

Chapter 28

Japan

[The third major chess tradition is that of the Japanese game Shogi, whose salient feature is that captured men become the property of their captors.]

28.1 Shogi

Shogi, also known as **Japanese Chess**. The ‘game of the generals’ probably arrived in Japan via Korea or Thailand sometime between the 10th and 12th centuries or possibly earlier. Although its early form is obscure, one piece of the modern game (the lance) is identical to the primitive Chinese piece (see the previous chapter), though shogi is remarkable not for its similarities to other chess games but for its differences. In particular, it is the only game in which captured pieces change sides, a 16th century innovation inspired, it is suggested, by the practice of captured mercenaries switching loyalties (in preference to an unpleasant alternative) during the internecine wars that beset Japan during that period.

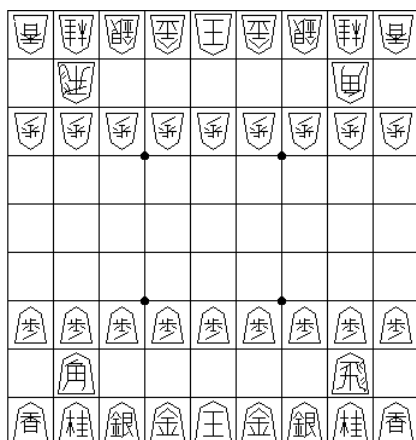
The game has been little played in the West although a number of shogi clubs and associations have been formed in U.K., Europe and America. A visit by Japanese shogi players to the Philadelphia Chess Club was reported in 1860 (*Illustrated London News*) and a few years later *The Chess World*, reprinting an article from the *Philadelphian Daily Bulletin*, recounted how, ‘on being introduced to the (Japanese) Embassy, we learned that the game (shogi) was exclusively confined to the middle and lower ranks, a striking illustration of the semi-barbarism of these islanders...’ (The arrogance is partly explained, if not excused, by the fact that Commodore Perry had sailed into Yedo Bay only 13 years previously, opening Japan to the world after 250 years of isolation.) The article went on to observe that ‘...two Japanese soldiers played the first game of Japanese chess ever played in a Christian land...’. In the opinion of Alekhine, who passed through Tokyo in 1933, ‘Japanese Chess cedes nothing in depth or beauty to the European game ... it

is at least as interesting’. Shogi flourished during the Tokugawa shogunate, lapsed briefly after the Meiji restoration (1868) but is now Japan’s most popular game with estimates of between 10 and 20 million who are familiar with the rules, of whom perhaps a million are players. The Nihon Shogi Renmei (Japan Shogi Federation), formed in 1924, regulates the game. A grading system, similar to that of weiqi (go), groups amateurs and professionals separately. Amateurs start at 15-kyu and work up to 1-kyu then to 1-dan (shodan) and upwards to 7-dan, the top grade; professionals start at about 6 kyu (roughly equivalent to amateur 3-dan) up to 9-dan. Major events, of which the Meijin title is the most prestigious, are lavishly funded and get wide press coverage. There is an extensive literature. The first international shogi tournament took place in June, 1999. It was won by Hayashi Takahiro of Japan. Players from 27 countries competed.

Shogi is a battle between two armies on an uncoloured board of 9x9 ‘squares’ (actually rectangular cells). Four of the grid intersections are emphasised to denote the respective camps and promotion zones. The marks are so sited as to divide the board into 3x3 regions. The board is placed lengthwise between the players. The pieces, of which there are 20 a side, are wedge-shaped, thicker at the base than at the head, and vary in size according to their importance. On one face is printed the black character representing the piece, and on the reverse face, where appropriate, the character (sometimes printed in red) for the same piece when promoted. On promotion a piece is turned over to show its new rank. The men are uncoloured and are identical for both sides, arbitrarily named

Black and White. The allegiance of a man is shown by the direction in which it is facing.

Each army is made up of 1 x King, Rook, Bishop, 2 x Gold General (commonly abbreviated to Gold), Silver General (Silver), Knight, Lance, 9 x Pawn.



Interpretation: LNSGKGSNL on ranks 1/9, BR on ranks 2/8 (each player's bishop on his left), 9xS on ranks 3/7.

The pieces move as follows.

King as an orthochess K.

Rook as an orthochess R.

Bishop as an orthochess B.

Gold General one square at a time as a K but not diagonally backwards, i.e. in any of six directions.

Silver General one square at a time as a K but not sideways or straight back, i.e. in any of five directions.

Knight as in orthochess but only forwards to an adjacent file, i.e. a choice of two moves at most.

Lance straight ahead as a R, but not sideways or backwards.

Pawn one square straight ahead only.

Capture is by displacement and all pieces, including the pawn, capture in the same manner as they move.

All pieces except King and Gold can promote. The promotion zone is made up of the three ranks occupied by the opponent at the start of the game as indicated by the board markers. Promotion can take place on the completion of any move or capture in which the piece crosses into, moves within, or leaves the promotion zone. Promotion is only

compulsory in the case of an L or P reaching the last rank, or of a N reaching either of the last two ranks, since without promotion the piece concerned would then be permanently immobile (a N can reach the penultimate rank as the result of an earlier drop, as described below). Pieces promote as follows.

Rook to Dragon King, when it acquires the additional power of moving one square as a B.

Bishop to Dragon Horse, when it acquires the additional power of moving one square as a R.

Silver, Knight, Lance, and Pawn all to Gold General.

A captured piece (described as a piece 'in hand') belongs to the player who captured it. It assumes its unpromoted rank and is placed in a 'reserve base' beside the player who can then enter it on the board as part of his army at any time instead of making a move. A piece can be dropped in any vacant cell but with certain restrictions.

(1) A piece dropped in the promotion zone cannot immediately be promoted; it may however be promoted on its next move.

(2) A pawn may not be dropped on a file on which the player already has an unpromoted pawn.

(3) A pawn may not be dropped to give checkmate, though it may be dropped to give check.

(4) A knight, lance or pawn may not be dropped on a square where it is rendered permanently immobile (last rank for L or P, last two ranks for N), though it may be dropped on a square it could not otherwise reach.

The object of the game is to capture the opponent's king and the rules governing check and checkmate parallel those of orthochess with one small difference: moving the king into check is not illegal though its capture ends the game. There is no castling as such. Draws, although rare, can occur (about 1% of all games). The rule governing repetition of moves and position is still in dispute. At present, a position which has been repeated four times, with the same pieces in hand and the same player to move, is a draw. Perpetual check is forbidden: the checking player must alter. If both players move their kings into the opposing camp, or can be assured of doing so, and there is no prospect of a checkmate - a

most unlikely event - the game is adjudged an 'impasse'. The pieces of each side, both in play and in hand, are counted: 5 points for a major piece (R, B) and 1 point for all other men, the K not counting. If both players have 24 points or more the game is a draw, otherwise the player with less than 24 points loses. An illegal move loses at once, even if discovered after play has continued. 'Touch and move' is not enforced. Shogi, like weiqi, has an attractive etiquette. Cho-Yo, in his egregiously but entertaining work *Japanese*

Chess, advises 'Never violate etiquette even though while playing with an enemy'.

Shogi sets are readily available in the west. Computers and software are also available.

[Text slightly revised. As with xiangqi, David proceeded in the first edition to devote several more pages to what was effectively a basic introductory treatise on the game, and again I have decided to not to repeat this but instead to encourage readers to seek out one of the full-length introductory books which are available.]

28.2 Historical shogi variants

It is only in recent years that serious research has been undertaken into the precursors of modern shogi. Fragmentary evidence has suggested that the seminal game or games may date back as far as the 8th century and that a small and large (13x13) shogi, both without R and B, existed at the same time. Several of the large variants (boards greater than 9x9) were never widely played and some may not even have been played at all. One game which was and still is played is Chu Shogi, whilst Tori Shogi has a small but enthusiastic following in the West. George Hodges of the Shogi Association was instrumental in unearthing and evaluating documents on these early games and making his and Japanese researches available to western readers through the Association magazine *Shogi* and in monographs. In all historical variants, the boards are uncoloured as are the pieces which are wedge-shaped, as in shogi, with promoted values, where applicable, on the reverse. The two sides are notionally Black and White, Black starting and playing down the board. Many of the piece names are open to alternative transliterations. For example, Ferocious Leopard is sometimes rendered as Horrible Panther. Where names are given, Shogi Association nomenclature is used. A modern variant has one player with a lone king which has the power of the Lion in Chu Shogi, whilst the opponent (who should win) has a full complement of pieces plus an extra R and B in hand. The Shogi Association has marketed sets for several of these variants. [Where no other provenance is given, information in this section is based on Shogi Association monographs.]

Heian Dai Shogi. An early form of large shogi dating from about the 12th century. The array, which is symmetrical about the centre file, has been reconstructed with some confidence, but the moves of the pieces are not firmly established. Board 13x13; 34 men a side, 1 x King, Go-Between, Side-Mover; 2 x Copper, Gold, Iron, Silver General, Lance, Knight, Free Chariot, Flying Dragon, Fierce Tiger; 13 x Pawn (*Shogi*, September 1980).

Chu Shogi, also known as **Middle Shogi**. Origins unknown but popular in the 14th and 15th centuries and the only large shogi to have survived to the present day; now with a small but ardent following in the West as well as in Japan. Reckoned by many to be the best of all large chess games. Early sources on the game are not conclusive; ideograms, nomenclature and rules given here are those approved by the Shogi Association. The game is described in a monograph, and is discussed in some depth by R. Wayne Schmittberger in a series of articles in *Shogi*. Board 12x12 uncoloured, 46 men a side: 1 x Drunk Elephant (DE), Free King (FK), King (K), Kylin (Ky), Lion (Ln), Phoenix (Ph); 2 x Bishop (B), Blind Tiger (BT), Copper General (C), Dragon Horse (DH), Dragon King (DK), Ferocious Leopard (FL), Go-Between (GB), Gold General (G), Lance (L), Reverse Chariot (RC), Rook (R), Side Mover (SM), Silver General (S), Vertical Mover (VM); 12 x Pawn (P). The moves of these pieces are as follows.

Bishop moves and promotes as in shogi.

Blind Tiger moves as K but not straight ahead. Promotes to Flying Stag (moves as K, or as R on file only).

Copper General moves as Gold, but not sideways. Promotes to SM.

Dragon Horse moves as B or one square orthogonally. Promotes to Horned Falcon (moves as FK except straight ahead, when it moves one or two squares as Ln).

Dragon King moves as R or one square diagonally. Promotes to Soaring Eagle (moves as FK except diagonally forward, when it moves one or two squares as Ln).

Drunk Elephant moves as K but not straight back. Promotes to Crown Prince (moves as K).

Ferocious Leopard moves as K but not sideways. Promotes to B.

Free King moves as orthochess Q. Does not promote.

Go-Between moves one square straight forward or back. Promotes to DE.

Gold General moves as in shogi. Promotes to R (unlike shogi Gold).

King moves as in shogi, does not promote.

Kylin moves one square diagonally or two squares orthogonally, leaping intervening square. Promotes to Ln.

Lance moves as in shogi. Promotes to White Horse (moves as FK in the three forward directions and straight back only).

Lion moves one or two squares, changing direction or leaping the intervening square if desired. It may move one square and return to its start square. It captures as it moves, and may therefore take two pieces in a single move or capture on an adjacent square without in effect moving. A lion may capture an opposing lion that is two squares away but only if it is unguarded. It may take an adjacent lion without restriction. It does not promote.

Pawn moves and promotes as in shogi.

Phoenix moves one square orthogonally or two squares diagonally, leaping intervening square. Promotes to FK.

Reverse Chariot moves as R but on file only. Promotes to Whale (as FK but straight ahead and in the three backward directions only).

Rook moves and promotes as in shogi.

Side Mover moves one square straight forward or back, or as R along rank only. Promotes to Free Boar (as FK but not on file).

Silver General moves as in shogi. Promotes to VM.

Vertical Mover moves one square sideways, or as R on file only. Promotes to Flying Ox (as

FK but not sideways).

Array for White (Black men diametrically opposite, king on g12):

```

- - - GB - - - - GB - - -
P P P P P P P P P P P P
SMVM R DHDK Ln FKDKDH R VMSSM
RC - B - BT Ky Ph BT - B - RC
L FL C S G K DE G S C FL L

```

The complexity presented by the array is to some extent illusory. There are basically only three types of piece: (1) Step-movers; (2) Line-movers; (3) Leapers. The step-movers, of which there are nine, move one square as a K or restricted K and are mostly on the first rank; the line-movers, also nine in number, move freely down one or more unobstructed lines; and there are three leapers: the lion, the kylin and the phoenix, the last two complementing each other. Curiously, there is no knight.

Promotion is on any square of the opponent's four first ranks and is optional. No piece may promote twice. For example, a B promotes to DH and an unpromoted DH promotes to HF but a B can never promote to HF. There are no drops as in shogi; captured pieces are removed from play. The object of the game is to capture the opponent's K or all his pieces except the K. If the opponent has promoted his DE to CP, however, the CP as well as the K must be captured. Perpetual check is illegal. There are one or two minor rules in addition. Black starts and plays down the board as in other shogi games. The average game runs to about 160 moves.

The lion is the strongest piece on the board and is the standard-bearer of the attack against the enemy king. As in shogi, it is normal to keep two or three step-movers in proximity to the K to protect it. Schmittberger submits, perhaps surprisingly in view of the large forces engaged, that the loss of a single tempo can be serious. He also argues that sacrificing material to achieve a breakthrough, a common strategy in shogi itself, is rarely advisable. Relative values are hard to determine since much will depend on how near a piece stands to promotion. Consider the SM and the VM whose moves complement each other. A VM can reach a promotion square in a single move from the array position but a SM needs at least six moves to do so.

Dai Shogi (Great Shogi); about 15th century. Board 15x15; 65 men a side. The pieces and their promotions are identical to those of Chu Shogi but with eight additional pieces. However, there may be no other connection between the two games, and no early game scores of Dai Shogi have survived. The additional pieces are Angry Boar (moves one square orthogonally), Cat-Sword (one square diagonally), Evil Wolf (as Gold General but not backwards), Flying Dragon (one or two squares diagonally), Iron General (one square straight or diagonally ahead), Knight (as in shogi), Stone General (one square diagonally ahead), and Violent Ox (one or two squares orthogonally). Cat-Sword promotes to Free Demon (up to five squares vertically, otherwise as orthochess Q), Flying Dragon to Square Mover (as R or one square diagonally ahead), Iron General to Free Iron (any distance straight or diagonally ahead), Stone General to Free Stone (any distance diagonally ahead), others to Gold General. The array has many similarities with that of Chu Shogi.

Dai-Dai Shogi (Great-Great Shogi); late 16th century, perhaps earlier. Board 17x17; 96 men a side of which 64 different. These include the interesting Hook Mover which moves as a R but changes direction at right angles unless it makes a capture on the first leg. The HM also appears in Maka-Dai-Dai Shogi and Tai Shogi. The Long-Nosed Goblin moves like the HM but also as a B, and can also move one square orthogonally. The LNG also appears in Tai Shogi; and in Maka-Dai-Dai Shogi as a Capricorn, a LNG without the one-step orthogonal option. As with other large shogis, promotion is by capture and is then mandatory. There are no drops, captured pieces being removed from play. The Shogi Association monograph on the game gives the score of a 256-move encounter.

Maka-Dai-Dai Shogi (Super-Great-Great Shogi). Late 16th century, perhaps earlier. Board 19x19; 96 men a side, the same as in Dai-Dai Shogi, but there are only 50 different pieces. Hodges suspects that the game was invented by Buddhist monks in order to play shogi on a weiqi (go) board. Certainly one or two pieces, like the Drunk Elephant, have Buddhist links. All pieces promote except the

Free King (moves like orthochess Q), Dragon Horse, and Dragon King (which are promoted pieces in shogi anyway). The King, whose capture is the aim of the game, promotes to Emperor and can then move to any square on the board. The promotion of a piece takes place immediately it makes a capture. There are no drops, captured pieces being removed from play.

Ko Shogi (Wide Shogi), attributed to Ogi Serai (1666-1728). A go board (19x19 intersections) is used with 90 pieces a side. These are go stones, white pieces are depicted in black on white stones and vice versa. Most pieces promote but there is no re-entering of captured pieces. (*Variant Chess* 44/47, the latter citing a book *Sekai no Shogi*)

Tai Shogi (Grand Shogi). About 16th century. Claimed as the world's largest chess game, 'invented by some recreational megalomaniac' in Trevor Leggett's words. (Larger shogi variants have been hinted at but only Tai-Kyoku Shogi below has been even partially confirmed.) Board 25x25; 177 men a side. There are over 100 different pieces if one includes promoted pieces (93 in the array); a mixture of humans, animals, birds and mythical creatures, mostly short-stepping. A game can run to 1,000-2,000 moves, yet according to Wayne Schmittberger a single pawn lost can prove fatal, a judgment that no one will be in a hurry to dispute. In common with other big shogis, promotion is by capture and not by movement within the opponent's base area, and there are no drops; captured pieces are removed from play. Otherwise the rules closely follow those of shogi. The aim is to capture the Emperor (which can move anywhere on the board) and the Crown Prince (which moves like a K).

Tai-Kyoku Shogi (Ultra Grand Shogi). A game on a 36x36 board, with 402 men a side, is mentioned in an old text, but only the array is known with any certainty. [Text editorial, from a monograph produced by the Shogi Association]

Tenjiku Shogi (Exotic Shogi) dates back several centuries and is a development of Chu Shogi. No scores have survived and it is

possible that the game was never seriously played. Board 16x16; 76 men a side of which 36 different (45 including promoted pieces). The object, as with all shogis, is to capture the opponent's K; but it is also necessary to capture another piece, the Drunk Elephant, if it has been promoted. Promotion is earned by a move partly or wholly within the five ranks furthest from the player, and is optional unless the piece would otherwise be rendered permanently immobile. In this respect the game follows shogi but there are no drops, captured pieces being removed from play. Tenjiku is not related to the other large shogis although the games have a number of pieces in common. A complex piece, the Lion, for example, is found in all the large shogis as well as in Chu Shogi. Unique to Tenjiku amongst the shogis is the Fire Demon that destroys all hostile pieces adjacent to it. Each side has a number of powerful pieces in addition to the Fire Demons, and this ensures lively opening play, a feature rarely found in large chess games.

Wa Shogi. Seventeenth century or earlier. Board 11x11; 27 pieces a side, all named after birds or animals. Normal shogi rules although no good evidence whether or not drops permitted. The Shogi Association recommends no drops (captured piece removed from play), Wayne Schmittberger favours drops. Object is to mate the Crane-King (moves as K). There are 11 Sparrow Pawns a side which exactly parallel the shogi pawn, promoting to Golden Bird (Gold General). Including promotions, there are 25 different pieces, a few corresponding to shogi pieces (Oxcart = Lance, Violent Stage = Silver General, Violent Wolf = Gold General, Gliding Swallow = Rook).

Tori Shogi (Bird Shogi); inventor uncertain, perhaps Ohashi Soei (1799) or Toyota Genryu (1828). The game has a small following to-day in Japan and in the West. Board 7x7; the pieces are all birds of which there are 16 a side: 1 x Phoenix, Falcon, Left Quail, Right Quail; 2 x Crane, Pheasant; 8 x Swallow.

Their moves are as follows.

Phoenix as shogi K.

Crane as K, but not sideways.

Falcon as K, but not straight back.

Pheasant one square diagonally backwards or two squares straight ahead, leaping intervening square.

Quail any number of squares straight ahead or diagonally backwards to the left, or one square diagonally backwards to the right (right quail); backward movements reversed (left quail).

Swallow one square straight ahead, as shogi P.

Capture is by displacement. Falcon and swallow promote if they move wholly or partly within the opponent's first two ranks. Promotion is compulsory. A falcon promotes to Eagle which can move (1) over any distance diagonally forward or straight back, or (2) one square sideways or straight ahead, or (3) one or two squares diagonally backwards (no leap). A swallow promotes to Goose: two squares diagonally forward or two squares straight back, leaping the intervening square. Tori Shogi is played with drops according to normal shogi rules. A swallow cannot be dropped (1) to give checkmate, nor (2) on the end rank, nor (3) on a file on which a player has two unpromoted swallows. Where the same position is repeated three times (same pieces in hand, same turn to play) the player starting the sequence must vary. The object of the game is to capture the opponent's phoenix. White baseline LPsCPxCPsR with F on d2 and 8xS on a3-g3 and e4, Black reflected in the board centre (so each side has a swallow on the fourth rank). The quails are distinguished only by characters 'left' and 'right' on their undersides.

Cho-Sen Chess, also known as **Choson Chess**. A game described in outline in a novel *The Jacket* by Jack London (1915, reprinted in 1963 as *Star Rover*), presumed to have been seen by the writer during his travels, and apparently either shogi or a variant thereof. For a discussion of the issues, see *Variant Chess* 40, page 126. [Text editorial]

28.3 Modern variants using the normal board

An-nan Shogi, also known as **Korean Shogi** (origins unclear). A piece moves in the manner of the friendly piece immediately behind it. If none, it moves normally. Can also be played with a piece moving in the manner of any friendly piece guarding it. The diversion is popular in Japan. (*Shogi* 68)

Kilyow (Japanese: The Dominion Game). Origins unclear. Play and array as for shogi with new piece names. Some additional rules: Lance can move along the rank on the first move only, Silver can advance two squares, Pawn is as in orthochess. Complex promotion rules. [The only source material now in David's Encyclopedia files is a photocopy of a single page from an unidentified Japanese book, but I imagine he must have had more.]

Small Shogi (John Gollon, 1960s). A curiously named variant. Set-up as for shogi with addition of Drunk Elephant in front of the K (e2/e8) and two Ferocious Leopards in front of the Silvers (c2,g2/c8,g8). DE and FL move as in Chu Shogi. (*Nost-algia* 369)

Quasi-Shogi (Nort Black, 1970). Usual shogi set-up but rooks and bishops have powers of their promoted equivalents (R+K and B+K respectively) putting a premium on attack. (Manuscript note presumably deriving from personal communication)

Unashogi (Edward Jackman, 1994). As shogi except (1) Board starts empty; each player has usual 20 men in reserve; (2) On his turn, the player can either drop a piece or move a piece. No capture or promotion until a player's K is on the board. (Inventor's rule sheet)

Hand Shogi (John W. Brown, 1997). Usual board but each side has 19 men: 1 x King, Hasty, Onager, Pard, Shogun, Tycoon, 2 x Gold General, Half Knight, Lance, Silver General, 5 x Soldier. King, Lance and Generals move as in shogi, Soldier as in Korean Chess (not more than one soldier of both sides on same file). Other moves: Hasty moves to second diagonal square; Onager

moves to second orthogonal square; Pard leaps two squares in any direction; Shogun moves up to three squares as orthochess R; Tycoon moves up to three squares as orthochess B; Half Knight moves as orthochess N but only in a forward direction. White array Ke1, Pe2, GGc1/g1, Sc2/g2/d3/e3/f3, Black similarly, all other pieces in hand at start of game. Hasty and Onager are 'assassins' and may only be dropped to give check. Half Knights may not be dropped beyond the 6th rank, promote to GG on end rank. On turn, move on board or drop a piece in hand. Captured pieces added to hand as in shogi. A game is called a hand. Players alternate colours. First player to win two hands in a row is the victor. (*Meta-Chess*)

Cannon Shogi (Peter Michaelsen, 1998) Usual board and men (five pawns only) plus Gold, Silver, Copper, and Iron Cannons. GC moves as R but can capture only if there is a piece between it and its target (so it moves and captures as the xiangqi cannon). SC the same except that it needs a screening piece to move as well as to capture (so it has the basic move of the Korean cannon). CC and IC the same but diagonally. Cannons promote to Flying Cannons which can leap one piece while moving; additionally, FGC and FSC can move one square diagonally and move or capture two squares diagonally by leaping an adjacent piece, and FCC and FIC can do the same orthogonally. Normal shogi array except that there are no pawns on the b/d/f/h files; cannons on c2-g2/g8-c8, SG-IC. (*Nost-algia* 376, *Eteroscacco* 86-88) [Text editorial]

Miburishogi (origins not recorded). First player to check three times wins. (*Eteroscacco* 86-88)

Kamikaze Mortal Shogi (Fergus Duniho and Roberto Lavieri, 2003). Normal setup. Pawns, Lances, Knights and Silvers may promote to Gold or any rank below; captured pieces are demoted one rank. A captured P returns to the board as a Kamikaze and is removed from play if captured or capturing. (Chess Variant Pages)

28.4 Modern variants using smaller square or rectangular boards

Minishogi. Origins unknown; discovered by Shigeo Kusumoto c.1970. Board 5x5; players have one each of King, Rook, Bishop, Gold, Silver, Pawn. Promotion is on end rank. Baseline (a1-e1/e5-a5) KGSR, pawns on a2/e4. First player is decided by tossing a pawn. (*Schach Magazin*, August 1990).

Kyoto Shogi (originator unknown, 1976). Board 5x5, five pieces per side; each piece apart from the king represents two different men according to which side is face up: Lance/Tokin (promoted P, moves as Gold), Bishop/Silver, Gold/Knight, Rook/Pawn. Array (a1-e1/e5-a5) PGKSR. Every time a piece is moved it is reversed. Rules are as in shogi except that there is no promotion, and a piece in hand can be dropped either way up. Despite the deceptive simplicity of Kyoto Shogi, games can develop into violent and unpredictable tussles. An hexagonal version was published by Jochen Drechsler in 2000. (*Abstract Games* 1, with additional material deriving from sources not recorded)

Five-Minute Poppy Shogi, also known as **Microshogi** (attributed to Oyama Yasuharu, see below). Board 4x5; five pieces per side; as with Kyoto Shogi, each piece apart from the king represents two different men according to which side is face up, though the pairings are different: Bishop/Tokin, Gold/Rook, Silver/Lance, Pawn/Knight. Baseline (a1-d1/d5-a5) SGBK, pawns on d2/a4. Play as in shogi except that when a piece other than a K makes a capture it is reversed (this is a difference from Kyoto Shogi, where reversal occurs after every move). A captured piece may be re-entered either side up, and the normal restrictions on pawn drops (not on a file with an unpromoted pawn, not to give mate) do not apply. (Document 'Microshogi' by Kerry Handscomb) [In *Variant Chess* 21, David describes this as a 'commercial' variant, but I am not so sure. From the source document: 'During a meeting in Tokyo in 1989, my host [...] showed me a very small shogi variant that his company had been using in a sales promotion. We played a couple of games and he showed me an article about this game that was written by the great shogi

player Oyama Yasuharu, who, I assume, was the inventor. After the meeting, my host presented me with the wooden set we had been using.' Perhaps the company was exploiting an existing game, perhaps it had invented the game or procured its invention, but the fact that a leading player thought it worth an article speaks for itself. And far be it from me to discourage companies from handing out good games as sales promotions.]

Gorogoro Shogi (Shogi to idle the time away). Origins unclear, reported in 1994. Board 5x6; each side has 1 x K, 2 x Gold, Silver, 3 x P. Baseline SGKGS, 3xP on b3-d3/4-d4. Promotion on last two ranks, other rules as for shogi. (Personal communication, also photocopy of page 5 of an unidentified Japanese shogi magazine)

Whale Shogi (R. Wayne Schmittberger, 1981). Board 6x6; 13 men a side (12 in the array) representing species of whale. Each player has 1 x White whale (W, royal piece, moves as orthochess king), Blue (B, one square forward straight or diagonally, or one square straight back), Grey (G, forward like a rook, backward like a bishop), Humpback (H, one square diagonally or one square straight back), Killer (K, as rook, or one square diagonally), Narwhal (N, one square sideways, or one straight back, or two squares straight ahead leaping if necessary), Porpoise (P, one square sideways), 6 x Dolphin (D, one square straight ahead, on reaching end rank it moves once like a bishop then reverts to D); array (a1-f1/f6-a6 and inwards) HGWPNB (royal pieces on c1/d6), 6xD (K not in the array). Captured pieces other than P change sides and can be dropped on any vacant square instead of a normal move; A captured P is removed permanently from play, and the capturing player can drop a K in its place. A D may not be dropped on the last rank, nor to checkmate, nor on a file on which the player has two or more Ds. Object of the game is to capture (checkmate) the white whale. (*Nost-algia* 355)

Yari Shogi (Christiaan Freeling, 1981). Board 7x9; 14 men a side, 1 x K, 2 x R, N, B, 7 x P. K as in orthochess. R as shogi (or orthochess)

R but not backwards; promotes to normal shogi R. B as shogi lance, or one step diagonally forwards; N as shogi N+L; both promote to Gold, which moves as shogi gold or as R backwards. Pawn as shogi, except that it may be dropped to give mate; promotes to Silver, which one step straight or diagonally forwards or as R backwards. Baseline (a1-g1/g9-a9) RBBKNNR, 7xP on ranks 3/7; promotion zone covers last three ranks. Three-fold repetition of position is illegal, stalemate is a draw. (Inventor's rules pamphlet)

Judkins's Shogi (Paul Judkins, 1996). Board 6x6, 7 men per side; baseline (a1-f1/f6-a6) KGSNBR, pawns on a2/f5. Promotion zone is last two ranks. (*Eteroscacco* 75)

28.5 Variants using non-rectangular boards

Trishogi (George Dekle Sr, 1987). Board 9x10 interlocked triangles (a1/c1/e1/g1/i1 apex towards player, b1/d1/f1/g1 base towards player). Except for board configuration, the game is identical to shogi, including the array. Rs and Bs have six directions of movement whilst moves of Gold and Silver vary slightly according to the orientation of the triangle occupied (apex towards player, G has 10 possible moves; base towards player, 8 moves; S moves also vary but both orientations give 8 possible moves). (Inventor's rules pamphlet)

Hexshogi (George Dekle Sr, 1986). Shogi on a board consisting of 85 hexagonal cells (nine files, lengths 9 and 10 alternately). K, R, B as in Glinski's hexagonal chess (see chapter 22), N as Glinski but only in the two directions closest to straight forward, Gold one step as R or one forward as B, Silver one step as B or one directly forward as R, L and P as in normal shogi. Promotion on the last three cells of each file. Array basically as shogi, a piece on the bottom cell of each file and a pawn on the third cell up, but the bishops and rooks are brought in from the b/h files to the c/g files.

If an impasse is reached, the game is ended and a piece count takes place. Kings count zero, rooks and bishops whether on board or in hand, 5 points; all other men 1 point. If both players have at least 24 points the game is drawn; if one player has less than 24 points he loses. (Inventor's rules pamphlet)

Cubic Shogi (Vladimir Pribylinec, 2000 and later). Board 7x8; each side has 14 cubic pieces with chess symbols on some or all of their faces. KRBP move as in shogi, N as in orthochess, Q as in orthochess but one or two squares only. NQKBN on b1-f1/f8-b8, B on a2/g7, R on g2/a7, 7xP on ranks 3/6. A unit that reaches the last two ranks promotes, P to B/N to R. Captured pieces can be dropped back in the game as in shogi but a pawn may not be dropped on a file on which the player already has a pawn (again as in shogi). Pieces retain their rank on capture. An alternative version has board 8x8 with NBQKBN on b1-g1, RR on b2/g2, 8xP on rank 3, Black mirroring on the file as in chess. (Inventor's rules pamphlets) [Text revised]

Masonic Shogi (George Dekle Sr, 1987). 9x9 board staggered as for Masonic Chess (see chapter 23), usual shogi array. R, B, K as in Masonic Chess. Knight as Masonic Chess N but only forward to second rank (four options). Lance straight forward on 'file' (in other words, wiggling parallel to the staggered edge of the board, so the L move and the forward R moves are different). Pawn one step forward on file. Gold one step as R, or one step forward as B (eight options). Silver one step as B, or one step forward as R (six options). Normal shogi promotions and drops (promoted R and B add K move). (Author's rules pamphlet) [Text revised. There seems to be a discrepancy between the explanation of the knight move and the accompanying diagram, and we have followed the diagram.]

Spherical Shogi (George Dekle Sr, 1988). The board is imagined to be superimposed on a sphere, the files being meridians and the pieces being able to cross the poles. Board 10x9; baseline (a1-j1/a9-j9, orthodox shogi pieces) SLNSGKGSNL, bishops on c2/i8, rooks i2/c8, 10 pawns on 3rd/6th ranks. Rooks cross to opposite meridian; bishops emerge one square removed from opposite meridian but travelling in other direction; knights better described with examples: Ne8 re-enters a9 or i9 while Nc9 re-enters g8 or i8. Any move that leaves the position unchanged is illegal. All other rules as shogi. (*World Game Review* 10)

Space Shogi (George Dekle Sr, 1987). Board 9x9x9. In the array, one side occupies bottom three boards, the other the top three. First-rank pieces on boards 1/9, ranks 1/9, usual layout

except silvers between knights and lances. Rooks and bishops in usual positions on boards 2/8, ranks 2/8; pawns on boards 3/6, ranks 3/6. (*World Game Review* 10)

28.6 Combination games

Blind Shogi (origins unclear). A potent blend of shogi and Kriegspiel. The position of the king is always known. The umpire announces a check without further elaboration and also any king move. When a man is taken it is passed by the umpire to the player making the capture who puts it in his reserve base. Opponent's pieces are not manipulated as they are in Kriegspiel. [Source material apparently missing from David's Encyclopedia files]

captured man belongs to the player making the capture and may be entered at any time on an empty square instead of moving. Bishops optionally promote to rooks when alighting on a marked square; revert to B when captured. No pawn promotion. (*Chess 'n Stuff*, February 1983)

Kohl's Game (Herbert Kohl, 1974). A chess-shogi hybrid. Board 5x7; three central squares (b4/c4/d4) marked. Each side has 1xK, 2xR, B, 5xP; baseline (a1-e1/a7-e7) RBKBR. A

WWII Chess (Edward Jackman, 1995). Board 9x9; White has shogi men in usual array; Black has orthochess men ditto (a8/a9 vacant). Each side plays according to its usual rules. Obviously biased, but in whose favour? 'A really silly game' according to its inventor. (Inventor's rule sheet)