The woodsman's axe, as used by the caste of foresters is broad, double-headed and long. It is designed to hit hard, but not as a weapon despite the grievous harm it can cause.



Yellow Gim: The yellow gim is a jungle bird from the interior, an insect hunter with a throaty, warbling call.

Yellow Knives: The Yellow Knives are a tribe of the Red Savages. Amongst their number their most prestigious warrior society is the Urt Soldiers.

Yellow Pool of Turia: The Yellow Pool of Turia was an indoor pool in a spacious chamber in the house of Saphrar. Eighty feet high with a domed ceiling, it was tiled in exotic green and yellow tiles, perhaps meant to evoke tropical regions. Vines ferns and flowers festooned the chamber from planters and the room was steamy and heated, lit by energy bulbs behind glass.

The pool was a beautiful yellow, threaded with ribbons, filaments and spheres.

The contents of the pool were alive, able to change its density from watery to thick mud, or even into a protective shell. It was also able to become corrosive and stinging, to dissolve flesh alive within its body. Only the orbs and a firmer sac of fluid deep inside were vulnerable.

The pool may be unique, a 'gift' from the Kur or a creature from the remoter tropical regions but its like has only been seen the once.

Yellow-Breasted Hermit Bird: A large woodpecker with a lurid yellow breast, the hermit bird can be heard hammering away on trees throughout the Northern Forests.



Zadit: The Zadit is a small, tawny desert bird that feeds on insects. It is a welcome sight as it particularly likes to alight on Kaiila to eat fleas, ticks and biting flies that torment the

beasts and their riders.

Zads: Zads are broad-winged, black and white birds with narrow, hooked beaks for picking at carrion.

They are mostly found in the south, especially in the Tahari where they soar on thermals looking for dead animals.

Zar: Zar is a game played on a kaissa board with flat tokens. Pieces are placed on the intersections of the lines, rather than in the squares. Nine pieces are placed along the edge, not using the corners.

The game is played like drafts, jumps must be made to empty spaces. There are no captures, you win by taking the opponent's places.

Zarlit Fly: The zarlit fly is a large insect, two feet long, with long, translucent wings a yard wide. It has broad, pad-like feet that let it alight on the water.

Despite its large size and intimidating appearance it is harmless.

Zeder: The zeder is a small, sleen-like animal that hunts in the jungle rivers of the interior. They build nests in the jungle trees overlooking the water.

Appendix CALENDAR

Each city or federation on Gor marks the year in their own way with different festivals, celebrations and ways of dating the months.

What follows is as close to a universal Gorean calendar as can be discerned, along with the corresponding dates of Earthly months.

First Month (Month of En'Kara)

- First Hand (March 21st-25th) The Gorean New Year
- Second Hand (March 26th-30th) The Fair of En'Kara is celebrated in the Sardar.
- Third Hand (March 31st-April 4th) The Wagon People return to the vicinity of Turia.
- Fourth Hand (April 5th-9th)
- Fifth Hand (April 10th-14th)
- First Passage Hand (April 15th-19th) The Planting Feast of Sa-Tarna is held.

Second Month

- First Hand (April 20th-24th)
- Second Hand (April 25th-29th)
- Third Hand (April 30th-May 4th)
- Fourth Hand (May 5th-9th)
- Fifth Hand (May 10th-14th)
- Second Passage Hand (May 15th-19th) The Wagon People hold the games of the Love War.

Third Month

- First Hand (May 20th-24th)
- Second Hand (May 25th-29th)
- Third Hand (May 30th-June 3rd)
- Fourth Hand (June 4th-8th)
- Fifth Hand (June 9th-13th)
- Third Passage Hand (June 14th-18th)

Fourth Month (Month of En'Var)

- First Hand (July 19th-23rd) The Turian New Year is celebrated.
- Second Hand (June 24th-28th) The Fair of En'Var is celebrated in the Sardar.
- Third Hand (June 29th-July 3rd)
- Fourth Hand (July 4th-8th)
- Fifth Hand (July 9th-13th)
- Fourth Passage Hand (July 14th-18th)

Fifth Month

- First Hand (July 19th-23rd)
- Second Hand (July 24th-28th)
- Third Hand (July 29th-August 2nd)
- Fourth Hand (August 3rd-7th)
- Fifth Hand (August 8th-12th) Kajuralia is celebrated in Ar
- Fifth Passage Hand (August 13-17) The Love Feast is held in Ar

Sixth Month

- First Hand (August 18th-22nd)
- Second Hand (August 23rd-27th)
- Third Hand (August 28th-September 1st)
- Fourth Hand (September 2nd-6th)
- Fifth Hand (September 7th-11th)
- Sixth Passage Hand (September 12th-16th)

Month of Se'Kara

- First Hand (September 17th-21st)
- Second Hand (September 22nd-26th) The Passing of Turia of the Wagon People.
- Third Hand (September 27th-October 1st) The Fair of Se'Kara is celebrated.
- Fourth Hand (October 2nd-6th)
- Fifth Hand (October 7th-11th) The festival of the 25th of Se'Kara is celebrated in Port Kar.
- Seventh Passage Hand (October 12th-16th)

Eighth Month

- First Hand (October 17th-21st)
- Second Hand (October 22nd-26th)
- Third Hand (October 27th-31st) The Feast of Fools
- Fourth Hand (November. 1st-5th)
- Fifth Hand (November 6th-10th)
- Eighth Passage Hand (November 11th-15th)

Ninth Month

- First Hand (November 16th-20th) The Thing is held in Torvaldsland.
- Second Hand (November 21st-25th)
- Third Hand (November 26th-30th)
- Fourth Hand (December 1st-5th)
- Fifth Hand (December 6th-10th)
- Ninth Passage Hand (December 11th-15th)

Tenth Month (Month of Se'Var)

- First Hand (December 16th-20th)
- Second Hand (December 21st-25th) The New Year of the Wagon People. The Fair of Se'Var is celebrated in the Sardar.
- Third Hand (December 26th-30th)
- Fourth Hand (December 31st-January 4th)
- Fifth Hand (January 5th-9th)
- Tenth Passage Hand (January 10th-14th)

Eleventh Month

- First Hand (January 15th-19th)
- Second Hand (January 20th-24th)
- Third Hand (January 25th-29th)
- Fourth Hand (January 30th-February 3rd)
- Fifth Hand (February 4th-8th)
- Eleventh Passage Hand (February 9th-13th)

Twelfth Month

- First Hand (February 14th-18th)
- Second Hand (February 19th-23rd)
- Third Hand (February 24th-28th)
- Fourth Hand (March 1st-5th)
- Fifth Hand (March 6th-10th)
- Twelfth Passage Hand (March 11th-15th) Southern Cities Carnival, Kajuralia is held in all cities except Ar.

The Waiting Hand (March 16-20)



World of Gor is the ultimate fan guide and encyclopaedia that describes the world of the Counter-Earth. A place of adventure, danger, fantasy and fulfilment.

This book is intended as a companion volume to the **Tales of Gor** Role-playing Game and as a resource for playing that game. It provides additional information to help fill out and understand the world of Gor.

It is also intended to be a fan resource and reference for those who love the world of John Norman's books and who wish to draw upon them in their own games, stories, an-fiction and when re-reading the novels.