

"The Earthworms Tame the Dragon": The Game of *Xiangqi*

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ORIGINS

The game of *xiangqi* (elephant or figural game) - sometimes known as *xiangxi* (game of elephants)¹ - as it has been played since the end of the Northern Song period (960-1127) uses thirty-two disc-shaped pieces in two opposing "armies," which move on the intersecting points of a grid on a board that is nine by eight squares on a side (Fig. 13:1). Although not as well known in the West as China's other great game of skill, *weiqi* (Japanese *go*), it is, in fact, currently more popular in China. Indeed, in terms of numbers of active players, it is the most popular board game of skill in the world.

13:1 Layout of a *xiangqi* board

Rows 0 and 9: A *ju* (chariot); B *ma* (horse/knight); C *xiang* (elephant/ minister); D *shi* (official/guard); E *jiang* (general)

Rows 2 and 7: B *pao* (cannon, formerly catapult)

Rows 3 and 6: *bing/zu* (soldier)

Xiangqi (elephant game) is a Chinese board game similar to chess. Like chess, *xiangqi* uses thirty two pieces, but unlike chess they move on the intersections of the grid rather than in the squares. Many of the pieces move in similar ways to those of chess. The *shi/zu* (soldier) is similar to a pawn, the chariot moves much like a rook, and the horse has a dog-legged movement much like the knight; the *xiang* (elephant/minister) moves diagonally like a bishop, but only two points at a time. The general is equivalent to the king, but there is no queen. The *pao* is distinctive it can only capture a piece when another piece lies between it and its victim.

Like international chess, *xiangqi* is a game of displacement. As in chess, the objective is to capture or eliminate the opponent's pieces, culminating in the capture of the opposing general. The similarities with chess are significant: not only is the number of pieces the same, but some of them have similar movements. The chariot (*ju*), for example, moves in exactly the same fashion as the rook; the horse (*ma*) moves in an L-shaped manner like the knight; and the *xiang* (elephant), diagonally like the bishop. These similarities have prompted some scholars to suggest that *xiangqi* is historically related to, or even derived from, Indian *chaturanga*, the source of modern international chess. Even the name - elephant game - is suggestive, since elephants were the war chariots of the ancient Indian army and played an important role in *chaturanga*. The latter was in existence by 600 CE at the latest, a time when travel along the Silk Road, linking China with India, Persia, and western Asia, was at its height. It is therefore not implausible to suggest that the game might have been introduced to China at this time.² The pieces in *xiangqi*, however, are not sculptural (like those of international chess), but are flat discs. The pieces are distinguished by the inscription of their names in Chinese characters, or (more rarely) by images in low relief on their surfaces. Some Chinese scholars thus have denied a link to India, arguing that elephants were deployed in war during the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE),³ and preferring to see *xiangqi* as derived from earlier indigenous games such as the *xiangxi* of 762 CE.⁴ This essay does not primarily address this controversy - until *chaturanga* pieces actually are discovered in an archaeological context, the case for a foreign origin must remain unproven - but instead focuses on Chinese literary references to the game.

The earliest mention of a game that may have been the prototype for *xiangqi* dates to the Northern Zhou period (557-81), when it is recorded that Emperor Wu lectured on the *Xiang jing* (*Classic of the Xiang Game*) to his ministers at court.⁵ The *Xiang jing* is not extant, and only literary pieces describing the game in ornate language survive.

Wang Bao, in his preface (extant) to the *Xiang jing*, compares the game to twelve categories: heaven, earth, yin and yang, the four seasons, numbers, the musical scale, the eight trigrams, loyalty and filial piety, lord and vassal, civil and military, rites, and virtues.⁶ Joseph Needham interprets this to mean that the *xiang* game was actually an astrological game,⁷ but it may be argued that the description in the preface merely reflects an ornate style of prose writing, and

does not necessarily mean that the game was actually a direct representation of these various concepts.⁸ Yu Xin (513-81), in his "Xiangxi fu" ("Prose Poem on the *Xiang* Game"), describes a square board and includes cryptic lines such as the following:

*the game pieces are comparable to horses, each worth a thousand pieces of silver
the tallies shine like the tallies of the six spirits [in the command of the heavenly emperor]
carrying out in the south the tallies from Red River
carrying out in the north the tactics from Black Mountain
the green dragon in the eastern path
the white horse leaves the western pass.*⁹

Lacking the game board, pieces, and rules with which to decipher these writings accurately, it is difficult to ascertain whether this was a race game or a game of displacement in which the capture of a principal piece was one of the defining features,¹⁰ or a combination of both. To shed more light on the nature of this game, further research on earlier race and displacement games in China, such as *liubo* (six rods) and the Northern Zhou game of *ruqi* (Confucian board game), is necessary.¹¹

A much more specific description of what appears to be a prototype of *xiangqi* is found in a fictional tale set in the first year of the Baoying era (762), recounted by the Prime Minister Niu Sengru (780-848). In the story, a scholar staying in a temple sees two armies come to life and do battle, with arrows and stones flying, which may indicate pieces such as the *nu* (crossbow) and *pao* (catapult). The scholar also hears a general (*jun shi*) give details of the moves of the *tian ma* (heavenly horse), *shang jiang* (top general), *zi che* (covered wagon), and *liu jia* (soldier). In the battles, the pieces are described as three-dimensional objects, though not more than a few inches in height. As a fictional tale belonging to a category of stories of common daily objects coming to life, we cannot be sure at this point in the story whether the chess pieces represented here were in reality three-dimensional. But when the scholar awakens with his experience of the nightly battles, his relatives steal into the temple while he visits the toilet and dig up his room. An old tomb with a golden chess board and several hundred three-dimensional pieces are revealed, and the relatives realize that the moves seen in the battles have been those of pieces from *xiangxi*.¹² Historians of *xiangqi* therefore call this the *xiangxi* from the Baoying era and note that the pieces in this game were three-dimensional.¹³ A poem written in 829 by Bo Juyi also includes the line, "the soldier rushes at the wagon in the game of *xiangxi*," and this may refer to the same game.¹⁴

XIANGXI AND XIANGQI OF THE NORTHERN SONG PERIOD

Whereas the references cited above give little information as to the details of earlier *xiangqi*-type games (and the extent of their popularity), by the Northern Song period, multiple works discussed by the modern scholar Zhu Nanxian indicate that the game, in a number of versions, was becoming increasingly popular.¹⁵ The following are the main sources:

1. Yin Shu (1001-1047), *Xiangqi*. The scholar-bibliographer Chao Gongwu (twelfth century) notes that this work contains five diagrams (of games) and that these games are different from those played in his day.¹⁶ Yin's work has not survived, and it is not clear how similar the game was to today's version.
2. Mei Yaochen (1002-60), "Xiangxi," 1059. This poem contains a line referring to the use of ferocious animals, including elephants, in battles.¹⁷ It thus reflects the fact that there were ferocious animals represented in the game, such as the elephant, at least.
3. Cheng Hao (1032-85), "Xiangxi," ca. 1055-75. The poem reads,

*Bo and weiqi are both games,
but the game of elephants imitates the deployment of troops.
The wagon and the horse still retain the warring methods of the Zhou period [ca. 1045-256 BCE];
the deputy general and the assistant general retain titles of Han officials.¹⁸
In the area of the central army, the general-in-chief can move in eight directions, and is important;
beyond the river, moving diagonally to a pointed corner, the foot soldier's position is not crucial.
I lean on the patterned catalpa board and smile;
heroes such as Liu Bang and Xiang Yu also vie for something casual.¹⁹*

Thus the following pieces were found in this *xiangxi* game: *jiang* (general in chief), *pian* [*jiang*] (deputy general), *bai* [*jiang*] (assistant general), *che* (wagon), *ma* (horse), and *zu* (soldier). A river was present, and when the soldier crossed it, the piece could move diagonally. There may have been a central square in which the general in chief could move in eight directions; this piece, therefore, was in the central position of the square at the beginning of the game.

4. Sima Guang (1019-86), *Qi guo xiangxi* (*Xiangxi of the Seven Kingdoms*), ca. 1071-85. The scholar official Sima Guang wanted to use a larger board and settled on a *weiqi* type board of nineteen squares on a side for his game of *qi guo xiangxi* (Fig. 13:2). Each kingdom had the following pieces, some unique to this game: one *jiang*, one *pian*, one *bai*, one *xing ren* (emissary), one *pao* (catapult), one *gong* (bow), one *nu* (crossbow), two *dao* (knives), four *jian* (swords), and four *ji* (mounted riders). The appearance of the catapult is particularly interesting. Although the catapult was mentioned in Niu Sengru's aforementioned story, this account constitutes its first appearance in a description of a real game. In later versions of *xiangqi*, the catapult was replaced by the cannon (*pao*), though its idiosyncratic moves it could only capture a piece by jumping over an intervening one were retained. The emissary, on the other hand, did not survive in any form in conventional *xiangqi*, which is not surprising as it could neither capture nor be captured by other pieces.²⁰

13:2 Diagram of *Qi guo xiangxi* (*Xiangxi of Seven Kingdoms*) invented by Sima Guang (1019-1086)
This variant of *xiangqi* was invented by the famous scholar Sima Guang (1019-1086), between the years 1071 and 1085. Unlike conventional *xiangqi*, it used a *weiqi* type board of nineteen squares per side. The Seven Kingdoms refer to the states of Qin, Chu, Han, Qi, Wei, Zhao, Yan, which were the main contenders during the Warring States period (475-221 BCE)
After a modern reprint of *Gu ju xiangqi tu* (*The Ancient Elephant Game Illustrated*), in Shen Jin, comp., *Xinshang bian* (*A Collection for Appreciation*), Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 1999, vol. 2, pp. 995-996.

5. Chao Buzhi (1053-1110), *Guang xiangxi tu* (*Expanded Xiangxi with Illustrations*). Like Sima, the scholar official Chao wanted to enlarge the board in a similar fashion. Chao's work does not survive, but in his essay "*Guang xiangxi tu xu*" ("*Preface to illustrations of expanded xiangxi*"), there are clues to both the *xiangxi* game current at the time and his expanded version. Chao mentions, for instance, that he wants to expand the normal board of eleven squares per side and thirty four pieces to a board with nineteen squares per side and ninety eight pieces. Though his essay was written in 1079, Chao was referring to the thirty four piece game he saw as a child, about 1060-70. Scholars have attempted to reconstruct this thirty-four-piece game, which probably included one *jiang*, one *pian*, one *bai*, two *xiang* (elephants), two *ma*, two *pao* (catapults), two *ju* (chariots), and six *zu*.²¹

From the above, Zhu Nanxian concludes that there was a game of *xiangxi* popular among members of the middle and upper classes between 1050 and 1070 and that Yin Shu's *xiangqi* was probably a similar type of game.²²

STABILIZATION OF XIANGQI AT THE END OF THE NORTHERN SONG PERIOD

The aforementioned references indicate that there was considerable variation in the game as it was played in the eleventh century. By the early twelfth century, however, the pieces and rules had been largely stabilized. In the reign of Emperor Huizong (r. 1101-27), there is evidence that the game used thirty two pieces, the number still used at present. Cao Xun (Ca. 1098-1174) records the story, dated to 1127, of the dowager empress, mother of Prince Kang, who took a general from among the pieces for *xiangxi* (meaning *xiangqi*, the elephant game) and wrapped it in yellow satin. After writing the characters for Prince Kang on the satin, she prayed that if she threw all thirty two pieces onto the board and the piece with the characters "Prince Kang" landed on one of the base squares within which the general moves, her son would ascend the throne. The dowager empress threw, and only the general landed on one of these squares. In the same year, Prince Kang ascended the throne as Emperor Gaozong.²³ The painter Xiao Zhao depicted this scene in 1162 as the seventh painting in a series of twelve entitled *Zhong xing rui ying tu* (*Auspicious Responses in the Restoration Period [of Emperor Gaozong]*). One painting of the scene survives and is thought by some scholars to be the authentic work of Xiao Zhao. In the center is the dowager empress, dressed in red, and several court ladies looking attentively at a *xiangqi* board, which is drawn accurately with nine by eight squares. Sixteen black and fifteen red pieces are scattered over the board, and there is one piece wrapped in silk lying within the base squares.²⁴

THE MATERIAL RECORD: COPPER XIANGQI PIECES

Excavation records also support the argument for the stabilization of the modern *xiangqi* game toward the end of the Northern Song period. In 1983, two sets of copper *xiangqi* pieces were excavated from a hoard dating to about 1102-10 in Zhangming zhen, Jiangyou City, Sichuan.

One is a complete set of thirty-two round pieces, each measuring 2.5 centimeters in diameter and 0.2 centimeter in thickness. A character is chiseled in standard script on one side of each piece, and the back of each bears an image fitting the name of the piece. Thus we have the following names and illustrations:

jiang (two); a seated general holding a sword
shi (four); a warrior guard holding a sword
xiang (four); a majestic elephant
ma (four); a horse ready for war
ju (four); a bronze chariot pulled by a horse
pao (four); a catapult
zu (ten); a soldier in armor

As the pieces for both sides are identical, it has been suggested that one side played with the characters on top and one side with the figures on top. The pieces from the other set have characters on both sides (and no images), which would have made recognition of the pieces in play difficult, unless they originally were differentiated by color (which may have been the case).²⁵ The use of characters to differentiate the pieces raises the question of whether only the literate could play *xiangqi*. The answer is probably that only minimal literacy was needed, but the use of characters on the pieces may well have been an incentive to acquire literacy.

EARTHENWARE AND PORCELAIN PIECES

In a report of the ten major archaeological discoveries in the Three Gorges Dam area in 2001, number nine is the discovery in Wanzhou District, Chongqing City, of an earthenware *xiangqi* piece, the *che*, in the entrance to Tomb 1, dating to the Eastern Han (25-220 CE) or Three Kingdoms period (221-265 CE).²⁶ If this dating is accurate, it would push the origin of *xiangqi* back some five centuries. At present, however, the piece remains an isolated find. Until more securely dated pieces from this period come to light, it would be rash to accept this example as valid. In 1997 a complete set of thirty-two ceramic *xiangqi* pieces was excavated from a tomb in the Xigong area of Luoyang. The round pieces of unglazed earthenware measure 2.5 centimeters in diameter and 0.3-0.5 centimeter in thickness. Half are white, half black, with incised characters for *jiang*, *shi* (guard), *xiang*, *ju*, *ma*, *pao*, and *zu*, filled in with cinnabar. This is the earliest complete set of ceramic *xiangqi* pieces excavated thus far, dating to the Chongning era (1102-06).²⁷ These authors are not aware of excavated boards from this period, but in the written record there is a poem by Emperor Huizong describing a small board made of white sandalwood, with ivory pieces inscribed with characters written in his "lean gold" style of calligraphy.²⁸

XIANGQI OF THE SOUTHERN SONG PERIOD

Following the stabilization of *xiangqi* toward the end of the Northern Song, several references from the Southern Song period (1127-1279) that mention the game in its present form are extant. The monk Yuxian, writing between 1131 and 1162, describes the *po luo sai* game as follows:

*The Sanskrit term po luo sai is translated here as bing [troops] that is, the game of troops. It is [the game in which] lines are drawn on a board, separated in the middle by a river, and each [side] has sixteen pieces: soldier, catapult, chariot, horse, elephant, etc.; it is commonly known as xiangqi [xiangqi].*²⁹

The poet Liu Kezhuang (1187-1269) wrote a poem entitled "Xiangyi yi shou, cheng Ye Qianzhong" (Poem on the Elephant Game, to show Ye Qianzhong), which describes all of the different pieces of the general, guard, elephant, chariot, horse, catapult, and soldier.³⁰ Finally, Zhou Mi (1232-98), recalling Hangzhou in the Southern Song, records fifteen chess players in attendance at court. Among these, five specialized in *weiqi* and ten in *xiangqi*, including a nun, Shen Gugu.³¹

THE MATERIAL RECORD FROM THE SOUTHERN SONG ONWARD

In the Qiandao era (1165-73), the eunuch Chen Yuan committed a crime and was banished, his belongings sold off. One was a *xiangqi* table of the following description:

One chi, five cun in height; two chi, five cun in width; the center is hollowed for the box of chess pieces. There is a rim all around. Eagle wood is used for the face of the board, and ivory to delineate the lines. Around the edge, several layers of ebony, huali, and white sandalwood are used for ornamentation. Laka

wood is used to carve waves with gold inlay, and the heads of the waves are inlaid with silver. The fragrant aroma is captivating.³²

The earliest excavated wood *xiangqi* pieces date from the late thirteenth century, or the late Song or early Yuan period (1279-1368). In 1973, a sunken Chinese ship of this date was discovered off the coast of Houzhu Harbor, Quanzhou City, in Fujian Province. Excavations were carried out, and a total of twenty wood *xiangqi* pieces were recovered from three of the ship's holds. One piece is carved with the character *ma* in standard script, filled in with red. Ten other pieces bear various characters such as *jiang*, *shi*, *ju*, *xiang*, *pao*, and *bing* (soldier), written in ink, and the characters on the remaining nine cannot be deciphered.³³ In the Ming period (1368-1644), the Grand Secretary Yan Song (1480-1565) was dismissed from office in disgrace and his belongings confiscated. The scholar Shen Defu (1578-1642) later noted that Yan had in his possession several hundred sets of green and white jade *weiqi* pieces and also several hundred sets of gold and silver pieces for *xiangqi*. He then commented, "If we use them for play, they would be intolerably heavy, and there is no sense in storing them. Truly they are superfluous things."³⁴ A list of Yan's confiscated belongings published in the early eighteenth century describes a smaller collection of *xiangqi* pieces. The list does not mention the gold or silver pieces but only nine sets of agate *xiangqi* pieces, one set of jade chess pieces, one set of crystal agate chess pieces, and eight sets of ivory chess pieces, which may have been for *xiangqi* or *weiqi*.³⁵ It is also recorded that the wealthy merchant official Hu Guangyong (1823-85) played *xiangqi* against his wife using his concubines as live pieces, in two teams dressed in blue and red with the names of the pieces written on them, using a raised platform as a board.³⁶

XIANGQI MANUALS

In the Southern Song period, there were at least two manuals devoted to *xiangqi*. Ye Maoqing compiled the *Xiangqi shenji ji* (*Divine Strategy of Xiangqi*) between 1173 and 1234, but it is no longer extant.³⁷ The Song loyalist general and prime minister Wen Tianxiang (1236-83), a *xiangqi* fanatic, also compiled a manual that included forty games.³⁸ For a popular introduction to the game, the late Southern Song encyclopedia *Shilin guangji* (*An Encyclopedia of Matters*) is worthy of note. The Zhishun (1330-33) edition includes two complete handicapped games as well as the earliest recorded endgame, entitled *er long chu hai shi* (*game of two dragons emerging from the sea*).³⁹ In the Yuan period, there was the *Youxi daquan* (*Complete Games*) of the Zhizheng era (1341-68), but only a manuscript exists, and its authenticity remains to be confirmed.⁴⁰ Many manuals of later periods also circulated in manuscript form, which may be due in part to the wish of some compilers not to let everybody in on the secrets of play, and it is only in the twentieth century that many of these have been printed.

Coming to the Ming period, there are at least six extant manuals (with enticing titles), which mainly include complete games or endgames, or a mixture of both:

1. Anonymous, *Meng ru shenji* (*Dreaming of Entering the Realm of Divine Strategy*), printed before 1522⁴¹
2. Zulong shi, *Bai bian xiangqi pu* (*Xiangqi Manual of a Hundred Transformations*), 1522⁴²
3. Anonymous, *Jinpeng shiba bian* (*Eighteen Variations of the Golden Garuda*), completed before 1540⁴³
4. Xu Zhi, *Shiqing yaqu* (*An Elegant Interest that Suits One's Temperament*), 1570⁴⁴
5. Zhu Jinzhen, *Ju zhong mi* (*The Mystery in the Tangerines*), with a preface (1632) by the author's brother, Zhu Yiwei, once the Supreme Commander of Yunnan. This work tops the list for number of reprints of *xiangqi* manuals in the Ming and Qing (1644-1911) periods.⁴⁵ The title refers to another story from Niu Sengru's *Xuan guai lu* (*A Record of the Abstruse and Strange*), in which someone from Baqing in Sichuan Province notices two large tangerines remaining on the branches after the autumn harvest. He orders them to be picked, and finds in each fruit two old men, each a foot or so tall, playing *xiangxi*. The story is notable for the fantastical objects wagered, such as ten ounces of hair from the seventh daughter of the Dragon Spirit of the Sea, nine *hu* (about forty five pecks, or ninety gallons) of jade dust from Yingzhou, one of the three magical mountains, and others. One old man says, "The pleasure in the tangerine is no less than that to be found on Shang Mountain, but it cannot be permanent, since the tangerine has been plucked."⁴⁶

In this story, the old man is comparing the pleasure of playing *xiangqi* inside the tangerine to the joys of residing on Shang Mountain, the place to which the famous Four Greybeards of the founding of the Han dynasty retired. Although there is no mention of *weiqi* in the original

account of the Greybeards, by the Tang dynasty (618-907) they were said to have enjoyed the game in their retirement.⁴⁷ Later versions of Niu Sengru's story seem to have been influenced by this, as the four men in the tangerines end up playing *weiqi* instead of *xiangqi*, no doubt because the former was considered a more prestigious game.⁴⁸

6. Chunyang Daoren, *Zi chu dong lai wu dishou* (*Since Emerging from the Cave I Have Not Met a Worthy Opponent*), date of compilation unknown.⁴⁹ The title is taken from a line of a poem written by a priest who was good at *weiqi*, recorded by his contemporary, the scholar official Yao Kuan (1105-62). The next line reads, "But if I can let someone off, I will do so." Although this originally referred specifically to *weiqi*, it has become a metaphor for the wisdom of allowing someone to save face in defeat.⁵⁰ By using a line from a poem about *weiqi* as the title of a manual for *xiangqi*, there is implicit admission that *weiqi* was the intellectually superior (or at least more prestigious) game.

For the Qing period, at least twenty-three manuals are extant. As the quality of *xiangqi* play in premodern China reached a peak in the Qianlong (1736-96) and Jiaqing (1796-1820) eras,⁵¹ the four famous manuals from the Jiaqing era should be mentioned briefly. All are on endgames, which end mainly in stalemate.

1. Xue Bing, *Xin wu can bian* (*Mind Battle Endgames*), 1800, with a preface by the scholar official Wang Chang⁵²

2. Sanle Jushi, *Bau xiangqi pu* (*Xiangqi Manual of a Hundred Games*), 1801⁵³

3. Zhang Qiaodong, *Zhuxiang zhai xiangxi pu* (*Xiangqi Manual from the Bamboo Fragrance Study*), originally printed in 1804 (revised edition, 1817), with a preface (1802) by Wu Yingkui, a senior licentiate.⁵⁴

4. Chen Wenqian, *Yuanshen haikuo* (*Deep as the Ravine, Wide as the Sea*), 1808, with a preface by the scholar official and calligrapher Liang Tongshu, son of the Grand Secretary Liang Shizheng⁵⁵

Many of the manuals from the Song to Qing period have been reprinted and studied briefly, and one of the pleasures in reading these manuals is appreciating the imagery in the titles in terms of the games illustrated. These titles are normally in set phrases of four Chinese characters. Some are common, some amusing, while others refer to historical battles or elegant lines of poetry. We have, for example, "rats fighting for the hole" (soldiers threaten the generals and fight for the prize), "snow surrounds Lantian Pass,"⁵⁶ "the earthworms tame the dragon" (three slow-moving soldiers force two chariots into a stalemate), and "the meeting of the orangutans" (seven pieces lined up on the eighth rank).⁵⁷

Xiangqi historians have noted the following course of development in the manuals, as seen from the level of play shown. Stage one, as seen in *Ju zhong mi*, demonstrates a grasp of the basic rules and various openings (including the cannon move to the central file), and endgames in which a winner emerges. This level, however, is relatively basic and crude. Stage two is exemplified by *Meihua pu* (*Plum Blossom Manual*) by Wang Zaiyue of the Kangxi era (1662-1722), and *Zhuxiang zhai xiangxi pu*. The former deals with openings, in particular the *pingfeng ma* (screen horses) defense⁵⁸ against the opening attack from the cannon to the central file. The latter evinces a switch from endgames in which there is a winner to stalemates, and to advanced endgames. Stage three, from the late eighteenth century to 1957, includes more systematic studies of openings, in particular the horse response to cannon attacks.⁵⁹

Early introductions of the game to the West include W .H. Wilkinson's *A Manual of Chinese Chess*, published in 1893; H.J.R. Murray's *A History of Chess*, 1913; and Charles Kliene's *Seven Stars: A Chinese Chess Ending with Three Hundred Variations*, 1916, which is an expanded study of the *qi xing juhui* (*meeting of the seven stars*) endgame variations found in *Baiju xiangqi pu*.⁶⁰ The endgame is so named because, at the start, each side has seven pieces remaining; it is one of the games that aficionados might choose to play against professional players for a small wager on street corners. Both Wilkinson and Kliene spent some time working in China.

ATTITUDES TO XIANGQI

In the late Southern Song period, Zhou Mi referred to *weiqi* as *da qi* (big chess). The modern scholar Zhang Ru'an has interpreted the *da* to mean "major," thus relegating *xiangqi* to a lower status as the "minor" form of chess. Zhang notes that this period marks the beginning of a differentiation of the two games into "high" and "base" pursuits.⁶¹ It may be argued, however, that the term *da qi* was used simply to differentiate between the games, with *da* indicating that *weiqi* uses more pieces.⁶² Nevertheless, a derisory attitude towards *xiangqi* was clearly evident in

some quarters by the late Ming period.⁶³ In his *xiangqi* manual *Ju zhong mi*, Zhu Jinzhen noted that people despised the game as an insignificant skill because it was played in marketplaces by the young and old but thought highly of *weiqi*; therefore, there were numerous manuals on *weiqi* and few on *xiangqi*. Zhu argued that there was no difference in the level of intelligence and skill required for the two games and that people attempted to differentiate between the two based solely on their own preferences.⁶⁴

In the Qing period, the scholar Jiao Xun (1763-1820) also wrote that people thought highly of *weiqi* and despised *xiangqi*, and that he found this to be strange. He argued that in the game of *xiangqi*, there were billions of possibilities for the deployment of each piece, while the game of *weiqi* required only the completion of the 361 points with no additional effort. According to Jiao, the meaning of *weiqi* seemed to be refined, and the game seemed to require deep thought, but someone with a bit of intelligence could exhaust the techniques. He went on to say,

*Women, children, farmers, or herdsmen may grasp the techniques of xiangqi, but to be good at it is another matter, and even grand Confucian scholars and famous worthies do not dare to lay this claim. Weiqi [looks difficult], but is easy. Xiangqi [looks easy], but is difficult.*⁶⁵

The relative level of difficulty of the two games may be argued, but it is to Jiao's credit that he stands up for *xiangqi*. As for women playing the game, it should be noted that there are records of women playing *xiangqi* in the Song and Yuan periods.⁶⁶

The reason behind derogatory attitudes towards *xiangqi* merits some discussion. During its early history in the Song period, *xiangqi* found favor among members of the upper classes. Games of the *xiangqi* family attracted the attention of scholar officials such as the aforementioned Yin Shu, Sima Guang, and Chao Buzhi and there were *xiangqi* players in attendance at the court of Emperor Xiaozong (r. 1163-89).⁶⁷ In the Ming period, the scholar official Li Kaixian (1502-68), a top player, wrote numerous poems on the subject. Legend has it that five high ranking ministers loved the game in the Qing period. Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736-95) watched them play over a period of six months, and the games were recorded in a volume.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, when *xiangqi* took off among the common people, it seems that scholarly aficionados of *weiqi* became anxious and began to differentiate between the two games in terms of the perceived level of skill required, with ramifications for their relative status.

A comparison between *weiqi* and *xiangqi* may prove interesting. *Weiqi* has a much longer history, and the accumulated symbolic and cultural capital of elegance associated with *weiqi* far outweighs that associated with *xiangqi* (see section 15). When Xu Zhi tried to package his aforementioned *xiangqi* manual with the title *Shiqing yaqu*, or *An Elegant Interest that Suits One's Temperament*, leading scholars like Jiao Xun stood up rightly for this terminology, but it was an uphill struggle. A comparison of the number of manuals on *xiangqi* and on *weiqi* produced in the Ming and Qing periods will demonstrate this point.

At first count, there were at least seventeen *xiangqi* manuals (six still extant) and seventeen *weiqi* manuals (all extant) in the Ming period. In the Qing period, the difference becomes more pronounced, with at least twenty-six *xiangqi* manuals (twenty-three still extant) compared to fifty-five extant *weiqi* manuals.⁶⁹

It is not easy to draw sensible conclusions from these figures. Professional players, some educated, compiled some of these *weiqi* and *xiangqi* manuals. But many of these manuals had prefaces written by literati, or were compiled by literati themselves. From the numbers, we can say that the literati were on the whole more interested in compiling manuals for *weiqi* than for *xiangqi*; and from the long association of literati with *weiqi*, the much greater number of poems written on *weiqi*, and the numerous paintings of literati playing *weiqi*,⁷⁰ it would seem that the literati considered *weiqi* a more prestigious game than *xiangqi*. The physical evidence of *xiangqi* pieces and boards, however, paints a rather different picture. Whereas *weiqi* pieces, though often made of fine materials, were usually plain, *xiangqi* pieces were often more elaborate and sometimes were made from exotic materials such as coconut (Fig. 13:3), tortoiseshell inlaid with silver (Fig. 13:4.), ivory (Fig. 13:5), jade, or if we are to believe Shen Defu's aforementioned account even gold and silver.

13:3

Set of *xiangqi* pieces

China; 18th century

Coconut; height: 2.9 cm, diameter: 1.6 cm

Polumbaum Collection, 0039

Photograph by Risa Korris

Whereas in the Ming and Qing periods *weiqi* pieces were stored in separate containers, *xiangqi* pieces were usually kept in a single round box.

13:4

Set of *xiangqi* pieces

China; 19th century

Tortoise shell; height: 5.7 cm, diameter: 4.8 cm,

Polumbaum Collection, 1475

Photograph by Risa Korris

13:5

Xiangqi set with characters engraved in seal and clerical script China; 17th-18th century

Ivory; height: 1.3 cm, diameter: 3.8 cm

Polumbaum Collection, 2178

Photograph by Risa Korris

In this set the two sides are distinguished by different scripts seal script (*zhuan shu*) in the upper row and regular script (*kai shu*) in the lower. The pieces are (from left to right): soldier, elephant, general, guard, and catapult (in modern sets, this is replaced by the cannon).

Moreover, many game boards during the late Ming period were used for both *weiqi* and *xiangqi*, the two games marked out on the obverse and reverse sides of the board, respectively (Fig. 13:6). It is ironic to think that on the underside of many *weiqi* boards depicted in literati paintings there lurks a *xiangqi* board.

13:6

Xiangqi folding board

China; 18th century

Huang huili wood with brass inlay;

approx. 38.1 x 30.5 cm

Polumbaum Collection, 0012

Photograph by Risa Korris

This is a double sided board, with the reverse marked out for *weiqi*.

Indeed, the fact that there were more manuals produced for *weiqi* does not mean that the game was more popular than *xiangqi* on the whole. For one thing, the numbers of reprints of particular manuals have not been taken into account. Manuals for both games could be reprinted many times, and the figures for manuals in circulation would then change. We also do not have actual figures for numbers of players in premodern China, but it could be argued that *xiangqi* was more popular among the common people and thus was played by a greater number of people than *weiqi*. Practical factors also favor *xiangqi*: a game of *xiangqi* takes less time than a game of *weiqi*; the paper *xiangqi* board is an economical option; and the thirty two pieces are less cumbersome than the 361 or so needed for *weiqi*. Even today, *xiangqi* sets may be purchased easily in convenience stores in Taipei, but not *weiqi* sets, and it is more common to see people playing *xiangqi* (rather than *weiqi*) in teahouses and parks in China. The reason for *xiangqi*'s enduring popularity, like that of international chess, must lie not just in the intellectual challenge of outwitting an opponent by sheer skill (after all, *weiqi* is no less skillful), but in the individuality of the different pieces that reflect the composition of a real army so explicitly. Just as all of the different elements of an army work together to defeat the enemy in real battles, so, too, is victory accomplished by marshalling one's army to greatest effect in *xiangqi* and in chess. The winner of a game of *xiangqi* feels the palpable satisfaction of having vanquished his opponent in battle, no mean feat for time spent on one side of a gaming board.

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¹ The character *xiang* has multiple meanings: elephant, ivory, image, or figure. It is not always clear which meaning is intended in the name. Sometimes the term seems to refer to elephants (which feature as pieces in most versions of *xiangqi*), but in other cases it seems to refer simply to figures, perhaps in contradistinction to games (such as *weiqi*) in which the pieces are non figural. *Qi* literally means a gaming piece, but in combination with *xiang* it usually refers to the game rather than to the individual piece. The *xi* of *xiangxi*

means "to play." *Xiangxi* literally means "elephant (or figural) play," and in this essay, it is translated as "game of elephants" or "game of figures," in order to distinguish it from *xiangqi*. From the end of the Northern Song period, *xiangxi* was sometimes used interchangeably with *xiangqi*, but in earlier times, it referred to a distinct game.

² For an argument for Indian ancestry, or the possibility that China obtained its knowledge of chess from Persia rather than from India directly, see H.J.R. Murray, *A History of Chess*, pp. 119-21.

³ See Shi Liangzhao, *Boyi youxi rensheng (Games such as Bo and Weiqi and Life)*, p. 162. Elephants and other ferocious animals were used in a battle in 23 CE; see Fan Ye (comp.), *Hou Han shu (History of the Later Han Dynasty)*, vol. I: p. 5.

⁴ For a discussion of *xiangxi*, see Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi (A History of Chinese Xiangqi)*, p. 46; and Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua (Chats on the History of Xiangqi)*, pp. 2-6.

⁵ Linghu Defen (comp.), *Zhou shu (History of the Zhou Dynasty)*, p. 76.

⁶ Li Fang et al. (comps.), *Taiping yulan (Encyclopedia of the Taiping Xingguo Era, for Imperial Perusal)*, p. 3353.

⁷ Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, vol. 4, part I: pp. 320-25.

⁸ Other writings on games, such as Ban Gu's (32-92 CE) "Yi zhi" (Principles of *yi*), Bian Shao's (fl. mid second century) "Sai fu" (Prose poem on the game of *sai*), and Li Xiu's (Eastern Jin period [317-420]) "Si wei fu" (Prose poem on the game of the four directions), all relate the game boards, pieces, and their movements to higher concepts. See Liu Shancheng (ed.), *Zhongguo weiqi (Chinese Weiqi)*, pp.119-122; and Ouyang Xun, *Yiwen leiju (Collection of Literature Arranged by Categories)*, pp. 1280-81.

⁹ Xu Yimin (ed.), *Yu Zishan ji zhu (Collected Works of Yu Zishan, Annotated)*, pp. 68-73. For interpretations of more lines from the writings of Wang Bao and Yu Xin, see Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 31-35; and Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, pp. 21-29. Emperor Taizong (r. 627-49) could not understand three games as described by Emperor Wu, and called upon his minister Lü Cai, who solved them in one night. See Liu Xu et al. (comps.), *Jiu Tang Shu (The Old History of the Tang Dynasty)*, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975, p 2720.

¹⁰ David Parlett, *The Oxford History of Board Games*, p. 286.

¹¹ For rules of the Confucian board game, see Li Fang et al., *Taiping yulan*, p. 3351.

¹² The story is from Niu Sengru's *Xuan guai lu (A Record of the Abstruse and Strange)*; see Li Fang et al. (comps.), *Taiping guangji (Comprehensive Records Compiled in the Taiping Xingguo Era)*, pp. 2935-37.

¹³ Based on the attribution to the Northern Song period of a piece of brocade on which the four accomplishments of the zither, chess, calligraphy, and painting are depicted, and chess is represented by a board of eight white and black squares on a side, scholars argue that the pieces in this game were placed on the squares and not on the intersections of the lines, as in the *xiangqi* of the Southern Song period (1127-1279). See Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 43 45; and Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, pp. 43 44. We are unsure, however, about the dating of this piece of brocade. We have seen only Wang Duan, *Gu jin tu'an ji (Patterns of Ancient Brocade)*, p. 3, which says that this brocade dates from the Ming (1368-1644) or Qing period (1644-1911). We have not been able to consult Bai Lichuan's *Zhongguo meishu shi lue (A Brief History of Chinese Art)*, which dates the brocade piece to the Song period (960-1279), as mentioned by Li Songfu.

¹⁴ Peng Dingqiu et al. (comps.), *Quan Tang shi (Complete Poems of the Tang Period)*, vol. 14: p. 5065.

¹⁵ See Zhu Nanxian's groundbreaking work, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi congkao (Studies on the History of Chinese Xiangqi)*, pp. 52-84.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 54 55.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁸ In the Han dynasty, the deputy general was subordinate to the general in chief, and the assistant general was subordinate to the deputy general.

¹⁹ Zhu Nanxian, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi congkao*, p. 57. Liu Bang gamed supremacy over Xiang Yu, his rival who ruled the state of Chu, and established the Han dynasty in 206 BCE. This may be the earliest reference to the four characters *Chu he Han jie* (Chu River, Han Boundary) written in the river area on later *xiangqi* boards.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 59 63.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 68 8a.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²³ Different texts record either thirty or thirty-two *xiangxi* pieces, but Zhu Nanxian argues convincingly that the correct number of thirty-two is what Cao Xun meant. See *ibid.*, pp. 17-20.

²⁴ The painting, in color on silk, measures 137.6 by 26.7 centimeters, and is in the collection of Tianjin Art Museum. See *Zhongguo meishu quanji bianji weiyuanhui (comp.), Zhongguo meishu quanji (A Complete Collection of Chinese Art)*, vol. 4: pp. 8 9.

²⁵ Zeng Changlin, "Song dai tongzhi Zhongguo xiangqi qianxi" (A brief analysis of copper Chinese xiangqi pieces of the Song period), *Sichuan wenwu* (Cultural Artefacts from Sichuan), 1995, no. 6, pp. 16-17. For an illustration, see Cui Lequan, *Zhongguo godai tiyu wenwu tolu* (*Album on Ancient Sports Art in China*), p. 157. In 1984, a similar set of thirty-two copper pieces (with characters on one side and images on the other), possibly dating to the Chongning era (1102-06), was found in Anyi County, Jiangxi Province. Half of the set could be seen faintly to be in red, and half in black. Each piece measured 3.8 centimeters in diameter, and 0.7 centimeter in thickness. See Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, p. 105; for an illustration, see Cui (as above), p. 157. Round brass pieces also have been excavated from Kaifeng. The date of discovery is not given, and the pieces vary in size from a diameter of 31 centimeters to 11 centimeters. Some have characters on one side and images on the other, and others have characters on both sides. Those with images are essentially similar to those from Anyi County, but the guard wears flowing robes; Li Songfu thinks that this is a depiction of a woman in military attire, and that it may have something to do with palace ladies in Emperor Huizong's court playing the game. We remain skeptical about this. See Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shihua*, pp. 59-63.

²⁶ See website www.xinhua023.com/tbguanz/wenwu-gonggao/09.htm, for April 5, 2004.

²⁷ Luoyang shi wenwu gongzuo dui, "Luoyang shi Xigong qu 5692 hao Bei Song mu" (The Northern Song Tomb No. 5692 from Xigong area, Luoyang City), *Zhongyuan Wenwu* (*Cultural Artefacts from the Central Plain*), 2002, no. 3, pp. 4-6. In 1955, a round white porcelain piece with the carved character Jiang dating to the Song period was found at the old site of Liancheng in Fengtai County, Anhui Province; see Nanjing Bowu Yuan, "Anhui Fengtai 'Liancheng' yizhi nei faxian yipi Tang Yuan shidai de wenwu" (*Cultural artefacts from the Tang to Yuan periods discovered in the ruins of Liancheng, Fengtai County, Anhui*), *Wenwu*, 1965, no. 10, pp. 46-50. Between 1954 and 1963, excavations were carried out at the old Hebijian kiln site in Hebi City, Henan Province, and three circular unglazed pieces were discovered. The pieces probably date from the late Northern Song period (or early twelfth century), and measure 2.7 centimeters in diameter and 0.6 centimeter in thickness. One piece has the character *xiang* carved on both sides, and the other two bear the characters *ma* and *zu*, respectively. See Henan sheng wenhua ju wenwu gongzuo dui, "Henan Sheng Hebijian ciyao yizhi fajue jianbao" (Brief report on the excavation of the old Hebijian porcelain site in Henan Province), *Wenwu*, 1964, no. 8, pp. 9-11.

²⁸ Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shihua*, p. 59.

²⁹ Zhu Nanxian suggests that the term *ji* (basis) is interchangeable with *qi* (chess piece); see Zhu Nanxian, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi congkao*, p. 15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

³² Hong Mai, *Yi Jian zhi* (*Records of Supernatural and Strange Matters in the Manner of Yi Jian*), vol. 2: p. 907.

³³ Quanzhouwan Songdai haichuan fajue baogao bianxiezu, "Quanzhouwan Songdai haichuan fajue jianbao" (Brief report on the excavation of a Song dynasty seafaring vessel at Quanzhou Bay), *Wenwu*, 1975, no. 10, pp. 1-18. The character *shi* appears with the "man" radical on one piece, and without it on two others; *pao* appears with the "stone" radical on one piece and the "fire" radical on another.

³⁴ Shen Defu, *Wanli ye huo bian* (Private Gleanings in the Wanli Reign), p. 211.

³⁵ Anonymous, *Tian shui bingshan lu* (*A Record of the Waters of Heaven Melting the Iceberg*), in *Congshu jicheng chubian* (*A Synthesis of Various Collectanea, Volume One*), ed. Wang Yunwu, pp. 99, 116, 117, 119.

³⁶ See Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, p. 226.

³⁷ Zhu Nanxian, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi congkao*, p. 89; Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 83-84.

³⁸ Zhu Guozhen, *Yong chuang xiaopin* (*Notes from the Portable Pavilion*), p. 475. These games are not extant, and one game attributed to Wen Tianxiang may not be authentic. See Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 81-83.

³⁹ Chen Yuanjing, *Shilin guangji* (*An Encyclopedia of Matters*) (1963), *xuji*, *juan* 4, pp. 15a-b. The 1340 edition gives six endgames; see *idem*, *Shilin guangji* (1999), pp. 179-80.

⁴⁰ Zhu Nanxian, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi congkao*, pp. 105-106; Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 92-94.

⁴¹ For a revised modern reprint, see Ding Zhangzhao and Jin Qichang (eds.), *Meng ru shenji* (*Dreaming of Entering the Realm of Divine Strategy*).

⁴² For a modern revised edition, see Li Geng and Huang Jiexiong (comps.), *Bai bian xiangqi pu* (*Xiangqi Manual of a Hundred Transformations*).

⁴³ For a revised modern edition, see Li Geng (comp.), *Jinpeng shiba bian* (*Eighteen Variations of the Golden Garuda*).

⁴⁴ For a modern study and revised reprint, see Xu Jialiang (ed.), *Shiqing yaqu* (*An Elegant Interest that Suits One's Temperament*).

⁴⁵ For a modern reprint, see Tang Boyuan (ed.), *Ju zhong mi* (*The Mystery in the Tangerines*).

⁴⁶ Li Fang et al., *Taiping guangji*, p. 250.

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- ⁴⁷ One of the earliest references to the Greybeards playing *weiqi* is found in a poem by Yu Hu (fl. 766-ca. 814); see Peng et al., *Quan Tang shi*, vol. 10: p. 3500. The earliest recorded painting of the Four Greybeards is by Sun Wei (fl. late ninth century). The Song dynasty painters Li Gonglin and Ma Yuan also painted this topic; see Sun Yuepan et al., *Peiwen zhai shu hua pu (Paintings and Calligraphy from Peiwen Study)*, printed with Zhang Zhao et al., *Mi dian zhu lin (Daoist and Buddhist Art Collection)*, vol. 5: pp. 256, 270, 422. For poems of the Yuan and Ming periods on paintings of the Four Greybeards playing *weiqi*, see Chen Bangyan (ed.), *Lidai tihua shi (Poems on Paintings from Various Periods)*, pp. 418-20.
- ⁴⁸ See, for example, the poem by Li Dongyang (1447-1516) quoted in Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, p. 53.
- ⁴⁹ For a modern revised reprint, see Li Geng and Ma Zhengfu (comps.), *Zi chu dong lai wu dishou (Since Emerging from the Cave I Have Not Met a Worthy Opponent)*.
- ⁵⁰ Liu Shancheng, *Zhongguo weiqi*, p. 344.
- ⁵¹ The famous *xiangqi* player Xie Xiaxun (1887-1988) noted that in the mid Qianlong era, there were eleven famous players who formed their own schools in nine different areas of China. See Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, pp. 330-33.
- ⁵² For a modern rearrangement and study of the manual, see Li Geng, *Xin wu can pian xiangqi pu (Xiangqi Manual on Mind Battle Endgames)*.
- ⁵³ For a modern rearrangement and study of the manual, see Xu Jialiang and Su Delong (comps.), *Bau xiangqi pu xinbian (Xiangqi Manual of a Hundred Games, Newly Arranged)*.
- ⁵⁴ For a modern reprint and study of the manual, see Qiu Wangyu et al., *Zhuxiang zhai xiangxi pu, chujī (Xiangqi Manual from the Bamboo Fragrance Study: Volume One)*; Zhu Hezhou et al., *Zhuxiang zhai xiangxi pu, erji (Xiangqi Manual from the Bamboo Fragrance Study: Volume Two)*; and idem, *Zhuxiang zhai xiangxi pu, sanji (Xiangqi Manual from the Bamboo Fragrance Study: Volume Three)*.
- ⁵⁵ For a modern rearrangement and study of the manual, see Liu Guobin and Zhu Baowei (eds.), *Yuanshen haikuo (Deep as the Ravine, Wide as the Sea)*.
- ⁵⁶ This is from the famous fine "Snow surrounds Lantian Pass, and my horse cannot proceed," by the poet Han Yu (768-804). In the game, it appears that the horses on both sides do not succeed in a checkmate. See Zhishui, *Han Yu shi xuan (Selections of Poems by Han Yu)*, pp. 194-95.
- ⁵⁷ See Li Geng, *Xin wu can pian xiangqi pu*, pp. 44, 151, 187; and Xu and Su, *Baiju xiangqi pu xinbian*, p. 68.
- ⁵⁸ The two horses move to the third and seventh files and form two wings of a defense.
- ⁵⁹ Yang Guanlin et al. (comps.), *Zhongguo xiangqi pu (Manuals on Chinese Xiangqi)*, pp. 2-6. A detailed introduction to developments in the whole of the twentieth century remains to be written.
- ⁶⁰ W. H. Wilkinson, *A Manual of Chinese Chess*; Murray, *A History of Chess*; Charles Kliene, *Seven Stars: A Chinese Chess Ending with Three Hundred Variations*. For Charles Kliene's entertaining preface, see the website <http://home1.gte.net/res1buP4/kliene.htm>, for April 5, 2004.
- ⁶¹ Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, pp. 114, 310.
- ⁶² The fifteenth century carpenter's manual Lu *Ban jing (The Classic of Lu Ban)* gives the measurements of 1 *chi*, 4 *cun* by 1 *chi*, 2 *cun* for a "large" *xiangqi* board, and 1 *chi*, 4 *cun*, 6 *fen* square for a *weiqi* board. See Klaas Ruitenbeek, *Carpentry and Building in Late Imperial China: A Study of the Fifteenth-Century Carpenter's Manual Lu Ban jing*, p. 267.
- ⁶³ As a counterweight to the above, we may note that both types of games were included in popular late Ming encyclopedias and Qing period reprints, although the content was simple and intended for popular consumption. See Wu Huiyang, *Wanbao quanshu: Ming Qing shiqi de minjian shenghuo shilu (A Myriad Treasures: A Truthful Record of Ordinary Peoples' Lives in the Ming and Qing Periods)*, pp. 558-70.
- ⁶⁴ Zhu Jinzhen, *Ju zhong mi (The Mystery in the Tangerines)*, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu bianzuan weiyuanhui, Xuxiu siku quanshu (Sequel to Collectanea of the Four Treasuries)*, vol. 1105: p. 69.
- ⁶⁵ Jiao Xun, *Diao gu ji (Collected Works from the Hall of Wild Rice)*, in *Congshu jicheng chubian*, ed. Wang Yunwu, p. 5.
- ⁶⁶ See Zhang Ru'an, *Zhongguo xiangqi shi*, pp. 114-17, 183-84.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-29.
- ⁶⁸ The volume is not extant. See Li Songfu, *Xiangqi shi hua*, pp. 180-81.
- ⁶⁹ These figures are taken from *ibid.*, pp. 109-29, 153-81; and Zhao Zhiyun and Xu Wanyun (comps.), *Weiqi cidian (A Dictionary of Weiqi)*, pp. 254-68. See also Tu Jingming, *Zhongguo xiangqi cidian (A Dictionary of Chinese Xiangqi)*, pp. 207-12.
- ⁷⁰ It is rare to come across a painting of scholars playing *xiangqi*. An exception is a Yuan-period mural painting from Guangsheng Temple, Hongdong County, Shanxi Province, depicting two scholars playing the game. See Cui, *Zhongguo gudai tiyu wenwu tutu*, p. 158.