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# I. Foreword

The following list was originally composed by Krista Donnelly, based on suggestions submitted by various members of the Tékumel Yahoo Group list. I have taken it upon me, with Krista’s kind permission, to reorganise the list in a new format and expand it with entries of my own.

Each entry gives the title, the author & publisher, where it can be obtained, and one or more comments about the contents, sometimes in the form of a “mini-review”. I have taken the liberty of officially ascribing the original comments to Krista Donnelly, although some of the comments may originally have been by others. In some cases, I’ve added comments of my own, occasionally disagreeing with the first comment.

Other people are of course free to add their own; I see these Comments as a way of comparing various views on the item in question, somewhat like the various “user reviews” on Amazon.

The entries are organised into five main chapters: Fiction, Non-fiction (history, cultural anthropology, mythology, travel account etc.), Internet sites, Music and Movies. Some of the chapters are subdivided into a small number of sub-chapters, like “Daily Life”, “Military”, “Fantasy novels” etc.

All the items are meant to either help players and GM’s to “step out of their own culture” and encourage their imagination and ability to intellectually “enter” another culture, or to help GM’s get ideas for their adventures and aid them in conveying the atmosphere of a culturally alien society. They are, in short, aides to one’s imagination.

I’ve noted, if possible, where the items can be bought or the URL of the site. Most of the books, movies and music can be bought at Amazon; Europeans should first try the British, French or German branches of Amazon (Amazon.uk, Amazon.fr, Amazon.de). Most of it is probably available through the better local bookstores and music- and moviestores. In all cases, a trip to a major library and trying to borrow or hire the item might be wise; not all GM’s and players are the same, let alone their gaming styles, meaning that not all resources are equally useful to everybody. Moreover, I can’t personally vouch for all the titles in the List; many were recommended by other people.

The list originally contained Professor Barker’s novels. However, I have removed these. All canon Tékumel publications are highly recommended, if not actually obligatory reading anyway. Shame on you if you don’t consult them first They are all (including the out-of-print material) available from Carl Brodt at Tita’s House of Games ([http://www.Tékumel.com/tita/](http://www.tekumel.com/tita/)). The new novels (Lords of Tsamra, Prince of Skulls and A Death of Kings), as well as Mitlanyal are also available from the publisher, Zottola Publishing (<http://www.zotpub.com/>). The new novels are also available through Amazon.

A large number of out-of-print articles are available through <http://www.drivethrurpg.com/catalog/index.php>.

Various other canon and non-canon articles, as well as various links to interesting material, can be found at [www.Tékumel.com](http://www.tekumel.com).

A final disclaimer: this list is of course purely unofficial; it is merely the combined recommendations of a wide range of Tékumel enthusiasts.

Andreas Baede

March 8, 2005

IJsselstein, The Netherlands

# II. Fiction

One of the biggest problems for modern western people (well, really, just people of any kind) when role-playing in a non-western cultural environment is one of imagination and empathy. Novels, to some extent, can help people to get a glimpse of other cultures and mentalities in a way that a “serious” book – whether historical, cultural-anthropological or even a roleplaying sourcebook – cannot. A good novel set in ancient Egypt, the Aztec Empire, the Kai’merate or Kaiel-hontokae is not only a great source of ideas for player and GM alike; it helps in giving substance to one’s player characters and NPC’s. The premier resource, of course, are Professor Barker’s novels, but the following list contains books that various members of the Yahoo list have found useful (and interesting and entertaining as well).

## Classical Novels:

Classical novels are what the name implies: literary classics of various cultures. Even in the case of western novels, they often possess an atmosphere and showcase cultural values and attitudes that are not (or no longer, at least not in that form or to that degree) present in modern western society.

1. **Gilgamesh: A New English version.   
   (Mitchell, Stephen Free Press 2004. Available through: Amazon).**  
   This is a new version by poet Stephen Mitchell. While the language of this version has been modernised and streamlined, it is highly evocative as a result. In some ways, Gilgamesh reminds me of Hrugga (what little that is known); both are the great heroes of their respective cultures, though I suspect Gilgamesh is more defiant (but Hrugga may have been happier?).  
   An excerpt can be found at Stephen Mitchell’s site, here: <http://www.stephenmitchellbooks.com/> *Who is like Gilgamesh? What other King*  
   *Has inspired such awe? Who else can say  
   “I alone rule, supreme among Mankind”?  
   The goddess Aruru, mother of Creation,  
   Had designed his body, had made him the strongest  
   Of men – huge, handsome, radiant, perfect.  
     
   Andreas Baede*
2. **Dream of the Red Chamber  
   (Hsueh-Chin, Tsao / Xueqin, Cao. There are multiple versions extant, all available through Amazon)**Classic Chinese novel with a lot of potentially useful Tékumel stuff.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
3. **Romance of the Three Kingdoms  
   (Kuan-Chung, Lo / Guanzhong, Luo. There are multiple versions extant, all available through Amazon).**Classic Chinese novel set in the civil wars of 2nd and 3rd century China.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*

## Historical novels:

These are historical novels that appeared during the last century or so.

1. **The Tale of Murasaki: A Novel  
   (Dalby, Liza. Anchor 2001. Available through Amazon)**Biography of the girl who wrote The Tale of Genji (a classic of Japanese literature). There are some weird (to western eyes) attitudes in it.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
2. **Marcus Didius Falco series (***The Silver Pig, Venus in Copper, The Iron Hand of Mars etc.***)  
   (Davis, Lindsey. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**Set in 1st century Rome, Falco’s adventures add grist to the mill for idea-starved G.M.s. However, he may seem “too much like a 1940’s hard-boiled private eye.”  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
3. **The Seeking  
   (Elegant, Robert. Various publishers. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Robert Elegant has written some good historical novels set in Asia. *The Seeking* describes the story of two men, Harrap, a prince of the North Indian kingdom of Kamardol - several generations after Alexander the Great - and his best friend Yakir, a thoughtful warrior of Brahmin stock.  
   The core of the story concerns the asvamedha, an ancient ritual in which a perfect stallion is let loose and the army of Kamardol follows it, enforcing the “sovereignty” of Kamardol along the way. The ritual leads Harrap, Yakir and their men across a large part of Central Asia.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Lords of the Two Lands series (***The Hippopotamus Marsh, The Oasis, The Horus Road etc.***)  
   (Gedge, Pauline. Soho Press. Available through Amazon)**Set in ancient Egypt.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*.
5. **I, Claudius & Claudius the God  
   (Graves, Robert. Vintage 1989. Available through Amazon)**Sly intrigue, though the Romans feel like 20th century British elites.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
6. **The Assyrian & The Blood Star  
   (Guild, Nicholas. Various publishers. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**These two books tell the tale of Tiglath Ashur, the half-brother of the famous Assyrian King Esarhaddon.  
   Does an excellent job of depicting the cultural alienness, the intrigue and the cruelty of the Assyrian Empire.  
   The second volume goes for ridiculous prices...It is time for a reprint of these two books!  
     
   *”It was a slow business, this death – the executioners were in no hurry. Marduknasir, if one could still call that mass of raw, bloody flesh by a name, lived at least until the skin was peeled from his breast and thighs. At least, he still cried out in a soft, mindless whimper. How long he lived after that only the God knows; there was only the twitching of his limbs. At last the executioners stood up. One of them, covered in blood and smiling – I remember how he smiled – held in his hands, like a garment he was presenting for sale, the whole skin, even the face with hair and beard.  
   ”Nail it the the wall of his house,” the King said, rising from his seat. He was sober now, and he did not smile. “Post a guard that none may take it down for burial. Feed the corpse to the dogs.”*  
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Judge Dee Mysteries series  
   (Gulik, Robert van. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**  
   Great source of inspiration. A magistrate and his assistants solve crimes in T’ang China.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   All that, and Robert van Gulik’s Dutch, too! Yaaay!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **A Mystery of Ancient Egypt series (***The Right Hand of Amon, A Path of Shadows etc. featuring “Lieutenant Bak”***)  
   (Haney, Lauren. Avon Books. Available through Amazon)**Protagonist is a frontier garrison officer in New Kingdom Egypt.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
9. **The Luck of Huemac  
   (Daniels, Peter. Random House 1981. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**This book describes the life of an Aztec nobleman, the grandson (on his mother’s side) of King Nezahualcoyotl of Texcoco, one of the founding rulers of the Aztec “Triple Alliance”.Through his life the story of the Aztec Empire is told and its culture, society and (bloody) rituals are explored. A serious and fairly successful attempt at “penetrating” an alien culture. Absolutely and wholeheartedly recommended.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
10. **Cloud of Sparrows, Autumn Bridge  
    (Matsuoka, Takashi. Delacorte Press. Available through Amazon)**Commodore Perry’s ships have forced Japan to open itself to the world, and the country is in flux. The books tell the story of a young, progressive daimyo, several other Japanese as well as several American characters. Although “realistic”, the story has some supernatural elements. Nice depiction of culture clash; the “look” inside the minds of the Japanese characters is also very interesting.   
      
    ”*That year, Lord Shayo froze in the icy winter sea; a branch laden with spring blossoms crushed his successor, Lord Ryoto; the next heir, Lord Moritake, was immolated by summer lighting. Koseki then became Lord of the domain.  
    He said “I can do nothing about the weather.”  
    During the early autumn rains, he executed the entire bodyguard corps, sent every concubine into a nunnery, banished the cooks, married the stablemaster’s daughter, and declared war against the Shogun.  
    Lord Koseki reigned for thirty-eight years.”*  
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **Brother Cadfael series (***A Morbid Taste for Bones, One Corpse Too Many etc.***)  
    (Peters, Ellis. Mysterious Press. Available through Amazon)**Good for inspiration for crime in a low-tech setting.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
12. **Servant of the Bones  
    (Rice, Anne. Ballantine Books 1998. Available through Amazon)**The first several chapters, the ones set in the ancient world, evoke a ritualistic feel remarkably well. Could easily be lifted and transplanted to Tékumel.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
13. **Lord Meren mysteries (***Murder at the Place of Anubis, Murder at the Feast of Rejoicing, Murder at the God’s Gate, Eater of Souls, Drinker of Blood etc.***)  
    (Robinson, Lynda. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**  
    In ancient Egypt, the Eyes and Ears of Pharaoh solves mysteries.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*As usual, placed in New Kingdom Egypt, this time during the reign of Tutankhamun.*Andreas Baede*
14. **Sano Ichiro Mysteries (***Shinju, Bundori, The Way of the Traitor, The Samurai’s Wife, The Concubine’s Tatoo, Black Lotus***)  
    (Rowland, Laura Joh. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**Detective novels set in Tokugawa Japan around 1660. Contains strange religious sects, stratified social structure, the power of the nobility and the pressure to conform. However, may be more difficult to translate to Tékumel because of dealing with peculiarly Japanese problems.*Krista Donnelly*
15. **Roma sub rosa series (***A Murder on the Appian Way, Roman Blood etc.***)  
    (Saylor, Steven. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**Features Gordianus the Finder, a sort of private investigator, begins in 80 B.C. and has progressed to the civil war between Caesar and Pompey.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
16. **River God, Seventh Scroll, Warlock, Birds of Prey, Monsoon, etc.  
    (Smith, Wilbur. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**River Gods is set in ancient Egypt, Seventh Scroll jumps into the future. Warlock is a sequel to River God and prequel to Seventh Scroll that departs from the believable into the magical. Not a bad story, but not as compelling as River God, either. The best stuff for EPT referees is probably in Seventh Scroll, as it spends alot of time talking about the various traps and contrivances of the ancient Egyptians.  
    Birds of Prey and Monsoon are about early canon pirate ships. Lots of good material (though not really "period") for nautical EPT themes. Lots of good political structure and expressing feelings about other cultures and races.  
    Wilbur Smith is quite prolific and has written many other books mostly about different periods of time and places in Africa. Lots of good hunting and tracking scenes, lots of information about native knowledge.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
17. **Justinian  
    (Turteltaub, H.N. Forge 1998. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Takes you into the mind of a ruthless, religiously bigoted Byzantine Emperor, Justinian II, and sets him in a stage nearly as alien as Tékumel.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*  
      
    Turteltaub has also written a series of fantasy and “alternate history” novels under the name of Harry Turtledove; his “Videssos Cycle”, about a force of Caesar’s legionaries who are accidentally, through magic transported to another world (very reminiscent of Byzantium & its neighbours in the late 11th century) is still a very enjoyable romp. Makes you wonder: what would happen with a force of historical Earth warriors ending up on Tékumel?  
    Justinian is about the remarkable life of Emperor Justinian II, the last representative of the dynasty founded by Heraclius, the great Emperor who saved Byzantium and defeated Persia in the 7th century – only to lose most of his reconquests to the Arabs…  
    I would, however, suggest that it’s better if one wants to roleplay in medieval Byzantium – the culture is just too different from Tékumel (as well as from our own, cultural kinship notwithstanding). Good historical novel, though.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*

## Fantasy novels:

What follows is a list of fantasy novels that distinguish themselves either in their atmosphere, their description of culturally alien cultures, situations and characters and / or apparent (real or imagined?) influence on Tékumel.

1. **Zothique, The Dark Eidolon, The Death of Malgrys & other stories  
   (Ashton-Smith, Clark. Various publishers. Available – new and 2nd hand – through Amazon and lots of other bookstores)**  
   The second two stories are recommended “For insight into the workings of the devoted Sarku worshipper’s mind.” Additionally, many of Smith’s “Zothique” and “Posiedonis” stories, and the two Maal Dweb stories set on Xiccarph, have a very Tékumelani feel to them.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   Weird, dark, nasty, melancholic, exotic. Smith has it all, and they come highly recommended. It does look like his work has had considerable influence on Barker. Also take a look at <http://www.eldritchdark.com/>, a site dedicated to Smith and his work.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Dragaera novels (***The Book of Taltos, Jhereg, Yendi, Theckla etc.***)  
   (Brust, Steven. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**While Dragaerea is presented as having a history about as lengthy as that of Tékumel, that aspect isn't the reason why I recommend it.  
     
   In the first place I recommend it because it presents a cosmopolitan culture in which magic is part of everyday life, while the people are presented as extremely understandable, "regular" folks, striking a nice balance between fantasy and the human condition. There's a lot about class- and race-distinctions that Tékumel fans could sink their teeth into. The "regular humans" are called "Easterners" because they live to the east of Dragaerea. They are humans like us, with 70-  
   year lifespans. The Drageaerans are long-lived genetic hybrids constructed millennia ago. They live 2000 years, maturing at a proportionately slower pace (kids live with their folks until 100),   
   and share characteristics with some of the creatures whose genes were mixed with their own. There are strong class-distinctions between the different races of Dragaereans, with some (the Jhereg and the Teckla) ranking only marginally higher than the "Easterners".  
     
   In the second place, it's a good counter-example of some of the things NOT to do. Despite a history of a quarter million years, the kind of depth and sophistication that Tékumel displays is not evident. Even overlooking Brust's addiction to precious pop-culture references and in-jokes (particulary for Minnesotans who may recognize "the Dean of Pamlar University" as local resident Pamela Dean, etc.), Brust just doesn't seem to be able to present the kind of four-dimensional complexity that such an ancient culture would demand. And NO attempt is even made to explain why this culture (or that of the "Easterners") fails to advance socially or   
   technologically beyond feudal fantasy. Tékumel fans tie themselves in knots debating whether the forces that hold such advancement in check in Tsolyanu are sufficient: Brust never approaches the question at all.  
     
   So it's a mix: it's good storytelling and entertaining writing. It's not perfect, but it's fun, and presents an interesting world mixing magic with a racially and socially divided society.  
   See also <http://www.dreamcafe.com/books.html>  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
3. **The King in Yellow  
   (Chambers, Robert. Various publishers. Some editions are part of anthologies. Available through Amazon)**Highly recommended - it was on Prof. Barker's childhood reading list.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
4. **The Worm Ouroboros, Mistress of Mistresses, A Fish Dinner in Memison, The Mezentian Gate  
   (Eddison, E.R. Various publishers. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**A fantasy world with a very different feel to it. Highly recommended – they were on Prof. Barker's childhood reading list.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   There is great richness in there, but you also need considerable literary teeth and patience to get through the dense, often archaic (even at the time it was written) prose. Recommended, but try before you buy…  
   Gollancz (UK) has reprinted *Ouroboros* and *Mistress of Mistresses* as part of its “Fantasy Masterworks” series. You should be able to get it through Amazon UK.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Bridge of Birds, Eight Skilled Gentlemen, The Story of the Stone  
   (Hughart, Barry. Del Rey. Available through Amazon)**Humorous take on mythic-esque China.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
6. **Elric Saga novels (***Elric of Melnibone, Stormbringer, etc.***)  
   (Moorcock, Michael. Various publishers. Available new and 2nd hand through Amazon and various other bookstores)**I don't know why this set of books has always made me feel strongly about EPT, it's not really the way that I have ever run any of my campaigns. Elric has that lost nobleman attitude that I think reminds me of a wayward Tékumelani Prince. Lots of different cultures and critters and places described in passing. Lots of very bizarre magic and summonings. Imagine Mridobu or one of the others exiling himself to wander the rest of the planet. I wonder how well a Prince would fare in Chrystallu or Nm'artusha?  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
7. **Conan stories, Cthulhu stories, Compleat Enchanter etc.  
   (Sprague de Camp, L. Various publishers. Available through Amazon – 219 entries!)**Highly recommended – they were on Prof. Barker's childhood reading list.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
8. **Tales of the Dying Earth, Planet of Adventure & various other novels & stories  
   (Vance, Jack. Various publishers. Available new and 2nd hand through Amazon and various other bookstores)**Planet of Adventure contains four stories: "City of the Chasch", "Servants of the Wankh", "the Dirdir", and "the Pnume". The Dying Earth stories iinvolve such heroes as Cugel the Clever and Rhialto the Marvellous.  
   Work may be an acquired taste, but he’s a great stylist and a wondrous conjuror of worlds. *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   Few writers succeed in conjuring in so few words an alien time, world, culture or race. And his characters are decidedly colourful and exotic – one can do worse than pattern some of one’s NPC’s on his characters. And if you like them, his stories are a delight!  
   Tales of the Dying Earth are fantasy; Planet of Adventure SF; though truth be told, Jack Vance is not a Hard SF author, and easily does both SF and Fantasy.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **The Urth of the New Sun series (***The Shadow of the Torturer, The Claw of the Conciliator, The Sword of the Lictor, The Citadel of the Autarch, The Urth of the New Sun***)  
   (Wolfe, Gene. Various publishers. Available new and 2nd hand through Amazon and various other bookstores)**The time travel, odd conjurations, curious social order, and post-scientific world, though all handled differently from Tékumel, are a very good source of ideas. In addition, Wolfe also has a particular skill with language: all of the "alien" terms in the book are merely antiquated English, meaning that words that initially seem foreign and unfamiliar also ring with a certain authenticity, adding an odd depth to the story.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*

## Science Fiction novels (including SF horror):

Tékumel is not merely fantasy, it is SF Fantasy, combining elements of both. The following is a short list of SF and SF/horror novels that distinguish themselves in various ways similar to the other groups of novels.

1. **Earth Made of Glass  
   (Barnes, John. Tor Books 1999. Available through Amazon)**“Earth Made of Glass” is a novel in a series about a future human diplomat and his wife who are involved in contacting and integrating the “Thousand Cultures”, the scattered, culturally widely divergent seeds of Mankind spread throughout the Galaxy in its sublight-exodus. This novel is about a mission on a planet with two mutually hostile cultures: one can only be described as “neo-Tamil”, the other as “neo-Maya”. In essence, this is a novel about individuals from three very different cultures, and how they interact. Since Tamils and Mayas are both major influences on Tékumel, I think you see the relevance…and it’s a good, if not very optimistic, novel on its own merit.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **In Conquest Born  
   (Friedman, C.S. Daw 2001. Available through Amazon)**This is also one of the SF novels I’ve added. Why? Because, basically, it pits two decidedly “alien” Human cultures against each other, and does a pretty good job of describing them. Another way of looking at the possible variety of Human cultures and mentalities. It describes the strange, and decidedly sexually charged, rivalry between a female general of the Azean Star Empire and a rising young lord of the Braxana (the latter possesses a ruthless *Wille zur Macht* that would make a Klingon blush; but with bursts of sometimes humane, sometimes calculating acts of compassion). Complex characters, interesting cultures, plenty of good ideas…In short, lots to draw inspiration from…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Courtship Rite  
   (Kingsbury, Donald. Various publishers. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Fiction providing a helpful background for understanding the question of morality in Tékumel.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   The planet Geta is effectively a “lost colony” whose Human inhabitants, living on an imperfectly terraformed planet, are dependent on a limited range of Earth-derived life – including Humanity itself. Stroll through the streets of Kaiel-hontokae, see its sights, meet its interesting inhabitants, and enjoy some baby liver pâté…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Psychohistorical crisis  
   (Kingsbury, Donald. Tor Books 2002. Available through Amazon)**This is Donald Kingsbury’s first novel in ages, and it’s quite good, even if the ending is rather weak. The novel is actually a very clever, and superior, homage to Asimov’s “Foundation” series – and, frankly, far better than the prequels that have appeared in recent years.  
   Its strength lies in its depiction of the ancient, highly sophisticated Galactic society and culture of the distant future; its mentalities; the theory and practice of psychohistory; snippets of “future past history”. I had a “jawdrop” moment when Earth, an ancient, backwater world, its place as the origin of Mankind hotly contested by historians, was described…and of course, the basic, genetically unmodified human form, now considered an archaic, “unevolved” and primitive subspecies of Mankind, and still prevalent on Earth and the nearby star systems…Kingsbury did a terrific job of evoking the hoary antiquity of this future, Man-dominated Galaxy. This book oozes atmosphere and ideas, culturally and mentally “alien” humans and the future Kingsbury describes has, I think, something of the grandeur of the Humanspace Alliance of before the catastrophe that befell Tékumel and its sister worlds.
5. **Cthulhu Mythos stories  
   (Lovecraft, H.P.; Derleth, August: Ashton-Smith, Clark; and many others. Various publishers. Available new and 2nd hand through Amazon and many other bookstores)**The Gods and Demons of Tékumel (especially the demons and some of the Tlokiriqaluyal Aspects) have certain similarities with the monsters of the Cthulhu Mythos created by H.P. Lovecraft and his associates. The “Deep One” stories were recommended by Krista Donnelly for adventure ideas involving the aquatic Nyagga. Other stories may also provide adventure ideas or help building “atmosphere”.*Andreas Baede*
6. **The Moon Pool, Dwellers in the Mirage  
   (Merritt, A. Wesleyan University Press 2004. Available through Amazon)**Plunderable for ideas for the G.M.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
7. **Caves of Terror, Black Light & other fantasies  
   (Mundy, Talbot. Various publishers. Available through Amazon)**No comments.
8. **The Rediscovery of Man  
   (Smith, Cordwainer. Nesfa Press 1993. Available through Amazon)**I feel that some of these stories, i.e. "Under Old Earth" have a very strange, rather Tékumel-like feel although they might be more suitable for the days before or soon after the Time of Darkness.  
   Smith wrote in the 1960s for about 10 years. His actual name was Paul Linebarger and he was an expert on Asian cultures and psychological warfare. Probably his most famous story is "Scanners Live in Vain." Many of his stories have a strange non-Western feel to them.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*

# III. Non-Fiction:

Non-fiction includes works on history, archaeology, cultural anthropology etc. that may be of use to the GM, as well as players. These titles may be mainly useful for GMs, however, giving him or her plot ideas, snippets of mythology or poetry to build up atmosphere, ideas for NPCs, details to fill up the setting or add local colour etc.

Not all of these titles are easy to get into; if one has little experience of books meant for an academic (or well-read lay) audience, it is best to start with the more accessible, general books. A visit to the nearest good public library and picking up the most recent Time / Life and National Geographic books might be a good idea…

## General histories:

Just like it says, a number of general histories of exotic and / or ancient civilisations and cultures. The events, cultural and societal traits, incidents, wars, buildings etc., not to mention personalities, can be useful sources of ideas, examples and models for any GM (and player as well). General histories like this are often good introductory works.

1. **The Aztecs: People of the Sun (Civilization of the American Indian Series, volume 50)  
   (Caso, Alfonso. University of Oklahoma Press 1988. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**  
   Lots of awesome religious ceremony ideas.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
2. **Mexico. From the Olmecs to the Aztecs.  
   (Coe, Michael D. & Rex Koontz,. Thames & Hudson 2002. Available through Amazon)**This is an updated and expanded version of the 4th edition (published mere months after I bought it, bah!). Eminently readable and lots of illustrations. Good little intro to the rich weirdness that is ancient Mexico.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **The Maya  
   (Coe, Michael D. Thames & Hudson 1999. Available through Amazon)**Another pretty good general history of the Maya, but significantly shorter than Drew’s book; lots of photographs and line drawings.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **The Lost Chronicles of the Maya Kings  
   (Drew, Davic. University of California Press 2000. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Good, and up-to-date, general history of the Classic Maya. Plenty of photographs and line drawings.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Gem in the Lotus: The Seeding of Indian Civilisation  
   (Eraly, Abraham. Orion Publishing Group 2005. Available through Amazon)**This book is a good general history of early Indian culture and society. At the moment I am writing this (march 8 2005) a new paperback edition is about to be published in the USA.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
6. **The Ancient Near East c. 3000-330 BC (2 vols.)  
   (Kuhrt, Amélie. Routledge 1997. Available through Amazon)**Excellent 2-volume history of the ancient Near East, from Uruk Mesopotamia and Predynastic Egypt to the conquests of Alexander. Gives a good overview of the history of the Middle East and the many “layers” of peoples and cultures that were “deposited”. Various details of culture, religion and society are clearly presented, although this is mainly a *political* history. A fair number of texts are quoted, many of which would, with minor adaptations, be eminently usable in a game. Some of these are very evocative:  
     
   *The ephemeral Joy of a single beautiful day  
   is followed by the sadness of 36,000 years.  
   May the divine coffin, my son,  
   be your desire in affliction!*Yup, the West’s Middle Eastern cultural ancestors were a cheerful lot…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Ancient Mexico: The History and Culture of the Maya, Aztecs and other Pre-Columbian Peoples.  
   (Longhena, Maria. Stewart, Tabori and Chang 1998. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**It's 292 pages mostly filled with pictures and drawings from the Ancient Mexico Cultures. There are some very nice color drawings of the major cities of how they would have looked then. Since the book is now out of print you may have to find a used copy but I think it's worth it.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
8. **Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan  
   (Tod, James. Various publishers. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**This is a whopper of a book, originally published in the 1820’s. It is still readable, sometimes enjoyably so, at other times as tough as lembas that has been lying around for an era or three (so: a high level of curiosity and some sado-masochism is needed...). Depending on the print, it may consists of two or three volumes, with between 1,000+ and 2,000+ pages. It contains an enormous amount of information on the history, dynasties, religion, customs, population, administrative arrangements and economy of the native Hindu principalities of Rajasthan in northwestern India.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Understanding Early Civilizations. A Comparative Study  
   (Trigger, Bruce G. Cambridge University Press 2003. Available through Amazon)**This is basically a compendium of facts, with the various chapters organised around such themes as kingship, urbanism, food production, land ownership, conceptions of the supernatural, etc. The book tries to compare cultural, organisational and technological traits of several early civilisations. Somewhat dry, but a veritable treasure-trove of information that can be used in various gaming or world-building contexts. However, definitely a “try before you buy” title. Even I found it sometimes hard to get through. Seven “early” civilisations are described, early being “culture at an early level of state-level political organisation”. These cultures are Sumeria, Egypt, Shang China, the Maya, the Aztecs, the Inca and the Yoruba.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*

## Society and daily life:

Everything you didn’t want to know and never intended to ask about Hittite equine love, Chinese self-mutilation, Roman liquor, the dancing girls of Gades and the temple whores of Babylon…

1. **Phoenix: Daily Life in Ancient India: From 200 BC to 700 AD.  
   (Auboyer, Jeannine. Phoenix Press 2002. Available through Amazon).**I am currently reading an older Dutch translation of the French original. A slightly old-fashioned, but useful general description of Indian society and economy in the era involved.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **China’s Golden Age. Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty.  
   (Benn, Charles Oxford University Press 2004. Available through Amazon)**The title covers the content pretty well, everyday life in Tang China. Great source material for adventure plots and adding “couleur locale” in “your” Tékumel.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Life and Society in the Hittite World  
   (Bryce, Trevor. Oxford University Press 2004. Available through Amazon)**The Hittites never struck me as a major influence on Barker’s creation of Tékumel. Certainly, they seem a little too hard-nosed and pragmatic to be of interest. Nevertheless, this book has a fair amount of info that can be used, if not in Tsolyanu, then elsewhere in the Five Empires. There are various things that can add flavour or help in worldbuilding. My favourite bit of information was that, in Hittite law, bestiality (sex with animals) was strictly forbidden, in many cases punishable by death. However, sex with horses and mules was apparently allowed… The ritual purity regulations and almost shamtla-like way in which much Hittite law operated are also of interest.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Daily Life in ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire.  
   (Carcopino, Jérôme. Yale Nota Bene 2003. Available through Amazon)**The gazillionth print of a classic, should be easy to get 2nd hand. Best of course for Roman roleplaying, but still usable in parts.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Aztecs. An Interpretation  
   (Clendinnen, Inga. Cambridge University Press 1995. Available through Amazon)**A description of the culture, society and – in so far that is possible – the mentality of the Aztecs. Rich source material, great book.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
6. **The Ancient City: Life in Classical Athens & Rome.  
   (Connolly, Peter & Hazel Dodge Oxford University Press 2000. Available through Amazon)**Peter Connolly is famous for his reconstruction drawings and his experiments in archaeology (reconstruction of ancient arms and armour, for instance). “The Ancient City” is a gorgeously illustrated book chock-full information, many bits of which could be used for Tékumel. Highly recommended!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Empire of Pleasures. Luxury and Indulgence in the Roman World  
   (Dalby, Andrew. Routledge 2000. Available through Amazon)**The sensual side of the Roman Empire – not just sex, but also food, perfumes etc.  
   Probably gives nice ideas for the moderately (but not excessively) decadent side of the Tsolyani Empire.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome  
   (Kyle, Donald G. Routledge 2001. Available through Amazon)**A look at gladiatorial games and executions in Rome, their history and the intriguing question of how the bodies were disposed of. Leaves a bad taste in one’s mouth, but great source material for Hirilakte-related adventures.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **In Search of the Trojan War  
   (director: Bill Lyons. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Although by now somewhat dated, this series written by British historian Michael Wood is one of the best examples how to make a historical documentary series *ever*.   
   While Troy itself may be irrelevant to Tékumel, the history surrounding it – not just Homer, but the actual history and archaeology, the new insights in the history and society of the Aegaean / Middle Eastern world of the Late Bronze Age, the way the story was transmitted across the ages – all this is not only fascinating, but also full of usable roleplaying material, if only by illustrating how real historical events get distorted into legend.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
10. **Les voyages d’Alix  
    (***Rome I & II, La Marine Antique I & II, La Grèce I & II, Le Costume Antique I, II & III, L’Egypte I & II, Carthage, Athènes, Jerusalem, Pompéi I, Persépolis, Pétra, Les Etrusques, Les Jeux Olympiques, Les Mayas I & II***)  
    (Artist: Jacques Martin & others. Writers: Various. Available through Amazon.fr and Amazon.ca)**This is a series created by French graphic artist Jacques Martin, who is best known – in Europe, that is - for his series *Alix*, about a Romanised Gaulish prince during the time of Caesar. “Les voyages d’Alix”, although featuring his hero of the same name, is really an excuse to produce a series of books with reconstruction drawings of ancient buildings, ships and costumes, ranging from Old Kingdom Egypt to Imperial Rome and the Classic Maya. The art varies from the good to the jaw-dropping beautiful. The series has 20 volumes (totalling over 1,200 pages chockfull drawings, as well as photographs, plans and explanatory text) now, with more on their way. Anyone interested in ancient civilisations, roleplaying in them or building a good “library of mental images” for Tékumel will find this series a really great resource. Even though it’s in French (the series is being translated into other modern languages, but as the Anglophone world is often impervious to good stuff from other language areas, all bets of a translation are off...) the images say enough!  
    A full listing and sample pages (in French) can be found here: <http://bd.casterman.com/serie/castaliv/?r=castjmar&p=1>  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **Ancient Egyptians  
    (director: Tony Mitchell. Available on DVD through Amazon.com. Another, region 2 version is available through Amazon.co.uk, but it’s unclear if there any differences between the two versions)**Not a book, but a documentary series. A Channel 4 series made with Egyptian cooperation, featuring four historically researched and re-enacted episodes from ancient Egyptian history: The Battle of Meggido, The Tomb Robber’s Tale, Murder in the Temple and The Twin’s Tale. Considering the influence of ancient Egypt on Tékumel, this is highly recommended viewing. And the second story ends with the impalement of a tomb robber. You don’t get more Tsolyani on TV than that...  
      
    Ironically, the series, while excellent (it could have been better, but it’s a cutting-edge historical documentary nonetheless), got an average rating on Amazon. The reason: one of the two reviewers considered the Egyptians in the movie “Hollywood Egyptians”, i.e. not black enough. The actors, ironically, are all Egyptian...  
    The other reviewer wasn’t much better though, Egypt always ends up a battleground between Afrocentrists and their opponents in America...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
12. **Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia  
    (Nemet-Nejat, Karen Rhea Hendrickson Publishers 2002. Available through Amazon)**I have no idea how much ancient Mesopotamia has been an influence on Barker’s creation; somehow, I feel Egypt, India and Meso-America were much more influential. Still, the ancient Mesopotamian queen Semiramis (Shamigeram) may have been (the or a…) prototype for “Nayari of the Silken Thighs”. Good source for ideas!  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
13. **Pompeii – The Last Day / Colosseum – A Gladiator’s Story  
    (director: Peter Nicholson. Available on a single DVD through Amazon)**Like “Ancient Egyptians” British documentaries re-enacting the last day of Pompeii (and Herculaneum) and the career of a gladiator in 1st century Rome under the Flavian dynasty. The latter documentary also tells the story of the building of the Colosseum by the Emperors Vespasian and Titus. Not only very good, but also filled with details and characters that should be easily transferable to Tékumel.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
14. **Dictionary of Ancient Egypt  
    (Shaw, Ian & Paul Nicholson. Harry N. Abrams 2003. Available through Amazon)**Originally the *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*. “An A-Z companion to the world’s greatest civilization”, as the blurb on the back cover says. But seriously, this is a great miniature encyclopedia with plenty of articles on, and pictures of, ancient Egypt.*Andreas Baede*
15. **The World turned upside down. Medieval Japanese society.  
    (Souyri, Pierre François. Columbia University Press 2003. Available through Amazon)**A good general history of medieval Japanese society and culture. By it’s very nature an introductory book. May be more useful for Japanese roleplaying (Sengoku etc.) than for Tékumel.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
16. **People of the Pharaohs: From Peasant to Courtier**  
    **(Wilson, Hilary. Michael O’Mara Books, 1997. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**  
    Sketches of the various social categories and classes in ancient Egyptian society: the farmer, the builder, the scribe, women and children, the soldier, the King...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
17. **Life along the Silk Road  
    (Whitfield, Susan. University of California Press 2001. Available through Amazon)**The different cultures and societies along the Silk Road explored through the life of a series of characters – a merchant, a courtesan, a soldier, a nun, an official, an artist etc. Good source of ideas and quotes…  
     *Haven’t you seen on Koko-Nor’s shores  
    White bones from ancient days that no one gathers?  
    The new ghosts are tormented with rage,  
    The older ghosts just weep.  
    When the sky grows shadowed and rain pours down,  
    You hear their voices wailing.  
      
    Andreas Baede*

## Politics:

Like Donald Duck in “When the Fuehrer says…”, you’ll be glad to be an American…or Dutchman, Briton, Swede, Canadian, anything but an ancient Baganda or Roman or Chinese…

1. **Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China  
   (Hucker, Charles. Stanford University Press 1985. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Thousands of obscure titles and offices laid out for you with pleasingly literal translations and descriptions (e.g. Assistant Junior Dancing Master, Expositor-in-Waiting, Destroyer of Malicious Birds). Great for adding color and filling out a large bureaucracy.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
     
   Sounds great, but a wee bit expensive, though…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World.  
   (Lendon, J.E. Oxford University Press 2002. Available through Amazon)**A fascinating description and analysis of the role of personal and collective “honour” in the Roman Empire and its government. Invites obvious comparisons with the status-obsessed Five Empires and their “lán / bussán” concept.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **At the Dawn of Tyranny. The origins of individualism, political oppression, and the State.  
   (Sagan, Eli. Knopf 1985. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**In the course of this book – highly recommended for anyone interested in the emergence of early states, by the way – Sagan describes lots of cultural and social particularities of various exotic societies in Africa and the Pacific, usually in the form of one incident or another. Lots of human sacrifice and arbitrary (or seemingly arbitrary) executions. Lots of material that can be used in non-Tsolyani contexts, either elsewhere in the Five Empires or in the barbaric lands beyond.  
     
   *”In the days of Umi, that king was sacrificing at Waipo, when the voice of Kuahiro, his God, was heard from the clouds calling for more men. The king kept sacrificing, and the voice continued to call for more, till he had slain all his men except one, when, as he was a great favorite, he refused at first to give up. But the God being urgent, he sacrificed him also, and the priest and himself were the only two who remained of all his company. Upwards of eighty victims, they said, were offered at that time in obedience to the audible demands of the insatiate demon.”*  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Treason by the book  
   (Spence, Jonathan. Viking Adult 2001. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Nonfictional account of a Chinese emperor hunting down the author of a treasonous book. Excellent source of material.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*

## Military history:

1. **Fighting Techniques of the Ancient World (3000 BC to 500 AD): Equipment, Combat Skills, and Tactics  
   (Anglim, Simon & various others. Thomas Dunne books 2003. Available through Amazon)**  
   A general history of warfare in Antiquity. Apparently not much on *fighting techniques*, however, rather, this book is a solid general history. Connolly and Warry may have more to say about Greek and Roman warfare, although their books are significantly older. Might be a good alternative if you can’t find or afford these latter two books.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Garrison Life at Vindolanda: A Band of Brothers  
   (Birley, Anthony. Trafalgar Square 2002. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**A description of garrison life at Vindolanda, a Roman fortress on Hadrian’s Wall. Could be useful source material for adventures in or near a frontier garrison in the Five Empires.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Greece and Rome at War  
   (Connolly, Peter. Greenhill Books 1998. Available through Amazon)**The classic book by Peter Connolly, now slightly outdated, but still an excellent introductory text in the history, arms, armour, tactics and incidents of warfare in the classical world. Since the depiction of warfare in the Five Empires owes a lot to the example of ancient Greek and Roman warfare, the usefulness of the book should be obvious.  
   Oh, and it’s a great book too!  
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **The Imperial Roman Army  
   (Le Bohec, Yann. Routledge 2000. Available through Amazon)**A good general description of the structure, tactics and training of, and life in, the Roman Imperial Army. The armies of the Five Empires appear to be more or less loosely based on the ancient Roman legions; this book has plenty of info that may come in handy when dealing with military PC’s and NPC’s.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **The Weapons and Fighting Arts of Indonesia  
   (Draeger, Donn F. Tuttle Publishing reprint 2001. Available through Amazon)**Utilizes a scholarly approach, cites sources and attempts to present a balanced viewpoint.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
6. **The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece  
   (Hanson, Victor Davis. University of California Press 2000. Available through Amazon)**I’ve understood that Hanson has become something of an icon of the Right in the USA. Well, never mind. Although something of his political convictions shine through in this book, it is still a pretty good attempt to mentally “visualise” infantry battle in ancient Greece. The parallel with the Five Empires should be obvious – like the classical Greeks, the armies of the Five Empires mainly rely on the spear / pike equipped phalanx. Much of this book can probably be used for big battle scenes, especially the bloody and chaotic reality of the fighting on the battlefield itself.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate  
   (Mattern, Susan P. University of California Press 1999. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**A fascinating look at Roman “strategic mentality” and what may be suspected from their actual strategic planning (including mapmaking) and thinking. Roman misconceptions, prejudices and arrogance could be easily transferred to, say, the Tsolyani and other Five Empires peoples.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **Warfare in the Classical World: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in the Ancient Civilisations of Greece and Rome  
   (Warry, John. University of Oklahoma Press 1995. Available through Amazon)**This book can be seen both as an alternative or a companion to Connolly’s *Greece and Rome at War*. Useful resource!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Osprey Publishing series (***Campaign, Elite, Essential Histories, Fortress, Men-At-Arms, Warrior***)  
   (Practically all volumes are available through Amazon. You should also be able to get them from good bookstores)**British publisher Osprey has published hundreds of books on military history; while earlier volumes may have been less than perfect, with not-so-great artwork and texts that were less than satisfactory from a scientific point of view (especially when dealing with medieval and ancient warfare), standards have increased during the last couple of decades. Many authors these days are scholars of note, there is considerable interaction with practitioners of experimental archaeology and historical re-enactment, and illustrations are of very high quality.  
   What you get, is a lot of relatively small, affordable books filled with photographs and high-quality reconstruction drawings of ancient and medieval arms, armour and clothing, lots of historical incidents and details of organisation. All material that is not only great for roleplaying in specific periods and areas, but also for Tékumel. A lot of the information and many details can be transferred to your favourite setting, if necessary with some minor changes.  
   For instance, recently some volumes appeared dedicated to ancient Greek and Roman artillery and siege techniques: a great resource for siege scenes in the Five Empires, and absolutely a must when your character is a member of one of the legions specialised in siegecraft.  
   Osprey’s site can be found here: <http://www.ospreypublishing.com/> .Most recent books have sample pages you can take a look at.  
     
   *Andreas*

## Ancient technology:

It’s always nice to delve into the intricacies of ancient irrigation technology and Roman and medieval building cranes…

1. **Engineering in the Ancient World  
   (Landels, J.G. University of California Press 2000. Available through Amazon)**Excellent source of information on ancient technology with probably the best treatment of water wheels, pumps and other such contraptions anywhere. Lots of good pictures and drawings, outstanding little book.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*

## Religion and Mythology:

The religions and mythology of ancient civilisations are chock-full with ideas, concepts, stories, rituals etc. to keep any enterprising GM busy stealing from them for decades, if not centuries…

1. **Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia  
   (Black, Jeremy & Anthony Green. University of Texas Press 1992. Available through Amazon)**Not as strange or as bloody as Meso-American religion, yet strange enough. A lot of it might be more suited for use with the “Tlomitlanyal”.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Dictionary of Hindu lore and legend  
   (Dallapiccola, Anna. Thames and Hudson 2002. Available through Amazon)**I don’t have to explain, I think…a handy reference book.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend  
   (Green, Miranda Aldhouse. Thames & Hudson 1997. Available through Amazon)**At first sight, Celtic mythology is absent from Tékumel, though some of the things in Mitlanyal did look familiar Seriously, though, much of Celtic mythology and religion is weird enough to be usable as a source of ideas.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Dying for the Gods. Human Sacrifice in Iron Age & Roman Europe  
   (Green, Miranda Aldhouse. Trafalgar Square 2002. Available through Amazon)**A description and analysis of the evidence for human sacrifice in Iron Age and Roman Europe.  
   Interesting and usable stuff; the evidence for continued, clandestine human sacrifice under the Roman Empire – despite its official prohibition - is especially interesting. Makes one wonder what happens in some parts of Tsolyanu during festivities dedicated to local, archaic aspects of Avanthe, Karakan, Vimuhla etc. and certain other, ahem, deities that shall not be named…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya  
   (Miller, Mary & Karl Taube. Thames & Hudson 1997. Available through Amazon)**A rich source of ideas for all things religious yet unwholesome…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*

## Archaeology:

Tékumel is full with relics of the past. To be able to have a good idea of what the result would be – the layers of material remnants of the past, the mixing of remains and artefacts of different ages, the look and condition of ruins – and to get ideas for “archaeological” adventures, a certain knowledge of the history, problems and methods of archaeology is probably a good thing.

1. **Archaeology. Theories Methods and Practice.  
   (Renfrew, Colin & Paul Bahn. Thames & Hudson 2004. Available through Amazon)**Lord Renfrew is one of the leading archaeologists of today, even if some of his ideas are hotly disputed. This book is an excellent introduction to archaeology, its theories, methods and practice. Lots of examples and ideas for “archaeological” adventures on Tékumel, or just cultural and social peculiarities one can use to add “couleur locale”.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*

## Cultural anthropology:

The more readable books on cultural anthropology are rich sources on the customs, lifestyle, economy, religion and mentality of various non-western cultures.

1. **Culture, People, Nature. An introduction to general anthropology  
   (Harris, Marvin. Allyn & Bacon 1997. Available through Amazon)**Everything you wanted to know about kinship systems, gender hierarchies and more. Excellent for giving a basic insight in the “skeleton” of societies, useful for filling in gaps in Tsolyani society or even better for elsewhere in the Five Empires. You’ll probably also end up asking questions concerning aspects of Five Empires society.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Man on Earth  
   (Reader, John. Harper Collins 1990. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**This is actually a collection of a dozen essays, each taking a particular society and its environment and the interaction between economy, society and culture. A very readable book with many tidbits of information that can be mined for Tékumel. And what’s more, it can be had 2nd hand for as little as 75 cents.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*

## Travel descriptions:

Travel descriptions are among the oldest kind of “ethnographic” literature, describing and illustrating foreign lands and their landscape, people and cultures. Moreover, they often betray a lot of the character and mentality of the writer.

1. **The City of Light: The Hidden Journal of the Man Who Entered China Four Years Before Marco Polo  
   (d’Ancona, Jacob. Tr. by David Selbourne. Citadel Press 2000. Available through Amazon)**Non-fiction travelogue of a Jewish Italian merchant visiting 13th century China.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
2. **The Journal of Hendrick Hamel  
   (Hamel, Hendrick. Available online here:** [**http://www.hendrick-hamel.henny-savenije.pe.kr/holland5.htm**](http://www.hendrick-hamel.henny-savenije.pe.kr/holland5.htm) **)**This is a translation of a 17th century book written by a Dutch sailor who was shipwrecked in Korea together with some shipmates, and were forced to live in “The Hermit Kingdom” for many years.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*

# IV Internet Sites

It’s amazing what you can find on the Internet these days; not only some very large, well-written sites on a wide variety of subjects, but also most classical texts in (older, hence copyright-free) translations. If you know where to look, you are bound to find many little treasures without leaving the comforts of home.

1. **ARMA: The Association for Renaissance Martial Arts:**[**http://www.thearma.org/**](http://www.thearma.org/)A site with plenty of articles on not just Renaissance, but also medieval and ancient European fighting techniques. A fair amount of this may be usable with Tékumel, with the necessary adaptations of course.
2. **British Archaeology:**[**http://www.britarch.ac.uk/ba/ba.html**](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/ba/ba.html)This site contains online all the articles that appeared in *British Archaeology* up to the november 2003 issue. Some of the articles may be a good source of GM ideas.
3. **Fotocommunity:**[**http://www.fotocommunity.com/index/**](http://www.fotocommunity.com/index/)An online database with lots of gorgeous pictures, including architecture and landscapes. Look, for instance, under “World” and go to various exotic locales...
4. **The History Net:**[**http://www.thehistorynet.com/**](http://www.thehistorynet.com/)A site containing a lot of articles from various military history magazines.
5. **The Internet Classics Archive:**[**http://classics.mit.edu/**](http://classics.mit.edu/)441 works of classical literature, by 59 different authors, including Caesar, Thucydides, Herodotus, Pausanias etc. Also includes Omar Khayyam, Sun Tzu and Confucius.
6. **Internet Medieval Sourcebook**[**http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html**](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html)A site with a wide variety of medieval sources, including many travel descriptions.
7. **Internet Sacred Text Archive:**[**http://www.sacred-texts.com/index.htm**](http://www.sacred-texts.com/index.htm)The translated sacred texts of various cultures, from the Orphic hymns to the Mahabharata.  
   The site also contains ancient works of eroticism, like the Arabic *The Perfumed Garden*, Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* (“The Love Books of Ovid”) and the *Kama Sutra*, like *The Perfumed Garden* translated by Sir Richard Burton.
8. **Kamat’s Potpourri:**  
   [**http://www.kamat.com/**](http://www.kamat.com/)A site with various articles and a fair number of pictures on various aspects of Indian history and society. Contains some really interesting stuff.
9. **Livius. Articles on Ancient History:**[**http://www.livius.org/home.html**](http://www.livius.org/home.html)An excellent English-language Dutch site with lots of articles on, and some translated sources from, ancient history. The emphasis is on Rome, but there’s also stuff on Greek, Babylonian and Persian history. The articles on *Germania Inferior* may actually be a rich source of ideas on life in a Tsolyani frontier region. The site also has a lot of good pictures.
10. **Mesoweb:**[**http://www.mesoweb.com/**](http://www.mesoweb.com/)A site with lots of articles and links about Precolumbian American cultures.
11. **Ostia Antica 2003:**[**http://users.libero.it/sabsab/ostia2003.htm**](http://users.libero.it/sabsab/ostia2003.htm)A bunch of little movies (and pictures) from the Roman re-enactment festival in Ostia, Italy, in 2003. Mainly interesting because this is the closest anyone will ever get to actually seeing Tsolyani legionaries... Also gives you an idea how people in heavy armour can move in warm weather. Quite well, actually, if not for long if you’re fighting...
12. **Rome Military Resources:**[**http://intranet.dalton.org/groups/rome/RMil.html**](http://intranet.dalton.org/groups/rome/RMil.html)Page with links to various sites about Roman military history.
13. **The Sibylline Order:**  
    [**http://www.sibyllinewicca.org/order/index.htm**](http://www.sibyllinewicca.org/order/index.htm)A Wiccan organisation, the Sibylline Order’s site contains a fairly extensive library with various religious and magical texts, including a more modern translation of the Orphic hymns than can be found on the Internet Sacred Text Archive.  
      
    *Powerful Victory, desired by all, with Your breast filled with dreadful righteous fury,  
    I invoke Thee, whose might alone can quell contending rage and strife,  
    In battle, it is Thine to grant the victor's crown!  
      
    Victory rules all things,  
    Glorious battle,   
    and joyful shouts are Thine,  
    Come, mighty Goddess,   
    and bless Thy supplicants with sparkling eyes elated by success,  
    Protect all illustrious deeds,   
    and crown them with immortal fame.*
14. **Samurai Archives:**[**http://www.samurai-archives.com/**](http://www.samurai-archives.com/)Various articles on the Japanese samurai and their history.
15. **Sonshi:**[**http://www.sonshi.com/index.html**](http://www.sonshi.com/index.html)A site devoted to Sun Tzu, but also contains texts from other military writers, like the Roman Vegetius, Caesar, Xenophon and Frederick the Great.   
    Frederick’s online book contains the following charming passage:  
      
    *”There is yet another way to gain intelligence of the enemy when milder methods fail, though I confess it to be a harsh and cruel practice. We find out a rich citizen who has a large family and good estate, and allow him a man who understands the language of the country dressed as a servant, whom we force him to take along with him into the enemy's camp, as his valet or coachman, under pretence of complaining of some injuries which he has received; he is to be threatened also at the same time, that if he does not return after a certain period, and bring the man with him, that his houses shall be burned, and his wife and children hacked in pieces. I was obliged to have recourse to this scheme at . . . . . and it succeeded to my wish.”*
16. **Templenet Encyclopedia:**[**http://www.templenet.com/encyclo.html**](http://www.templenet.com/encyclo.html)A site with lots of articles and pictures of Indian temples.
17. **Weblinks to Warfare in the Roman World:**[**http://romanhistorybooksandmore.freeservers.com/l\_warfare.htm**](http://romanhistorybooksandmore.freeservers.com/l_warfare.htm)Another page with links to various sites about Roman military history.

# V. Music

Music can be a powerful tool for the GM to create a certain atmosphere. In the case of Tékumel, there is not all that much information about music or musical instruments, however. There is some agreement that the music should be “exotic”, so *The Chieftains* and *Meat Loaf*, not to mention *The Spice Girls* are universally deemed less than suitable.

However, exotic music brings with it certain risks: if the style of music is known to the players, they may associate it with its culture of origin – NOT Tékumel. In my own point of view, the choice of music of Tékumel should therefore not merely be based on how exotic it is, or whether it uses instruments similar to the ones that are described on Tékumel. Rather, it should be based on how “strange” it sounds to the players involved. Also, not every unknown exotic music is useful; some musical styles really get on people’s nerves, and unless the GM *wants* the music to have this effect on his players, he should avoid using it.   
Apart from various styles of exotic music there is also film music. A lot of this can be used, because this is evocative music *par excellence*. Of course, the style should not clash with Tékumel…Pulp Fiction’s music, good though it is, just wouldn’t do…

## Musical styles:

This is a short list of certain musical “styles” that were recommended by several people.

1. **African music.**I have always thought of the "delicate syncopation of the Pei Choi log-xylophones" as either the amadinda music from Uganda, or perhaps something like the mbira and later mariba music from Zimbabwe.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
2. **Australian didgeridoo music.**Why this was placed on the List, I dunno and cannot fathom. The sound is very distinctive and goes very well with Scandinavian folk rock, but Tékumel?  
   Well, perhaps in the jungle regions of Nmartusha…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Classical Western music.**Some of the music suggested on the original list were *The Nutcracker Suite* of Tschaikovsky, Claude Debussy’s *Reverie* and *Iberia* and Ravel’s *Bolero*. I’m personally not too crazy about this, since western classical music is often very well-known, and sounds, well...classical, not alien or exotic. Still, some pieces might work, for instance select portions from Holst’s *The Planets* or Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* or Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* (Avanthe rituals, anyone?).  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Gamelan music.**Gamelan is played in large ensembles of from between 3 and 30 musicians and singers, and most of the instruments are what we might call xylophones in the west. There are drums and flutes and some bowed instruments as well. Most of the instruments would be classified as metallophones, and are made of bronze, or iron. Numerous gongs are played, and the gong ageng (great gong, in the sense of large/important) reminds me of the tunkel gongs of the temples, although these are probably much larger. The tuning systems are (at least in Javanese and Balinese varieties) either an equally spaced pentatonic scale, or a heptatonic (seven note) scale. [Caveat: “Having studied gamelan for some time, mostly Javanese, some Balinese, and no Sundanese (they are each very very different), it never struck me as being particularly Tékumeliyani. That's just my opinion, however, and the descriptions in the source book are evocative of gamelan, to be sure.”  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*Personally, I can’t use this, because every Dutchman (I live in the Netherlands) will immediately associate it with Indonesia – not with Tékumel. If the players don’t know it, you can use it.  
   If you chose carefully, it can be very evocative – it certainly helped my players hating “de Gordel van Smaragd” (The Girdle of Emeralds, the Dutch poetic name for the Indonesian archipelago) while playing Cthulhu in 1890s Dutch East Indies…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Gregorian Chant and other early Christian church music**Well, somebody placed it on the list. Absolutely disagree; Gregorian chants are instantly recognisable, unless one’s players are from some lost Dayak headhunter tribe from the jungles of Borneo. In my humble opinion: Don’t Use It!  
   But if you want to give it a try, just look up “Gregorian chants” on Amazon and listen to some samples.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
6. **Indian classical music.**No comments.
7. **Indian ragas.**e.g. Raga Malkos. Long, slow, contemplative Indian sitar music may have something in common with the Tenturen (the instrument used for Tsolyani classical music). Flute and the little bowls filled with water (called "Jaltarang" in India) are also likely to produce some similarities.  
   Jaltarang is a set of delicate pottery bowls, into which different amounts of water were poured. When struck by the player with a little stick, elegant bell-like tones were produced. Various of these methods are used by the Tsolyani, as well as horns, drums, flutes, and others.  
     
   I have always thought that the Sra'ur could be thought of as the Indian sarod.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
   Here too, I would urge caution; if your players know something of Indian music, they might associate it with India, not Tékumel. If you are uncertain, try to pick up tunes & tracks that sound somewhat unusual – there are several styles that sound different from the “typical” Indian sound one hears in travel programs and movies set in India.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **Japanese classical music.**Classical Japanese pieces, for shakuhachi particularly. The Tenturen reminds me of the Japanese koto, perhaps.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*  
   One example would be “Japan: Shakuhachi – the Japanese Flute”. You can hear some samples on Amazon. Other examples are “Koto Music of Japan”. As usual, one should watch for over-familiarity – you want people to visualize Tékumel, not Japan.  
   Not as well known, and in my opinion much better suited, is Japanese drum music, as performed by the ensemble “Kodo” (look for instance on Amazon for “Best of Kodo” and “Tsutsumi”. Somehow, I strongly associated the track *Niji no Nagori – “Rainbow Traces”* with Vrá. Turned out the first line of the song means something like *“Riding the Wind across the Ocean”* Yes!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Mongolian music and singing.**Well, this is fairly unknown and can be pretty weird when you’ve never heard it. You might actually find, among Mongolian and Tuvan (or Tuwinian) music, some songs that might work as Tsolyani marching-songs – I used several for Mongolian bannermen of the Manchu Emperor in a Cthulhu adventure in 1890s China!  
   Titles you might check out on Amazon are those by ensemble Huun-Huur-Tu or “Instrumental & Vocal Music Fom Buryatia”.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
10. **Thai music.**Well, as usual, beware of familiarity. Lots of people go on holiday there..  
    Some of the Thai court music is nice, some of it may make you a hated GM…  
    Personally, I will never use it for Tékumel, it’s too obviously related to the Indonesian music styles from Java, Bali and Sumatra.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **Tibetan tri-chordal singing.**  
    Tibetan tri-chordal singing and the singing bowls are also quite lovely.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*

## Traditional music:

Original music from various cultures and periods in history. Some of these are in “modernised” versions, but at least all of them are sung and played on real instruments. Synthesizers are either absent or at least not recognisably there. There are also some “modern” compositions that deliberately look back to old, traditional music styles.

1. **Iran: Musique du Su du Khorassan (Music of South Khorassan) / Musique du Nord du Khorassan (Music of North Khorassan)  
   (Sima Bina. Label: Universal / Demon. CD available through Amazon)**Sima Bina is one of the leading singers of traditional Iranian music. A throaty voice and plenty of emotion. The music is pretty good, and clearly related to the music of the Kamkars.   
     
   *The warriors of the secret Citadel  
   A thousand women in love  
   Endlessly waiting for them  
   Hoping to welcome them one day  
     
   The secret of the silver sabre,  
   the Lion of the Dark forests  
   the stilted Sepulchre Lion*. *Andreas Baede*
2. **Into the Labyrinth, Aion, Spiritchaser, Toward the Within, Serpent’s Egg, A Passage in Time, Within the Realm of a Dying Sun, etc. etc.  
   (Dead Can Dance. Label: Warner Brothers. CD’s available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**Lisa Gerrard, the singer from “Gladiator”, was originally half of Dead Can Dance. Melancholy, weltschmerzy, mildly exotic. Careful what you use, better try out those samples…Personally, I’ve never found any RPG use for their music, but a few tracks could be used, I suppose.  
   It’s certainly evocative, but perhaps a bit TOO evocative. You want the music to aid in building atmosphere, not that your players pay more attention to the music than to the GM.  
   Also, while I like their music, I don’t think personally that it fits Tékumel very well, with the possible exception of the more Persian-inspired tracks.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Mediterraneum, Stella Splendens, On the Way to Bethlehem, Troubadours  
   (Ensemble Oni Wytars. A lot of their CDs are not available through Amazon, try it through the group’s site. Look at** [**www.oniwytars.de**](http://www.oniwytars.de) **and go on from there…)**Medieval music from all over western Eurasia: European, Arab, Persian, Turkish, Balkans…  
   That which doesn’t sound sufficiently exotic can be used for medieval roleplaying…or is just darn good, if you like medieval European and Middle Eastern music.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Yemenite Songs**(Ofra Haza. Label: Global Style june 2000. Available on DV through Amazon.)  
   Well, Ofra Haza is (was?) a very pretty Israeli lady and she can certainly sing. However synthesizers & modern instruments are quite prominently present.   
   Personally, I wouldn’t use it.   
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Sjofn  
   (Gjallarhorn. Label: Northside Records 2000. CD available through Amazon)**I was somewhat doubtful about placing this CD on the List. After all, these are Swedish-Finnish songs, and while thoroughly enjoyable (if Scandinavian folk music is your kind of thing), they would be best for medieval Scandinavian or Harnic roleplaying. However, the track *Suvetar*, about the Goddess of Spring (yup, it’s a fertility ritual song), sounds sufficiently strange and evocative. Same goes for the mystic *Kom Helge Ande* (“Come, Holy Spirit”). It probably depends on how good the Finnish or Swedish-Finnish of your players is...  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
6. **Trä, Karelia Visa  
   (Hedningarna. Label: Northside Records. Available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**Hedningarna is (was?) a Swedish-Finnish folk rock band. Their music is a strange mix of traditional and medieval Swedish and Finnish music, intermingled with influences both modern and ancient from various music styles. The result is very often very unfamiliar-sounding, yet very evocative. I would be very careful about what you use and when, though. Some of the tracks – or bits of them – would be perfect in helping to set an entirely different “mood” for cultures outside the Five Empires.  
   A few of them – especially “Mita Mita” and “Ukkonen” from Karelia Visa are usable for the Five Empires. You can try out samples on Amazon. The other Hedningarna CD’s, like “Kaksi”, are less usable.  
    *Andreas Baede*
7. **The Living Fire  
   (The Kamkars. Label: Long Distance 1996. CD 2nd hand available through Amazon)**  
   Fast, fiery music from the Kurdish mountains. May be a little too wild for stolid Tsolyani…  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **Mahabharata  
   (Various artists. Label: Real World 1990. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**The soundtrack of Peter Brook’s TV series of the same name, this is near-perfect for Tékumel. There may be other CD’s with the same name, you want the one with ASIN number B000000I1U, Real World label.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Somnia Imperii  
   (Composer: David Marshall. Label: Ancestral Instruments. CD can be ordered through Ancestral Instruments, their site can be found here:** [**http://www.ancestral.co.uk/index.html**](http://www.ancestral.co.uk/index.html) **)**The late David Marshall was one of the pioneers in the reconstruction of ancient Roman instruments and their music. His wife still runs the company they founded, Ancestral Instruments. The music is best used with Roman roleplaying, but is certainly exotic enough for Tékumel, unless you’ve got a bunch of players who are deep into Roman history and know this kind of music already.  
   Pictures of the instruments and samples of several tracks can be found here: <http://www.ancestral.co.uk/romanmusic2003.htm>   
     
   By the way, Ancestral Instruments also sells various other CD’s with historical music, might be worth checking out, either for enjoyment or for roleplaying purposes outside Tékumel.*Andreas Baede*
10. **The Mystic’s Dream  
    (Loreena McKennit, from the album “The Mask and the Mirror”. Label: Warner Brothers 1994. CD available through Amazon)**Somebody placed this on the original List, but for me, it’s too recognisably Western/Middle Eastern, with Gregorian chants and all. McKennit’s music lends itself best for “western” fantasy – it was used in the rather mediocre “Mists of Avalon” miniseries. McKennit certainly has roleplaying potential, but not, I fear, on Tékumel – at least not with me. But listen to the clips on Amazon and make up your own mind.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **Russian Twilight  
    (Irina Mikhailova. Label: Well-tempered World 1997. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**I actually bought this CD when some Tékumelista recommended it, and I liked it. A few tracks are certainly usable – Dance of the Winds is probably the best. Incidentally, “Zurahvo” is perfect for roleplaying in a Byzantine setting…  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
12. **Sine Missione  
    (Omnia. Label: Emmuty Records 2002. Available through the Emmuty Records site,** [**http://www.emmuty.de/choose.shtml**](http://www.emmuty.de/choose.shtml) **)**Omnia is a Dutch group originally formed to perform reconstructed Roman music. And *Sine Missione* is just that, reconstructed Roman music, albeit perhaps a little too modern-sounding. The music on this CD is, of course, primarily useful for Roman roleplaying, and enjoyable as well. It also sounds exotic enough for Tékumel, though you’d better have no Roman re-enactor in your playing group!  
    Samples of the CD’s tracks can be found here: <http://www.emmuty.de/katalog/EM005.php>  
      
    In a reorganised form, Omnia became what they themselves call a “Neocelt” band, performing a mix of old and new “Celtic” (mainly Irish, some Breton) music, as well as other traditional northern European music with a “pagan” atmosphere. They’ve become a bit of New Age Celts, but it’s all tongue in cheek (for instance, severed heads on poles are a standard feature of their performances) and at least they know how to play their instruments and how to sing! Anyone interested can find their site (and samples from their CD’s) here: <http://www.omnia-neocelt.com/> ). Very usable for medieval-ish or Celtic-esque roleplaying!  
      
    Emmuty Records also sells various CD’s of other European (mainly German) groups specialising in historical (medieval and early modern) and / or folk music. Most, but not all, of the sung texts are in German; great stuff for medieval (ish) roleplaying, and absolutely perfect for *Warhammer*. One group, called *Die Streuner*, recorded a song on their CD *“Schnorrer, Penner, Schräge Narren”*called “Söldnerschwein” (lit. “Mercenary Swine”), which must be the best song for historical and fantasy mercenary characters (PC or NPC) *ever.* The first sentence starts *“Was kann schöner sein, als ein Söldnerschwein zu sein*”: *“What can be more fine, than being a Mercenary swine?”*.*Andreas Baede*
13. **Full Moon, Incantations etc.  
    (G.S. Sachdev. Label: Various. CD’s available through Amazon)**  
    Indian flute music. Try before you Buy.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
14. **Edda  
    (Sequentia. Label: Musical Heritage Society. Available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Sequentia is a European ensemble who are at the forefront reconstructing medieval European music, especially that of the early and high Middle Ages. They are often rather stiff and formal to my taste, but there’s no doubt they are a very talented bunch. Years ago I listened to Sequentia’s Jerome Bagby telling Beowulf in the original Anglo-Saxon in a medieval church in Utrecht, and he got me completely spellbound – even though my Anglo-Saxon is, to say the least, extremely patchy.  
    The very formal, ceremonial and if I dare say almost ritualistic style, plus the somewhat unusual melodies – mostly using harp and medieval fiddle – may fit certain Tékumel sessions. The tracks are long though, so it’s best to use certain selected fragments. Especially haunting and strange are the two parts of The Prophecy of the Seeress (when Bagby, Barbara Thornton and Lena Norin get going, they sure get going and transport you to another time and place); The Song of the Mill is extremely melancholy; Baldr’s Dreams eerie and somewhat creepy, especially in its first half.  
      
    The CD comes with a handy book about the Edda and how the artists went about producing the music, as well as the songtexts in both Old Norse and various modern languages, including English. You might want to use some of those texts for flavour...  
      
    Just make sure that none of your players know Old Norse…And one warning: Eowyn’s lament in “The Two Towers” movie at the burial of her cousin was clearly based on the style reconstructed by Sequentia for “Edda” – so be careful what you use.  
    Oh, and of course it’s perfect for use in Harnic or Viking roleplaying.  
      
    *There comes the shadowy   
    Dragon flying,  
    glittering Serpent, up  
    from Dark of the Moon Hills.  
    He carries in His pinions  
    -he flies over the field –   
    Malice Striker, corpses.  
      
    Andreas Baede*
15. **The Sounds of India, Ragas & Talas, etc.  
    (Ravi Shankar, Label: Various. CD’s available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**More Indian music. Ravi Shankar is a bit of a “superstar” in the world of traditional Indian music, ragas especially .For me, his music is TOO recognisable as Indian music.   
      
    *Andreas Baede*
16. **Stellamara (Star of the Sea), The Seven Valleys  
    (Stellamara. Label: Various. CD’s available through Amazon)**Clear influences from Dead Can Dance and Lisa Gerrard. Stellamara’s Sonja Drakulich (for the D&D junkies: that’s **drakul-ich**, not **draco-lich**) has a great voice. The songs and melodies come from all over western Eurasia, from medieval Spain to Persia; most of it sounds exotic to modern western ears. Quite usable, I would say.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
17. **Music from Ancient Rome I & II  
    (Synaulia. Label: Amiata. CD’s available through Amazon.de; you might try Amazon and Amazon.uk, but the German branch may be your best bet…It also has sample of all the tracks. You might also order it directly through here:** [**http://www.soundcenter.it/anticaromaeng.htm**](http://www.soundcenter.it/anticaromaeng.htm) **)**Reconstructed Roman music, certainly exotic enough for Tékumel.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
18. **Vihma  
    (Värttinä. Label: RCA 1998. CD’s available through Amazon)**  
    Värttinä is a Finnish band whom I had the privilege of enjoying live in 2004 in Tilburg in the Netherlands. The singers are great and cute, the musicians terrific. That said, most of the music is useless for Tékumel, even though a lot of it doesn’t sound “typically western” – nor Middle Eastern or Indian. One track, however, I can wholeheartedly recommend, the haunting *Mielenevi Alenevi*. It may not be the Five Empires, but darn, somewhere on those 772 worlds they must be singing like that…  
    The other CD’s I recommend for those who like their music. Some of it may be usable, but probably not within the Five Empires…  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
19. **Bali: Golden Rain  
    (Various artists. Label: Nonesuch 2003. CD available through Amazon)**Specifically the *“Monkey Chant”*. With a caveat: people who hear it for the first time react with "What the Hell?" It can be heard on an album of Balinese music named "Golden Rain".  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*  
    You can listen to samples on the Amazon site. Weird, though I already knew it.  
    I think it can be used very well in some temple or monastery…but personally, I have to be careful – Indonesia is a former Dutch colony, and one of my potential players has actually studied Javanese and Balinese dance. As with every music, watch out for too much “familiarity”. It could break the “suspension of disbelief”.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*

## Film Music:

Music from various movies and TV series. As this music is often deliberately written (or selected) to build atmosphere and accompany certain kinds of scenes, it is often very useful for roleplaying. Of course, one should not use the music from “Pulp Fiction” to accompany a scene in the Temple of Sárku, for instance...

1. **Bram Stoker’s Dracula  
   (Composer Wojciech Kilar. Label: Sony 1992. CD available through Amazon)**The creepy and highly effective soundtrack of Coppola’s great baroque vampire movie. The one drawback may be that it’s a fairly well-known soundtrack.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
2. **Conan the Barbarian  
   (Composer Basil Poledouris. Label: Wea International 2003. CD available through Amazon)**The main drawback may be that this movie’s soundtrack is relatively well-known. But hey, it’s *the* classical heroic fantasy soundtrack...you should own it anyway!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon  
   (Various artists. Label: Phantom. CD available through Amazon)**Watch out for too Chinese-sounding music. Otherwise, great soundtrack and usable in parts, I think.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Death and the Maiden  
   (Composers Franz Schubert / Wojciech Kilar. Label: Erato 1994. Probably hard to get...)**The tracks by Kilar – about a third of the CD – are pretty creepy, and great for roleplaying anywhere dungeon-y or just plain ominous...  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **Gladiator, More Music from the motion picture Gladiator.  
   (Composer Hans Zimmer. Label: Decca. Available on CD through Amazon)**Terrific soundtrack; however, if you recognise the style, it’s very waltzy and pseudo-Roman. Also, parts of the soundtrack are very well-known. Still, will probably go down well with most players, I suspect. But beware of nitpickers.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
6. **Hamlet  
   (Composer Ennio Morricone. Label: Virgin Records 1992. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Another creepy soundtrack generally suitable for roleplaying, especially below ground...Used it with great effect in Cthulhu campaigns.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Hellraiser  
   (Composer Christopher Young. Label: Silva Screen Records 1987. CD 2nd hand available through Amazon)**Creepy. Creepy. *CREEPY!* Did I say that this soundtrack is creepy?  
   Barker’s Cenobites always struck me as Chiténg worshippers...  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **Lord of Illusions  
   (Various artists. Label: Mute Records 1995. CD 2nd hand available through Amazon)**Creepy film music for all your cultists – Change, Stability, Shadow God...or otherwise... The track *While the Blood Runs Warm in Your Veins* may be utterly unusable for Tékumel, but is great for Cthulhu or early 1900s Vampire...  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love  
   (Composer: Mychael Danna. Tvt 1997. CD available through Amazon)**The soundtrack of the movie of the same name. Very, very usable for Tékumel.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
10. **Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl  
    (Composer Klaus Badelt. Label: Disney 2003. CD available through Amazon)**A highly enjoyable movie, but it also has a great, rousing soundtrack. For all your over-the-top, high adventure.. *Andreas Baede*
11. **The 13th Warrior  
    (Composer Jerry Goldsmith. Label: Varese Records 1999. CD available through Amazon)**This movie, based on Michael Crichton’s *Eaters of the Dead*, itself based on *Beowulf*, is a bit of a sleeper hit: A well-made, old-fashioned adventure, well-acted, intelligently made (for an action movie) and thoroughly enjoyable. The only weird thing are some of the arms and armour, which are, quite simply, anachronistic (either too old – a Roman gladiator helmet, for instance).  
    Anyway, the soundtrack’s pretty good, atmospheric and can easily be used for Tékumel adventures.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
12. **Various spaghetti western soundtracks (***Once Upon A Time in the West, The Good, the Bad and the Ugly, etc.***)  
    (Composer Ennio Morricone.****Label: Various. CD’s available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**The guy or gal who suggested this must have been kidding. Surely everybody associates this with westerns?  
      
    *Andreas Baede*

## Other Music:

All the rest, from 1950s compositions to modern Gothic rock. A rather mixed bag...but with some real gems among it.

1. **In the Lap of the Gods (from “Pyramid” album)  
   (Alan Parsons Project. Label: Arista 1990. CD available through Amazon)**No comments.
2. **Cantar de Procellar  
   (Arcana. No idea where you can get it, good luck!)**No comments.
3. **"How to Destroy Angels", "Stolen and Conterminated Songs" and "Unnatural History, Vols. I and II"  
   (Coil. Label: Various. CD’s available through Amazon)**Alas, no samples on Amazon.   
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **Karma  
   (Delerium. Label: Nettwerk Records 1997. CD available through Amazon)**No comments.
5. **Great God Pan  
   (Endura. Label: Misanthropy Records 1997. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**No comments.
6. **Birdy; Passions; Passion Sources  
   (Peter Gabriel. Label: Various. CD’s available through Amazon)**Well, a bit too synthesizer-y for my taste, I’m afraid. To each his own.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **Koyaanisqatsi; Powwaqatsi; Akhnaten; And lots, lots more  
   (Composer Philip Glass. Label: Various. CD’s available through Amazon)**Careful what you use, the music is relatively well-known and here and there a bit too synthesizer-y and S-L-O-W for my personal taste.  
   Akhnaten is probably the most usable, featuring actual Egyptian speech and translated Egyptian texts you could easily adapt for Tékumel. In fact, Act I, scene I, *“The Funeral of Amenhotep III”* is just terrific, with drums and Egyptian chants.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
8. **The Island Anthology  
   (Jade Warrior. Label: Polygram 1995. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**No comments.
9. **Serenade for the Dead  
   (Leatherstrip. Label: Cleopatra 1994. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**Some of the tracks from the "Serenade for the dead" album (their other work is a little bit modern industrial for Tékumel IMHO)  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
10. **Delilah (from album “Flautista”)  
    (Herbie Mann. Label: Polygram Records 1998. CD available through Amazon)**Laid-back 50s pulp sensuality, judging from the clip on Amazon.Personally, I would only recommend it for a cheesy, fun Tékumel adventure involving Princess Ma’in and a lusty, drunk Ahoggya…plus a dozen horny Shén, some tipsy N’lüss and a befuddled Tinaliya...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **Desert Poems, Towards the Evening Child, Towards the Wind, Behind Eleven Deserts, Music of Stones, East of the Night, The Garden of Mirrors, etc.)  
    (Stephan Micus, Label: ECM Records. CD’s available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**Stephan Micus is a German composer/musician who has mixed and matched instruments and musical styles from all over the world and various time periods, and thus succeeded in creating something pretty unique. If there is a musical equivalent to such great creators of cultural/historical fantasy pastiches like Tolkien and Barker, then Stephan Micus is that guy. I discovered him through the track *Night Circles* (from the album *The Garden of Mirrors*) on an ECM sampler CD. However, while I think his stuff is excellent for Tékumel – it is often beautiful, evocative and culturally difficult to place – I would definitely try it out first, though: not every album is equally good or usable. Luckily, Amazon has lots of samples of his work.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
12. **The Aztec Gods (available as part of Toccata Giocosa/Night Flight/Symphony No.4/Los Dioses Aztecas)  
    (Composer Gardner Read. Label: Composers Recordings 1997. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**It is a modern Classical work for percussion. It sounds just like the kind of music you'd expect to accompany human sacrifices.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*Well, judging by the Amazon clips: Yes, in a 1950s pulp movie. For someone whose heard a lot of old and new film music as well as traditional music, like me, this would immediately “put me out of the mood”. It’s just too obviously a ‘50s product. Well...the one track that sounded promising was the Huitzilopochtli one.   
      
    *Andreas Baede*
13. **Long Ago and Far Away  
    (The Shroud. Label: Neue ästhetik / Tess 1996. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**“Long Ago and Far Away” This is a small American atmospheric goth band concentrating on eerie music supporting the haunting female lyrics. Almost any of their albums will contain some music that is Tékumel appropriate and some that is less so. The album "Long ago and Far Away" may be a good place to start but their version of the Sisters of Mercies "Alice" is particularly haunting, though unfortunately only available on compilations ("American Gothic" springs to mind) that will have little or no other music on it that would fit with Tékumel.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
14. **Todeswunsch,Ich töte mich, Dead Lovers’ Sarabande, etc.  
    (Sopor Aeternus. Label: Apocalyptic Records. CD’s available 2nd hand and new through Amazon)**  
    This is the name of the artist, often the albums are marked as being by "Soppor Eternus and the Ensemble of Shadows. An Italian artist who produces some of the most eerie and disturbingly atmospheric music I have ever heard. Anything by this artist should suit Tékumel but his instrumental only works (the albums are usually marked when its instrumental only) are less disturbing since his lyrical content tends to be very bleak and maudlin.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*  
    Actually, the group Sopor Aeternus is German (Krista, were you referring to Anna-Varney Cantodea?); I have to say that from what I’ve heard, it doesn’t do much to me. Gothic Vampires, hmmm…  
    Good music for accompanying watching Murnau’s “Nosferatu”, though…or playing “Vampire” in a late 1800’s / early 1900’s setting...More CD’s and clips are on Amazon.de.  
      
    *Andreas Baed*
15. **Hymn to the Sphynx, etc.  
    (Third Ear Band. Label: Mooncrest Records 2001. CD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**No comments.
16. **White Winds  
    (Andreas Vollenweider. Label: Sony 1990. CD available through Amazon)**No comments.
17. **From Across This Gray Land I, II, III  
    (Va-From Across This Gray Land. Label: CD’s of volume II and III available through Amazon)**No comments.
18. **Lotsa titles...  
    (Vangelis. Label: Various. CD’s available new and 2nd hand through Amazon)**Might take a look at the soundtrack of the recent “Alexander” movie…Traditionally a lot of synthesizers, though, and I gave up on them after OD’ ing on Jean-Michel Jarre...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*

# VI. Movies & tv drama series

Movies (and television series) may not excel in depicting the complexities of societies, religions and political systems, but they are great for actions scenes, adventure plots, ideas for PCs and NPCs, and also visual references. And let’s not forget film music…Films provide “living” and “moving” examples of strange cultures, exciting battles, and impressive landscapes, cities and palaces. Even if movie references don’t fit Tékumel, they can provide a starting point; the GM can alter the details, keeping a mood of awe or excitement, but impressing upon the players the differences that make the Tékumel “reality” “other” and “alien”.

1. **Gosford Park (2002)  
   (director: Robert Altman. Available on DVD through Amazon)**It's superficially about a murder during a fall shooting party at an aristocratic English country house in the 1930's. Not, one might think, rich ground for Tékumel, but Altman puts the servants in the movie as much or more than the masters (the cast is remarkable), and it was seeing this big bunch of people in a big house together, the interactions within and between social levels, and some of the realities of people "in service" to others that was useful. Of course life in a high status clanhouse would be different in many ways (e.g. presence of slaves, many servants are clan-cousins) but I think it's still worth some thought. The pheasant-shoot itself was a good example: the crowd of beaters gathering, the huntmaster giving instructions to keep them from impugning the shooters, the shooters at stands blazing away as the game comes to them. Substitute crossbows for shotguns, and tweeds and boots for sandals and firya kilts, and you won't be far wrong...  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*
2. **The Last Emperor (1987)  
   (director: Bernardo Bertolucci. Available on DVD through Amazon)**The life of Henry P’u yi, last Manchu Emperor of China, and first and only Emperor of the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. Good for experiencing something of the “weirdness” of the Chinese Court in its latter days.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
3. **Mahabharata (1990)  
   (director: Peter Brook. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Peter Brook’s TV series based on the ancient Indian epic. Buy or rent it, then watch it. And watch it again. Ye Tékumelistas, what are ye waiting for?  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
4. **The Emperor and the Assassin (1999)  
   (director: Kaige Chen. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Court intrigue, romance and epic scope -- again, the battle scenes are spectacular.  
   “The person who liked this movie”  
     
   Ugh. yes the battles are quite amazing, but the intervening looong sections of heavy melodrama seemed interminable. Imho, best viewed with a fast forward option.  
     
   *Krista Donnelly*I found it also so-so, but liked it because it gave a little more info on Ch’in history than “Hero”. In my opinion, one should watch it in its entirety, wait a few days, then re-watch the good bits using fast-forward. Better still, read a few good books about Ch’in shih huang-ti and Warring States China.  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
5. **The Godfather (1972)  
   (director: Francis Ford Coppola. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Demonstrates the exchange of favors. Favors seem to be an integral part of Tsolyani (if not Tékumelani) life, and I think this movie demonstrates the point very well. Again, AMC shows this movie from time to time, in a slightly edited version (some of the more violent/bloody scenes were removed.)  
    *Krista Donnelly*
6. **The Egyptian (1954)  
   (director: Michael Curtiz. Available on 2nd hand NTSC VHS video through Amazon)**An old 1950s romp in ancient Egypt, featuring a physician, Sinuhe, during the reigh of Akhnaten. Since the 2nd hand videos go for over $20, this is clearly a movie in need of a good DVD transfer (and it’s not the only one!).  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
7. **(the life and loves of) Omar Khayyam (1957)  
   (director: William Dieterle. Available on 2nd hand NTSC VHS video through Amazon)**It's on AMC (American Movie Classics) now & then (they title it simply Omar Khayyam) and has to do with court life in Persia (?). I won't say ancient court life, since it's set, I think, about 300-400 years ago. There are several striking similarities I noticed, perhaps more so since I was rereading Man of Gold at the time. The first is the Red Hats; in this case the assassin clan, not the Mu'ugalavyani. The second was daises (sp? pl. of dais), there was at least one which played a part in the movie, perhaps there were others around it that I didn't notice. The third, and for me the most eerie similarity was the Imperial Seal; at one point a person was elected as the 'Keeper of the Seal.' There is also a lot of court intrigue which struck me as somewhat similar (though abbreviated) to the Tsolyani situation near the end of the reign of Emperor Hirkane Tlakotani.  
   *Krista Donnelly*  
   Hmmm…I always thought Omar Khayyam lived in the 11th century. Shows what I don’t know, and Hollywood does. Featured Peruvian singer Yma Sumac as a singing haremgirl, apparently (‘Now, what does a nice Inca girl like you do in a Persian joint like this?”).  
   You might take a look at this site, <http://www.okonlife.com/>, about Omar Khayyam and his poetry. Wish I could read the Farsi original…  
     
   *Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,  
   Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide  
   Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"  
   And--"A blind understanding!" Heav'n replied.  
     
   Andreas Baede*
8. **I, Claudius (1975)  
   (Based on the books I, Claudius and Claudius the God by Robert Graves. Available on DVD through Amazon)**The legendary BBC series on DVD. Buy it and watch it, not for the less than accurate (and occasionally rather cheap) costumes and scenery, but for its excellent cast and performances. The Evil Empress (Livia), a mad Emperor (Caligula), a likeable if unlikely hero, and grand drama in a huge, polytheistic empire. If you don’t come away from this with roleplaying material, you should check your pulse.  
   Just go watch!  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
9. **Land of the Pharaohs (1955)  
   (director: Howard Hawks. Available on 2nd hand NTSC VHS video through Amazon)**A historically silly but enjoyable 1950s movie about Cheops and the building of the Great Pyramid. Features a young and delectable Joan Collins as the deliciously evil princess Nellifer of Cyprus.  
   I can actually remember seeing this movie as a kid of five, in German, on TV. I still blame it for beginning my lifelong infatuation with the history of ancient civilisations...  
     
   *Andreas Baede*
10. **Kunpan (aka Kunpan the Warrior) (2002)  
    (director: Thanit Juntanukul. Available on DVD, but probably not in the USA or the UK)**The movie’s apparently based on some Thai epic.  
    Kunpan is not a good movie; there are gaps in the story, the hero frequently acts as a swine, the viewer (unless he or she knows Thai) is at the mercy of subtitles…  
    However, the people in the movie are striking; the hero, at times, has the cruel and ruthless streak more heroes of yore have. But there are more strange things in it.  
    At the beginning, Kunpan’s noble warrior father is beheaded on the orders of the King for failing to prevent some minor disturbance. Later in the movie, Kunpan never, ever shows any grudge towards the King (something few western Eurasians, either ancient or modern, would find comprehensible). The hero Kunpan himself ain’t no “western gentleman” either. For instance, at one point in the story, he murders his lover and turns their unborn child into some kind of personal demon familiar. But the setting is exotic, the love story tragic, the actors look very good (the hero is undeniably handsome in a non-western way, the King looks impressive even if he’s ruthless, the women are stunning) there are all kinds of little bits of cultural lore and rituals…This is exotic, non-western fantasy, folks, and there ain’t no happy end here. The hero’s lady love gets her head lopped off in the course of some weird, ritualised execution at the end of the movie.  
    Soak it up for the atmosphere, and don’t mind the story (and the gaps in it) so much.  
    Apropos the DVD, I couldn’t find it on Amazon. Anyone interested contact me, perhaps I can find it here in Europe (you do need a region-free DVD player, though…)  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
11. **The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad (1958)  
    (director: Nathan Juran. Available on DVD through Amazon)**The first of the Sinbad movies, featuring Ray Harryhausen’s special effects.  
    A remarkably fun movie (the region 2 DVD had very crisp imagery too!), but why somebody placed it on the Recommended List, beats me, frankly.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
12. **Kwaidan (1965)  
    (director: Masaki Kobayashi. Available on DVD through Amazon)**The classic movie of Japanese ghost stories, as written down by Lafcadio Hearn.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
13. **The Thief of Baghdad (1940)  
    (director: Zoltan Korda & Michael Powell. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Golden Oldie; maybe it was Professor Barker’s “Star Wars” experience…But why it was placed on the List?  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
14. **Kagemusha (1980)  
    (director: Akira Kurosawa. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Also contains some spectacular battle scenes, and hinges on the death of a warlord who is assassinated at a siege, while listening to a flutist who is inside the castle he's besieging.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*  
    Criterion Collection will bring out a definitive version on DVD in the course of 2005. Remember, fellow non-North Americans, only order this one if you have a region-free DVD player!  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
15. **Throne of Blood (1961)  
    (director: Akira Kurosawa. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Throne of Blood in particular is filled with battle scenes involving hundreds of warriors on either side in brightly colored laquered armor.  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*  
    ???I thought it was in Black & White. Saw it years ago, it’s a retelling of MacBeth, made a helluva impression on me. A fine example how one can adapt a well-known story to an entirely different cultural environment.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
16. **Ran (1985)****(director: Akira Kurosawa. Available on DVD through Amazon)**King Lear, Akira Kurosawa-style. Gorgeous, tragic.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
17. **Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000)  
    (director: Ang Lee. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Visually beautiful and evocative, the simple story rises above itself.   
    But personally, I don’t see what’s “Tékumelani” about this movie – it’s great for Chinese roleplaying, though, and it’s a fine movie.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
18. **The Royal Hunt of the Sun (1969)  
    (Director Irving Lerner. Simitar Entertainment 1998. DVD available 2nd hand through Amazon)**This movie deals with the (fictional) relationship between the Conquistador Francisco Pizarro and the last Inca Emperor, Atahualpa. The movie is highly regarded, mainly because of Christopher Plummer’s reputedly brilliant depiction of Atahualpa as a dignified, culturally alien ruler.  
    Unfortunately, there is no good DVD available of this movie. It is originally about 2 hours long, the DVD stops at 98 minutes, and the quality is, apparently, not very good either. It’s one of those classic 1960s movies that still awaits a proper DVD transfer. Still, I saw it a loooooooooong time ago on TV and really want this baby...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
19. **Cleopatra (1963)  
    (director: Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Available on DVD through Amazon)**A rather notorious (because it reputedly almost ruined 20th Century Fox) and occasionally tedious movie. However, this is one of the original, hugely expensive, incredibly lush, over-the-top epics of 20th century film. Big polytheistic empires in movies don’t come grander than this...*Andreas Baede*
20. **The Fall of the Roman Empire (1964)  
    (director: Anthony Mann. Available on 2nd hand DVD through Amazon)**This is the movie *Gladiator* ripped most of its plot off. Not a really good movie, but with terrific performances by the late Sir Alec Guinness and by Christopher Plummer as Commodus, who could eat Joaquin Phoenix for breakfast. Unfortunately, occasionally crummy editing and some crappy performances as well make this movie less than great. Still, not only is this is a great resource for Roman roleplaying, but also for Tékumel, if only because of some striking characters like Commodus, Marcus Aurelius and others. And hey, it’s a polytheistic, humongous *empire*...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
21. **The Hour of the Pig (1992)  
    (director: Leslie Megahey. Available on DVD through Amazon under the title of “The Advocate”)**At first sight, this is a good movie but better for medieval roleplaying than Tékumel. However: It features a young lawyer from Paris (a young bureaucrat?) who goes to the provincial county of Ponthieu, where he gets involved in a trial involving a pig who is charged with murder. The story has decadent feasts, a powerful noble with, ahem, odd children, who’s under covert surveillance by agents of the Church (OAL?), etc. The quiet, rural environment of Ponthieu provides the strapping young Parisian lawyer with more excitement than he bargained for, or expected...In short, a story that could be adapted whole or in parts to Tékumel, with interesting characters.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
22. **Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love (1997)  
    (director: Mira Nair. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Great visuals, terrific music, excellent performances. For western audiences, this is probably one of the easiest and most attractive ways of getting a taste of “ancient”, pre-Raj (British rule) India. Seriously, though, the movie looks terrific. And it is one of the few movies that has a genuine non-European/American cast in it. It may not provide deep insights into ancient Indian civilisation or the erotic Kama Sutra text itself, but it is still a delight for the senses.  
    Tékumel, or at least part of it, has to be as pretty as this...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
23. **Heaven and Earth (1993)  
    (director: Oliver Stone. Available on DVD through Amazon)**No comments.
24. **Gladiator (2000)  
    (director: Ridley Scott. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Seriously, great music, great action scenes, and the Roman Hirilak...er, I mean, arena?  
    This is the movie similar Tékumel scenes has to match, so you better take a good look at it!  
    *Andreas Baede*
25. **Shogun (1980)  
    (TV series based on the book by James Clavell. Available on DVD through Amazon)**  
    The book by James Clavell was based on the adventures of the English sailor William Adams in 17th century Japan.  
    Although the Japanese are a bit romanticised, it has good performances, interesting characters and a nice, if simplified depiction of the clash between two very different cultures and mentalities.   
      
    *Andreas Baede*
26. **The King of Masks (1999)  
    (director: Tian-Ming Wu. Available on DVD through Amazon).**Set in 1930's Sichuan -- An old man buys an apprentice whom he plans to train in the art of Quick Changing Mask Opera (stories acted out by a single performer who changes characters by rapidly removing paper masks -- a description that does \_not\_ do it justice).  
      
    *Krista Donnelly*
27. **Hero (2004)  
    (director: Yimou Zhang. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Again, Ch’in shih huang-ti & an assassin. Beautiful but also slow and very pretentious to my taste.  
    I did not like the “Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Kaiser” philosophy.  
    Still, the over-the-top imagery might do very well as a story (propely adapted) told in Tsolyanu…  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
28. **Raise the Red Lantern (1991)  
    (director: Yimou Zhang. Available on NTSC VHS video through Amazon)**The nasty, tragic tale of a young woman who is the nth wife of a rich Chinese in the 1920s. Though Tsolyanu is extremely liberal regarding sexual matters compared to China, the tale is nasty, and culturally alien to modern western sensibilities. Something like this could be placed in Ghatón; other cultural particularities could be placed in Tsolyanu. And who is to say what a rich, unscrupulous (in our eyes) Tsolyani might do with socially inferior secondary wives and concubines, in an out-of-the way provincial town?  
    It’s about time, by the way, that this movie is transferred to DVD.  
      
    *Andreas Baede*
29. **The Last Samurai (2003)  
    (director: Edward Zwick. Available on DVD through Amazon)**Somewhat superficial, simplified and romanticised. But it looks great and the attitudes of all involved are deliciously stereotyped and gloriously heroic. Great models for roleplaying...  
      
    *Andreas Baede*