AN ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE ANCIENT GAME *LIU-PO*

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In an article entitled "A Note on the So-called TLV Mirrors and the Game *Liu-po* 六博," I discussed a mirror of the Han or possibly San-kuo period depicting immortals playing the ancient game *liu-po* (hereafter referred to as the *liu-po* mirror) and used it as evidence for relating the famous TLV pattern on Han mirrors to that on a *liu-po* board.[1] However, I did not go into many details about the game, because I was then unable to ascertain the way or ways in which it might have been played. Since the publication of the article, I have noted three different sources of archaeological information about the game and its implements. In this additional note I propose to review these materials and to discuss a few texts which include technical terms relating to *liu-po* and similar games. Many problems still remain unsolved. It is hoped that further discoveries and studies will throw more light on this ancient game.

The first item is a "Han Pottery Group" in the British Museum, which appears as an illustration in an article by Mr. R. L. HOBSON.[2] His description is quoted as follows:

As shown, the two principal figures are squatting on their heels beside a low table on which is a board fitted with certain intriguing appliances. A jar and a standing figure complete the composition. The main discussion centres round the board, which is rectangular, with six transverse strips at the right end and two notched strips along the sides at the left end, the rest of the surface being level except for two disks which appear like flat buttons mid-way between the notched strips, and some shallow L-shaped depressions in the corners which the glaze has almost filled up.

So far two suggestions as to its meaning have been explored. The first

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[1] *HJAS* 9.3-4 (1947) .202-206. The Japanese scholar KOMAI Kazuchika 駒井和愛 arrived at the same conclusion on the *liu-po* mirror in an article in the *Kōkogaku zasshi* 考古學雜誌 33.2 (1943) .61-70. His article, however, was not available to me until October, 1951, when I was writing this additional note.

[2] *The British Museum Quarterly* 8.3 (1934) .111-112. His illustration is reproduced here as Plate I.

supposes that the scene represents a game played by the two seated figures with the standing figure as spectator, the vase being used for holding counters or perhaps refreshment. Unfortunately the only table game which we know to have been played in the Han dynasty (206 B. C.-A. D. 220) is the game of " checkers " which could not by any stretch of imagination be represented here.

The second suggestion is that the board is a musical instrument, in two parts, the right end with transverse strips being played on, perhaps with a hammer, by one of the figures, while the notched strips on the left held five strings on which the other figure performed. The attitude of the two persons would suggest that one has just finished his piece and the other is applauding.

Mr. HOBSON proceeds to compare the group with two analogous scenes on stone bas-reliefs in Shantung. Not being able to identify the scenes, he leaves open the question of whether the two figures were players or musicians. As I have shown in my article, such scenes featuring two seated persons at two sides of a board bearing the TLV pattern are representations of the game *liu-po*. The Han pottery group should, of course, be identified as the same scene.

In a recent article on " The Antiquity of *t'ou hu* " 投壺,[3] Professor R. C. RUDOLPH has published a photograph of the same set of figures. Not knowing that the pottery group had been acquired by the British Museum, he used a reproduction from the *Illustrated London News*.[4] He writes:

This group of figures, probably dating from the 1st century, consists of two players on either side of a gaming board with an attendant in the background. On the board are five or six wand- or arrow-like objects and a large vase. The Han dynasty game *liu-po* comes to mind in connection with six such objects and a gaming board, but the presence of the large pot eliminates this possibility and forces one to conclude that this group is intended to show a game of *t'ou hu* in progress. . . . The positions of the hands of the players indicate that they originally held wooden arrows.

On a reprint of the article sent to myself, Professor RUDOLPH has indicated that he is not so certain about the elimination of the possibility that the figures represent the game *liu-po*. In my opinion, there is no doubt about the identification. Each of the two notched strips represents six domino-shaped draughtsmen called *ch'i* 棊, belonging to one player. The six transverse strips are sticks known as *chu* 箸, which were thrown to determine the

[3] *Antiquity* 24 (1950) .175-178.

[4] 13 May 1933, p. 694, Fig. 5.

moves of the draughtsmen. This agrees perfectly with the Han tradition that *liu-po* was played with six *chu* and twelve *ch'i*. The two disks midway between the notched strips are probably weights called *chên* 鎮, which are defined in the dictionary *Shuo-wên chieh-tzŭ* as *po-ya* 博壓 "weights for *po*."[5] The "shallow L-shaped depressions in the corners" are undoubtedly remnants of the TLV pattern.

As to the jar or large pot, I cannot offer a definite interpretation. Mr. HOBSON has indicated two possibilities. It is likely that the jar was used to hold the sticks when they were not in use, or to hold some counters which are not represented. It is not impossible that the sticks were thrown into the jar to determine the moves; thus the game *liu-po* may have been related to *t'ou hu* or pitch pot. Unfortunately there is no textual evidence for the latter interpretation.

The second group of materials comes from Han tombs in northern Shansi excavated by the Japanese between 1942 and 1944. It includes sticks, draughtsmen, weights and boards which seem to have been intended for the game *liu-po*. A comprehensive discussion of these implements may be found in an article by MIZUNO Seiichi 水野清一.[6] According to him, in Tomb No. 13 in Yang-kao 陽高 were found ten domino-shaped pieces, three large sticks, a few small sticks, and two thin square pieces, all made of bone. Six of the dominoes bear on each of their four sides the incised representation of a tiger, and the other four dominoes that of a dragon. The incised lines for the tiger were filled with red pigment, and those for the dragon with green. On one end of each domino is the outline of a bird, and on the other are faded lines representing another animal. Since tiger, dragon, and bird make three of the four animals corresponding to the four directions, the last animal is perhaps *hsüan-wu* 玄武, a combination of tortoise and snake. The incised lines, however, are not clear enough to verify this conjecture. These dominoes have been

[5] *Shuo-wên chieh-tzŭ ku-lin* 說文解字詁林 629a-b. In Han and earlier texts, *po* often indicates *liu-po* rather than simply "a game."

[6] *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 東洋史研究 9.5-6 (1947) 39-45. The illustration reproduced here as Plate IIA is based on the *Mōkō kōkoki* 蒙疆考古記 (Kyōto, 1946), Pl. 41.

identified as draughtsmen (*ch'i*) for *liu-po*. Apparently there were originally twelve of them, six tiger pieces and six dragon pieces. Two dragon pieces may have been lost.

The large sticks bear finely carved patterns of animals and clouds. The original length of the sticks seems to have been about twelve centimeters, corresponding to six Han *ts'un* 寸. According to the *Hsi-ching tsa-chi* 西京雜記, the Han expert on *liu-po*, Hsü Po-ch'ang 許博昌, used *chu* or throwing-sticks made of bamboo, which were six *ts'un* in length.[7] Therefore Mizuno identifies these large sticks as *chu* for *liu-po*. The small sticks, according to Mizuno, were perhaps inlaid on a board to serve as marking lines, since they appear to have been connected with one another by black lacquer. Specimens of such inlaid game boards may be found in the collection of the Shōsōin.[8]

Mizuno suggests that the two thin square pieces may have been used as *ch'ou* 籌 or counters, which is not impossible. However, he compares them with certain bamboo sticks discovered in a Han tomb in Huai-an 懷安, Shansi. After examining an illustration of these bamboo sticks,[9] I find that they bear geometric patterns which resemble those on the six sticks on the *liu-po* board in the British Museum. Consequently they may also be identified as *chu*. Mizuno states that similar dominoes and sticks made of bone have been discovered in Tomb No. 17, and sticks and thin square pieces of bone excavated from Tomb No. 20, both in Yang-kao. Further information on them, however, is not available.

In Tomb No. 12 in Yang-kao, near the dominoes and sticks discussed above, there were four weights in the shape of crouching sheep made of gilt bronze with shells for backs. The inside of each was filled with something like lead, making the piece very heavy.[10]

[7] The text which I have consulted (Pao-ching-t'ang 抱經堂 ed., B9a-b) reads "six *fên* 分." "Six *ts'un*," however, is a reasonable emendation.

[8] *Shōsōin gobutsu zuroku* 正倉院御物圖錄, Vol. 1, Pls. 47, 58 (a *wei-ch'i* 圍棋 board), Vol. 8, Pls. 6, 7 (another *wei-ch'i* board), Pls. 16, 17 (perhaps a *shuang-lu* 雙陸 board).

[9] *Pei-cha-tch'eng, Wan-ngan* 萬安北沙城 (Tōkyō, 1946), Pl. 66, reproduced here as Plate IIB.

[10] Similar weights are not unknown. They have been called *ya-hsiu* 壓袖, "sleeve weights," by Chinese dealers. See B. Laufer, *Jade* (Chicago, 1912), 306-308.

The weights were found neatly placed at the four corners of a square lacquer board seventy centimeters to the side. In Tomb No. 17 similar sheep-shaped weights of gilt bronze were discovered at the four corners of a plain stone plate of the same size. In Tomb No. 16 in Wan-an 萬安, four tiger-shaped iron weights were discovered at the corners of a smaller square. Underneath the weights are traces of textiles. MIZUNO proposes to identify these weights and boards as those used for the game *liu-po*. The TLV pattern, according to him, may have been made on a piece of textile or paper placed on the plain board. This is, however, not the only possibility. Judging from the scenes on certain Han bas-reliefs in Szechwan (see below), I wish to suggest that such boards or plates, presumably with textile mats on them, may have been intended to provide a ground to receive thrown sticks for *liu-po*.

The third group of archaeological materials are stone bas-reliefs discovered in recent years in western Szechwan, which represent scenes of immortals or human beings playing *liu-po*.[11] Apparently these bas-reliefs are of Han date. In the two specimens reproduced here (Plate III), we find excited players shouting with raised hands; they are similar to the players represented in the Han pottery group or on the *liu-po* mirror discussed in my previous article. The pattern on the game board, which is placed beside the mat, is obscure in one of the specimens. In the other case, we find the V's, but not the T's or L's. In their place, there is a great cross, which may be an over-simplified representation of the pattern. Evidently a throw has just been made, because there are six sticks on a mat (with weights at the four corners) showing the result. Considering the sticks found in Han tombs and those represented in the Han pottery group, I would assume that the sticks had two sides, one side carved and one plain, or both sides carved in different patterns. The two sides may have represented *yin* and

[11] See Wolfgang FRANKE, "Die Han-zeitlichen Felsengräber bei Chia-ting (West Ssuchuan)," *Studia Serica* 7 (1948).26; R. C. RUDOLPH and WEN Yu, *Han Tomb Art of West China* (Berkeley, 1951), 28-29, 33, Pls. 56, 57, 80. I am indebted to Professor RUDOLPH for his permission to reproduce here (as Plate III), his Pls. 57 and 80.

For more illustrations of *liu-po* boards and mats, see Figures 57, 59, 236, and 253 in *Corpus des pierres sculptées Han* published by Centre d'Études Sinologiques de Pékin, 1950.

yang, black and white, or other dualist elements.[12] The draughtsmen of *ch'i* may have been moved in accordance with the throw of the sticks.

On the *liu-po* mirror, a large figure of an immortal in the foreground of the scene holds a few sticks in his hand. He is probably about to make a throw. In the background is a small immortal holding a cup, which may be analogous to the vase in the Han pottery group and might have been used for some function like holding the sticks or counters. I believe I was wrong when I suggested in my article that the sticks were for record-keeping and that the cup was a dice-box, because, in a scene showing a game in progress, we would expect to find in the conspicuous foreground a representation of the important part of the game—the making of a decisive throw—rather than a device for record-keeping. The size and position of the immortals indicate clearly that the sticks were more important than the cup.

In my article I translated a few lines from the poem " Chao hun " 招魂 in the *Ch'u-tz'ŭ* as follows:

> With bamboo sticks and ivory draughtsmen,
> There is the game *liu-po*.
> Dividing into groups and proceeding together,
> Forcefully they threaten each other.
> Having become *hsiao* 梟 (i. e., in the lead) and
> going to win double,
> One shouts for the " five-white " 五白 . . . .

Instead of " having become *hsiao*," I probably should have written " having made a *hsiao*." *Hsiao* is a technical term in *liu-po* and similar games.[13] It refers to *hsiao-ch'i* 梟棋, " leading draughtsmen," in contrast to *san* 散 or *san-ch'i*, " ordinary draughtsmen."

According to the *Chan-kuo ts'ê* 戰國策,[14] *hsiao-ch'i* " leading

[12] In his article " The 'TLV' Pattern on Cosmic Mirrors of the Han Dynasty," *JAOS* 68.4 (1948) .159-167, Dr. Schuyler CAMMANN stressed symbolic meanings of the TLV pattern. It is obvious that many games and methods of divination have cosmic significance. It is, however, difficult to ascertain the meaning or range of meanings of a particular symbol or even of a number.

[13] For instance, *Han shu* 64A.13b mentions a game called *ko-wu* 格五 " blocking five," in which, according to a commentator, " one does not use throwing-sticks (*chien* 箭) but only moves *hsiao* and *san*."

[14] *Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed., 5.38b.

draughtsmen" are powerful because they have the assistance of *san-ch'i* "ordinary draughtsmen." However, one leading draughtsman cannot match (in value or strength) five ordinary draughtsmen. These statements seem to have applied to *liu-po*. In the *I-lin* 易林,[15] a Han work on divination, we read the following verse:

A wild bird and a mountain magpie,
Gather here to play the game *liu-po*.
With three *hsiao* and four *san*,
The host wins over the guest.

If the total of *hsiao* and *san* should make six, perhaps we should read "two *hsiao*" for "three *hsiao*" in the text.

The term *hsiao-ch'i*, written 驍棊, appears in a lost work, the *Ku po ching* 古博經, which is quoted by the Sung commentator HUNG Hsing-tsu 洪興祖 (1090-1155) to explain the above lines in the poem "Chao hun."[16] The passage may be rendered as follows:

The *Ku po ching* says: The way to play the game (*po*) is to have two persons sitting and facing each other at two sides of a board (*chü* 局). The board is divided into twelve columns (*tao* 道). Two margins and a central belt are designated as "water" 兩頭當中名爲水.[17] Twelve draughtsmen (*ch'i*) are used, six black and six white. Also two "fish" are used and placed in the water. The throwing dice are made of jade.[18] Each die is 1.3 *ts'un* to the square on the side and 1.5 *ts'un* in length. It has pointed ends. Holes are drilled on the four faces of the die to make "eyes" (*yen* 眼), which are also known as "teeth" (*ch'ih* 齒).[19] Two players throw the dice in turn to move

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[15] *Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed., 3.64a, 4.61a. The *I-lin* was written by TS'UI Chuan 崔篆 and not CHIAO Yen-shou 焦延壽, to whom it is traditionally attributed. On the problem of authorship, see the article by Dr. HU Shih in *CYYY* 20 (1948) 25-38.

[16] *Ch'u-tz'ŭ pu-chu* 楚辭補註 (*Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 9.15b-16b.

[17] I am not sure that I have understood this sentence correctly. It is possible that the "water" exists only in the central belt or only in the two margins. If my interpretation is correct, the central belt may be called "common water," and the two margins, "home waters." Fish captured from the "common water" may be removed to one's "home water" so as to make it difficult for the opponent to recover them. The purpose of the game is perhaps to capture both "fish" and to bring all one's men to the opponent's "home water."

[18] The number of dice used is not indicated in the text. Presumably it was "two," omitted by mistake under the influence of "two fish" above.

[19] In the period of Six Dynasties *ch'ih* was frequently used to mean a throw. Good throws were known as *k'uai-ch'ih* 快齒 "happy teeth," and bad ones *o-ch'ih* 惡齒 "awful teeth." See *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan* 太平御覽 754.4b, 6b. From T'ang times on, *ch'ih* has often been used to mean dice.

the draughtsmen. When a draughtsman arrives [at the water], it will be set upright and called *hsiao-ch'i*. Then it may enter the water to "eat fish"; this is also known as "catching the fish." When one catches a fish, he scores two points (*ch'ou*). When one recovers a fish, he scores three points. If one fails to win after having caught two fish, it is called "to have two fish recovered [by the opponent]." The opponent scores six points and wins a complete victory.[20]

The date of the *Ku po ching* is unknown. I am inclined to think that it is post-Han, because it is not quoted by WANG I 王逸 (first half of the second century) in his commentary to the *Ch'u-tz'ŭ*. The game described in the above passage cannot be identified with *liu-po*, because, instead of throwing-sticks, four-faced dice with pointed ends are used in it, and because its board does not bear a TLV pattern. The implements of this *po* actually resemble those of the later game *shuang-lu*,[21] which uses two dice and a board marked with twelve columns. This similarity argues for a comparatively late date for both the book and the game.

The desirability of making *hsiao-ch'i*, nevertheless, appears to have its analogue in *liu-po*. According to *Chan-kuo ts'ê* 7.50b and *Shih chi* 44.13b the player who has made *hsiao* has the option of "eating" (*shih* 食) or "holding" (*wo* 握 or "refraining" *chih* 止) in accordance with his convenience. The "eating," however, seems to have referred to taking the opponent's draughtsmen rather than the "fish." *Sai* 塞 and *sha* 殺, i. e., "blocking" and "killing" (eating), apparently were two important tactics in *liu-po*.[22] The "killing" included that of the opponent's *hsiao*, which was necessary to ensure victory. Unwillingness to kill the honored *hsiao* was given as the reason why Confucian scholars refused to play *po*.[23] In contrast with the principles of blocking and killing, the scholar YU CHAO 游肇 (452-520) even invented the *Ju-ch'i* 儒碁 "Confucian Chess," in which peaceful and courte-

[20] The last two sentences are added from the *Ku po ching* as quoted in the commentary to *Lieh-tzŭ* 列子, attributed to CHANG Chan 張湛 of the fourth century. *Ssŭ-pu pei-yao* ed., 8.11a-b.

[21] See HUNG Tsun 洪遵, *P'u shuang* 譜雙 (*Li-lou ts'ung-shu* 麗廔叢書 ed.), which records different forms of *shuang-lu* in Sung times. Also see *HJAS* 9.3-4 (1947). 205.

[22] *Yin Wên tzŭ* 尹文子 (*Ssŭ-pu pei-yao* ed.), *chiao-k'an chi* 校勘記 8a.

[23] *Han Fei tzŭ* 韓非子 (*Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 12.5b.

ous moves are encouraged.[24] This game never seems to have become popular.

In his article on *liu-po* (p. 63), KOMAI Kazuchika proposes that the *hsiao* in the poem "Chao hun" may be a throw which enables the player to win double. According to him, perhaps one of the six sticks may show the sign for *hsiao* while the other five are making the "five-white." This interpretation may be supported by CHANG Shou-chieh's 張守節 commentary to *Shih chi*, which reads, "Carved pattern of a *hsiao* 'owl' is found on certain dice for *po*. He who makes *hsiao* may eat his [opponent's] men. If that is not to his advantage, he may make other moves."[25] Such dice, however, resemble the *wu-mu* 五木 or "five-woods" used in the game *shu-p'u* 樗蒲, which first appeared in the latter Han period and became popular in the Six Dynasties.[26]

According to the *Wu-mu ching* 五木經 attributed to LI Ao 李翺,[27] the game *shu-p'u* uses five pieces of wood as dice. Each piece is black on one side and white on the other. Two of the pieces bear a carved pattern of a pheasant on the white side and that of a cow on the black side. There are six "royal throws" (*wang-ts'ai* 王采), and six "mixed throws" (*yun-ts'ai* 暎采). The royal throws are:

1. *lu* 盧 "black"—five black, which counts 16 points (i.e., it enables the player to move his draughtsmen for 16 spaces),
2. *pai* 白 "white"—five white, which counts 8 points,
3. *chih* 雉 "pheasant"—two pheasant and three black, 14 points, and

[24] *Wei shu* 55.3a-6b. Rules for *Ju-ch'i* are given with a preface by YU Chao in *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan* 755.3a-4b. The two types of men used in *Ju-ch'i* are called *hsiao-ch'i* and *fu-ch'i* 伏碁 "submissive draughtsmen."

[25] *Shih chi* 44.13b. CHANG Shou-chieh lived in the eighth century.

[26] *HJAS* 9.3-4 (1937) .205.

[27] Professor E. D. EDWARDS in her *Chinese Prose Literature of the T'ang Period* (London, 1937), 1.197-199, has summarized the principles of the game basing on the *T'ang kuo-shih pu* 唐國史補. The text of the *Wu-mu ching* is preserved in *Li Wên-kung chi* 李文公集 (*Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 18.149b-150b, the *T'ang-tai ts'ung-shu* 唐代叢書, and other places. I have corrected two misprints in numbers in the text.

4. *niu* 牛 "cow" or *tu* 犢 "calf"—two cows and three white, 10 points.

The mixed throws are:

1. *k'ai* 開 "opening"—one pheasant, one cow, and three white, 12 points,
2. *sai* 塞 "blocking"—one pheasant, one cow, and three black, 11 points,
3. *t'a* 塔 "pagoda?"—two pheasants, two white, and one black, 5 points,
4. *t'u* 禿 "bald-headed?"—two cows, two black, and one white, 4 points,
5. *chüeh* 撅 "holding?"[28]—three white and two black, 3 points, and
6. *hsiao* 梟 "owl"—three black and two white, 2 points.

According to the *Wu-mu ching*, in *shu-p'u* there are 120 spaces separated by two barriers or passes (*kuan* 關) into three zones, presumably on a board. One of the spaces represents a pit (*k'êng* 坑). Twenty horses (*ma* 馬) or men are in five colors, presumably for as many as five players.[29] Horses are moved according to the throw. They may be doubled up only after crossing the first barrier. A player's horses may be hit by his opponent's men if the latter arrive at the space occupied by the former. A royal throw is needed to cross a barrier or to save a horse in the pit. Making a royal throw or hitting a horse of the opponent entitles the player to another throw. These rules resemble those of *shuang-lu* or *ta-ma* 打馬 "hitting horses," a game played mostly in Sung times.[30] The five woods, however, may be used as a simple

[28] For this and other meanings of *chüeh*, see *Shuo-wên chieh-tzŭ ku-lin* 5500b-5501a.

[29] The *T'ang kuo-shih pu* (*Hsüeh-chin t'ao yüan* 學津討源 ed.) C.16a-b says 360 spaces altogether and six horses per player.

[30] See Li Ch'ing-chao 李清照, *Ta-ma t'u-ching* 打馬圖經 (*Li-lou ts'ung-shu* ed.). According to the author's preface dated 1134, in her times there were three kinds of *ta-ma*. One was known as *Kuan-hsi ma* 關西馬, in which there were ten horses and one general for each player. Another was known as *I-ching ma* 依經馬, in which there were twenty horses but no general. The third was *Hsüan-ho ma* 宣和馬, which was a mixture of the first two, introduced in the Hsüan-ho era (1119-1125). Li pre-

gambling game without draughtsmen. Apparently this practice already existed in the Six Dynasties, and it was also known as *shu-p'u*.[31] Thus *shu-p'u* and *po* both seem to have derived the meaning of gambling in general from a particular game.

I do not know of any preserved specimens of "five-woods" for *shu-p'u*. In the British Museum, there are eight domino-shaped pieces made of wood, which bear pictures of different animals painted in color. Four pieces have birds on the two broader faces and beasts on the two narrower faces. The four other pieces have their birds and beasts located vice versa. Illustrations are reproduced here as Plate IV. The date of these pieces is unknown. They may have been used as dice, thus resembling the "five-woods," but while one of the birds looks like a pheasant, I find no cow or owl among the other animals.[32]

There is sufficient textual evidence to prove that *hsiao* referred to a throw in the dice game *shu-p'u*. But it was merely a mixed throw, and counted only two points. In my opinion, this meaning of *hsiao* represents a degeneration of its earlier meaning, "to be in the lead." It is not likely that the late meaning was ever used in *liu-po*, in which *hsiao* refers regularly to *hsiao-ch'i* "leading draughtsmen."

The terms *hsiao* and *san*, "leading" and "ordinary," were applied not only to games but also to social stratification. This is clearly shown in a passage in the *Yen-t'ien lun* 鹽鐵論.[33] During the celebrated debate over government monopoly of salt and iron in 81 B. C., the officials made the following point, arguing for a

ferred the orthodox *I-ching ma* and consequently described it in her *t'u-ching* or "illustrated canon."

[31] *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan* 754.4b-7a.

[32] I am indebted to Mr. William WATSON, Assistant Keeper, Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, for the following information from his letter dated November 5th, 1951:

"The broad faces of the wooden gaming pieces have painted on them: a dog, a fox, a ram?, a goat? On the narrow faces there are: a horse, a *Ch'i Lin*, a tapir (but with hooves), a dog.

"As you must have observed, we exhibit these pieces as of T'ang date, but I cannot give any cogent argument for this. I think they must be, at the latest, pre-Ming."

[33] *Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed. 8.2a. This passage is in Chapter 43 which has not been translated into English.

strong policy against the Hsiung-nu: "Our Emperor Kao-tsu pacified the Nine Provinces with his sword. At present, having the Nine Provinces with us, we are unable to carry out [our orders] among the Hsiung-nu. Among the commoners in the villages and streets, there is still [the distinction] between the *hsiao* and the *san* (i. e., the leading and the ordinary). How much more between the ruler of an empire [like the Han] and a small state like the Hsiung-nu!"

In the *Kuan-tzŭ* 管子[34] we find the regulation that *san-min* 散民, or "ordinary people," were not allowed to wear silks. Under the Northern Ch'i, for the purpose of transportation of taxes in kind, the people were graded into groups called *shang-hsiao* 上㪷, *chuang-hsiao* 中丨, and *hsia-hsiao* 下丨, in other words, people of superior, medium, and inferior strength or grades A, B, and C. People of grade A were to send their tax grain to distant granaries, those of grade B to nearer granaries, and those of grade C to granaries in their own locality.[35] This arrangement was apparently intended to equalize the tax burden by making the richer people pay more freight.

To come back to the game *liu-po*, I should like to discuss another technical term, *chang* 張, which appears in a few very difficult passages. The meaning of the term cannot be ascertained, and my interpretation of these passages is highly speculative. It is merely advanced to present a problem.

In WANG I's commentary on the lines in the poem "Chao hun" quoted above, there is a passage which may be tentatively rendered as follows: "[When a player wishes to] aim at *chang* and eat a draughtsman, [it may] take refuge down in a cave. Therefore he shouts for the 'five-white' in order to help his throw." The text for the first sentence is 射張食棊下兆於屈. *Hsia chao yü ch'ü* does not make sense, and I am therefore following another version which gives *hsia t'ao yü k'u* 下逃於窟.[36] In the *Lieh-tzŭ* is a passage which may be translated tentatively: "Among the [guests] upstairs who were playing *po*, one aimed at *chang* with

[34] *Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed. 1.14a.
[35] *Sui shu* 24.8a-b.
[36] *Ch'u-tz'ŭ pu-chu* 9.16a-b.

bright stones (i.e., dice) and made a hit 樓上博者射明瓊張中. He recovered two 'fish' and laughed." The story goes on to tell that a kite happened to pass by the place and dropped a dead mouse on this man. The accident infuriated the players, who blamed their host for it and consequently plotted and carried out his destruction. The commentary quotes the *Ku po ching* passage discussed above and says "the bright stones [made] five-white." Apparently the term *chang* is closely related to the desirable throw of "five-white." [37]

The word *chang* also appears in the following passage in the *Hsi-ching tsa-chi*: [38]

Hsü Po-ch'ang was from An-ling 安陵.[39] He was an expert at *liu-po*. Tou Ying 竇嬰 [40] was fond of playing the game and often had Hsü accompanying him. Hsü's formula for the game was:

方畔揭道張
張畔揭道方
張究屈玄高
高玄屈究張

It also read,

張道揭畔方
方畔揭道張
張究屈玄高
高玄屈究張.

Children of the San-fu 三輔 (i. e., the three prefectures in the Ch'ang-an area) were all able to recite it. To play the game, one used six sticks (*chu* 箸), which were sometimes called *chiu* 究. They were made of bamboo, and were five *fên* 分 (*read* five *ts'un*) in length. Another method employed two sticks. Po-ch'ang wrote the *Liu-po ching* 六博經 in one chapter, which is preserved.

The first version of the formula is almost a palindrome (*hui-wên* 廻文) and the second version is a perfect example. Neither version makes much sense. We may start with the easier characters: *tao* should refer to lines or columns on the board, and *chiu* should mean the throwing-sticks or throws. *Chang*, as suggested above, seems to be associated with a decisive throw related to the killing

[37] *Lieh-tzŭ* 8.11a-b. Also see *Huai-nan-tzŭ* (*Ssŭ-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 18.20b.

[38] Pao-ching-t'ang ed., B.9a-b.

[39] To the north of Ch'ang-an.

[40] A minister in the second century B. C. Biog. *Han shu* 52.1a-2b.

of " leading draughtsmen." Since it appears with the verb *shê*, " shooting, or aiming at," it may be used in its original meaning, " to draw a bow," or " to extend." Since it is associated with eating, it may also refer to the constellation *chang*, which, according to tradition, represents the crop of the Red Bird.[41]

To be even more speculative and try to connect the formula with the TLV pattern, one might suggest that *chang* (perhaps " extensions ") could have referred to the four T's around the central square or the whole area; *fang* " squares " referred to the squares at the four corners marked out by the V's, and *ch'ü* (perhaps " benders ") referred to the L's on the board. The verb *chieh* 揭 has the meaning of " raising high " as illustrated in two lines in the *Shih ching* describing the handle of the Dipper raised in the sky.[42] To put all these conjectures together, we may read the following meaning into the first version of the formula:

> From the corner of a " square " there is a rising way to
> the " extension " area,
> From the corners of the " extension " area there are
> rising ways to the " squares ";
> Throws taking one from the " extension " area
> to the " benders " beat the mysterious
> and high,
> The high and mysterious beats such throws by taking
> one from the " benders " to the " extension " area.

For the second version, the first two lines may be reversed. I am interpreting the *ch'ü* in the formula as a pun. It is possible that the text *t'ao yü k'u* in WANG I's commentary may have been *t'ao yü ch'ü*, " to take refuge in the benders." My hypothesis is that a player of *liu-po* may move his men along the lines indicated on the board. For instance, he may start at the open end of an L. When a draughtsman reaches the corner of a square marked by V, certain throws will enable it to become *hsiao* and reach the central area via a diagonal line.[43] If the player's opponent already has a

[41] *Shih chi* 27.10a, *Han shu* 26.4a.

[42] LEGGE, *The Chinese Classics* 4.356.

[43] Dr. CAMMANN expresses somewhat the same idea when he says, " In fact, we believe that the goal of the game *liu-po* must have been to get one or more of one's circular counters into the center of the board, to establish an axis for symbolic control of the Universe." *JAOS* 68.4 (1948).162.

hsiao in the area, it may be taken (killed) or sent to the open end of an L (what I have proposed to call a " bender ") to start again. Similar principles are found in such games as *shuang-lu* and *ta-ma*. Diagonal lines linking the four corner squares to the central square are actually found on *liu-po* boards shown on Han bas-reliefs.[44]

To conclude this additional note, I wish to re-stress a point which I made in my first article, that *liu-po* was apparently supposed to be a game favored by immortals and deities, including the deity Tung-wang-kung 東王公. Ambitious human beings also wished that they could play against these supernatural beings, perhaps hoping to obtain magic power by winning the game. According to *Shih chi* 3.9b-10a, King Wu-i 武乙 of the Shang dynasty was a tyrant. He had a puppet made to represent a heavenly deity and played *po* against it, ordering a subject to make moves for the heavenly deity. When defeated, the deity was ridiculed and punished. A similar story is found in *Han Fei tzŭ* 11.6b: King Chao of Ch'in 秦昭王 ordered artisans to climb Hua Shan 華山 on hooked ladders. With heartwood of pines and cypresses, they made " game arrows " (*po-chien* 博箭, i. e., throwing-sticks) of eight *ch'ih* 尺 in length and draughtsmen eight *ts'un* in length. The following words were inscribed, presumably on a stone in the mountains, " King Chao once played *po* with a heavenly deity at this place." According to *Chan-kuo ts'ê* 3.50a, a daring youth of Hêng-ssŭ 恒思 [45] offered to play *po* against the deity of a grove, saying, " If I win, the deity should lend me his spiritual power for three days. If I lose, the deity may make me suffer." Thereupon he made throws with his left hand for the deity and with his right hand for himself. He won. According to the story, the youth borrowed the spiritual power of the grove but did not return it. The grove withered on the fifth day and died on the seventh.

The *Mu t'ien-tzŭ chuan* 穆天子傳 [46] reports that King Mu of Chou visited Ping 邴 and played *po* with Ching-kung 井公. The match was concluded only after three days. The commentary

[44] See *Kōkogaku zasshi* 9.8 (1919) .34-36.

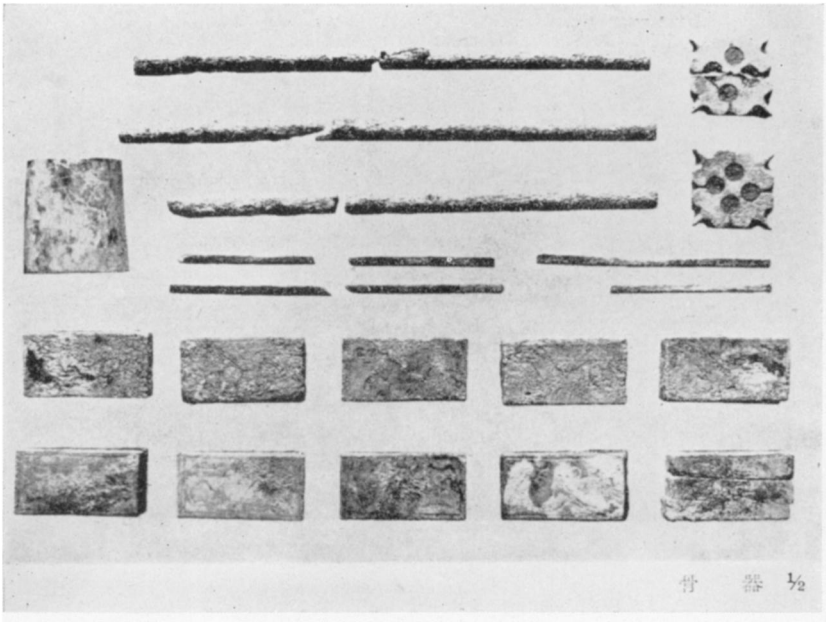
[45] An unidentified place name, presumably in the state of Ch'in.

[46] Lung-hsi ching-shê 龍谿精舍 ed., 5.3b.

PLATE I

HAN POTTERY GROUP

COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM



A

(Left)

Liu-po implements from Yang-ko, Shansi.

B

(Right)

Liu-po implements and other articles from Huai-an. Shansi.

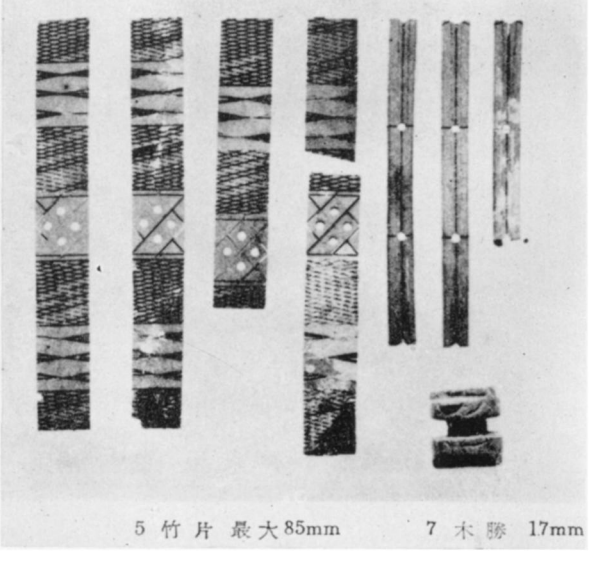


PLATE II

PLATE III

HAN BAS-RELIEFS FROM SZECHWAN

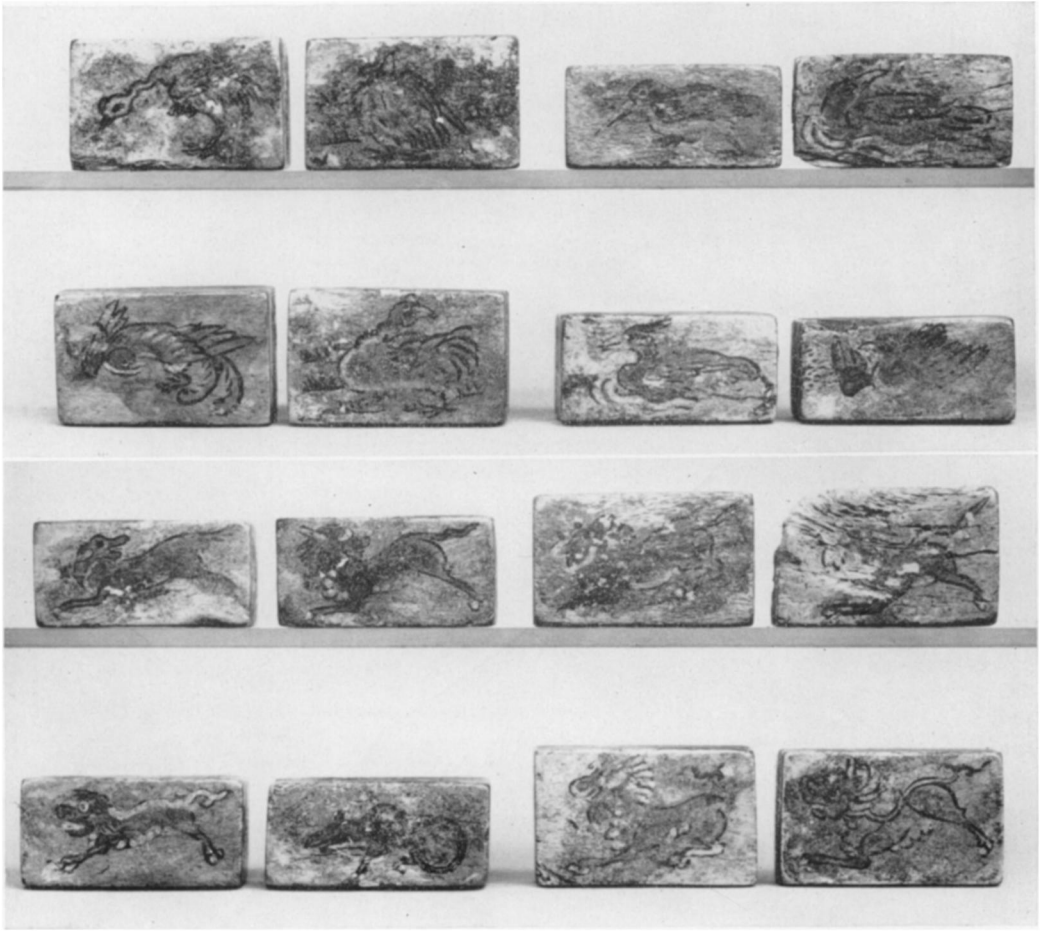


PLATE IV

Wooden Gaming Pieces

Courtesy of the British Museum

says, " Presumably Ching-kung was a worthy hermit. Hence the King went to his place to play with him." I am inclined to think that Ching-kung might have been a priest or even a deity. Ping apparently was in modern Shantung. It has been identified as Fang 祊 in the *Tso chuan*, a place from which the revenue was to be used for sacrificial offerings to T'ai Shan 泰山.[47] The name or title *Ching* reminds one of the constellation *ching* or *tung-ching* 東井. According to the *Mu t'ien-tzŭ chuan*, the King had a delightful time visiting the deity Hsi-wang-mu in the West. Could this call on Ching-kung have something to do with Tung-wang-kung, the corresponding deity in the East?

[47] *Shuo-wên chieh-tzŭ ku-lin* 2850b-2851a.