

# Appendix III

## The Possible Spiritualism of Tibetan Go

By Peter Shotwell

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- I. A Tibetan Go Conference and Some Games Played in Yunnan, China
- II. Another Important Rule in Lhasa-style Go
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- IV. A Note on Sikkimese Go

*This paper was given at the Symposium on Go in History, Art and Literature during the 2008 European Go Congress. There were a number of items that are noted that will need further research, but I do not have the time or resources to devote to them. In other words, this is posted to stimulate interest and perhaps provide a basis for further work, either to confirm its theses or refute them.*

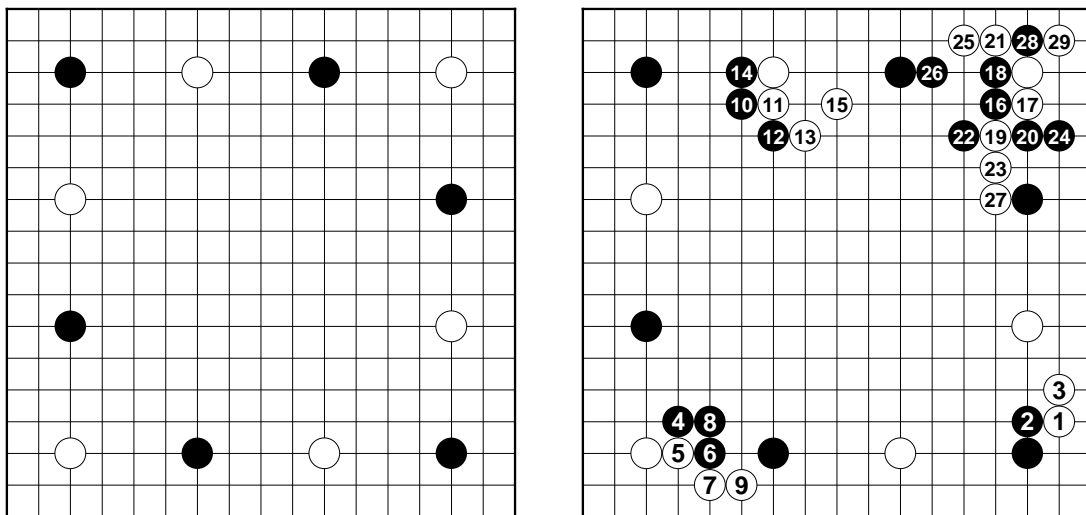
## I. A Tibetan Go Conference and Some Games in Yunnan

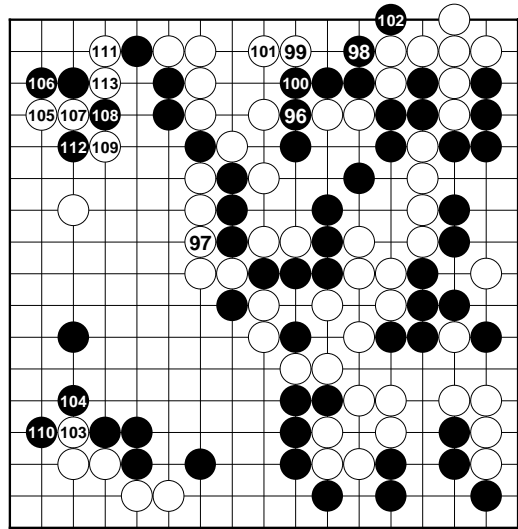
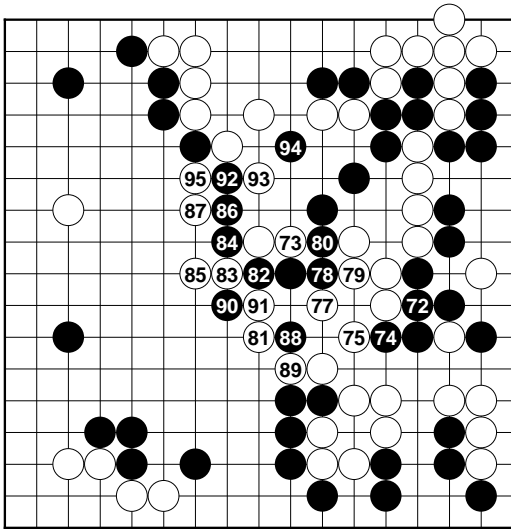
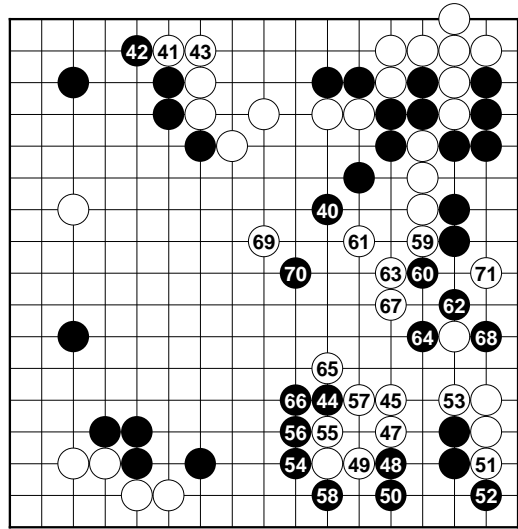
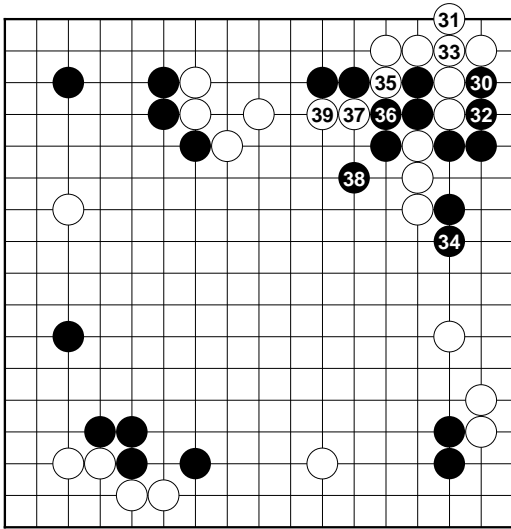
*Note: Those not interested in the technical go issues can pass on to the next section.*

A recent go conference in Yunnan in southwest China was stimulated by two comprehensive articles by John Fairbairn and myself, along with the discovery of two gigantic stone boards described in the first appendix of this article. A condensation of Fairbairn's *Go on the Roof of the World* that was published in *Go World No. 59 (Winter 1989)* is at <http://www.msoworld.com/mindzine/news/orient/go/history/tibetan.html>. The complete article is available on the *Go World Archive CD*. My article continued Fairbairn's and is the main text to which this is an appendix.

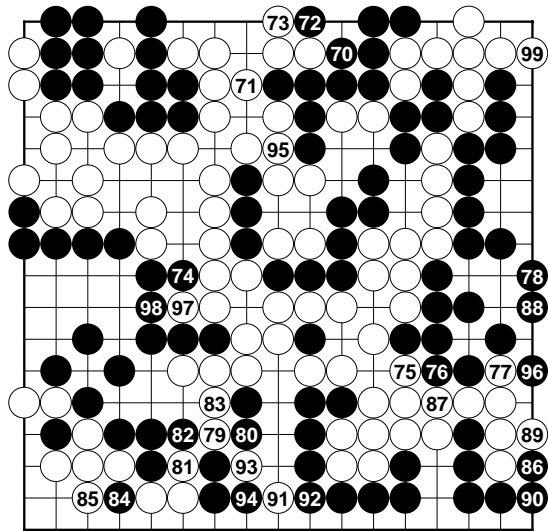
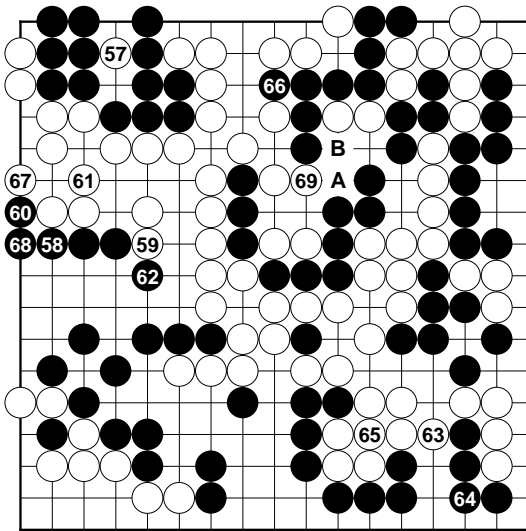
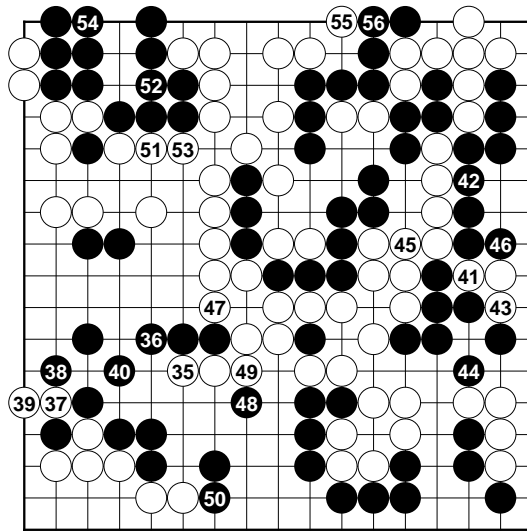
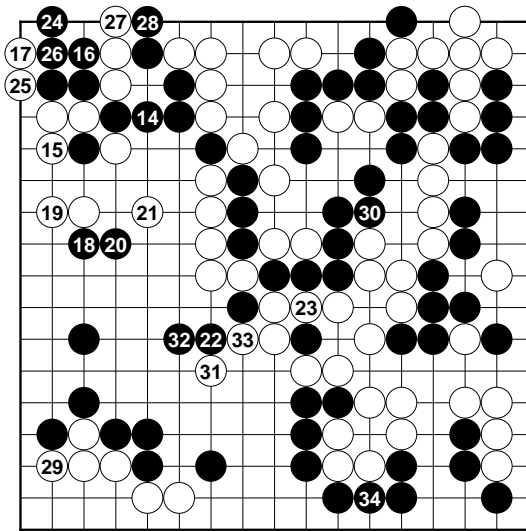
From a Chinese article, Fairbairn also briefly described at <http://www.gogod.co.uk/NewInGo/NewInGo.htm> a series of exhibition games that were said to have been played with Tibetan rules in 2005. These were also played in Yunnan, although perhaps not at the time of the conference.

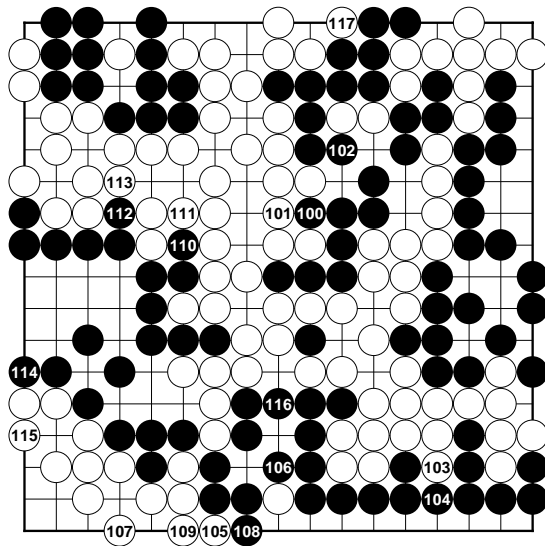
There is a much more complete report of the Yunnan games from a Japanese article translated in Fairbairn's *GoGod CD* ([www.gogod.co.uk](http://www.gogod.co.uk))—a must-buy treasury for anyone interested in the history of go, or in studying modern and historical games. There, he gave the .sgf files of two games that were played between four professionals. Three of the players were Chinese and one was Korean. The most interesting game took place between Jiang Zhujiu 9P and Yue Liang 6P.





*79 takes 76*





It was said that ‘Tibetan rules’ were used. These are explained in greater detail in the main text of this article at [www.usgo.org/bobhighlibrary](http://www.usgo.org/bobhighlibrary). The rules necessary to understand this game were the starting layout of 12 stones on a 17x17 board; White goes first; and, most important, one must wait one move before killing a group. This means, among other things, that there are no snap-backs and when trying to kill a group something similar to the *ko* rule is in effect. This makes killing a difficult task. My informants have said that this is ‘probably because of the Buddhist aversion to killing anything,’ although, as we shall see, perhaps it is more complicated than that.

According to the newspaper record, Jiang took White and played first because he was the superior player. With no *komi*, he won by 1 *zi*, which means a ½ point with Japanese counting, and 1 point in Chinese-style scoring, which is the custom in Tibet.

Thus, there seems to be no mention of some additional rules that I found in Lhasa on my first trip in the early 90s. Using a small handful of the Chinese-style stones like dice that are flat on one side and convex on the other, certain combinations decided who played White. White gets ½ point so there are no ties, though it was unclear if White always gets the ½ point, or only in the case of ties. Fairbairn pointed out in a private communication that in Chinese counting, ties are rare because they do not occur unless there has been a *seki*. Presumably, although I didn’t ask, Tibetan go uses the Chinese *seki* rule, whereby its stones are counted.

In any case, nothing was added onto the reported score, but two other counting rules that I found in Lhasa were not implemented, although they seem to have been mentioned in the Japanese reporter's article. One was that winning (and keeping) the center point (as Black did with 82) should gain 5 points, and the other is that losing four corners carries a 20-point penalty.

In any case, the situation in the upper-left is interesting because it shows the killing rule in action. White makes a threat at 155 and Black answers and then White can take with 157.

Fairbairn kindly summarized the Japanese commentary:

*White was ahead after 39.*

*71 and 87 were bad. 71 should be at 73 and 87 should be at 95.*

*94 was good and put Black ahead.*

*110 should be 113—this was perhaps a rules oversight. Yue possibly overlooked that it was in effect going to be a ko fight, but even if not, it was a mistake in judgement—he had to waste moves eliminating ko threats (e.g. 130 and 134) and it also made 151 and 153 sente.*

*156 was the game-losing move. Yue didn't realize he could ignore 155 under Tibetan rules. If White cuts at 156, Black can live at 169. If Black A-White B, then it's the same situation as in the upper-left corner—White would have to move elsewhere and Black could make two eyes. Even worse for White, all the big 'ko' threats will have disappeared because Black has time to eliminate any threats, while White needs to fill in dame points before Black is forced to capture. In effect, it is a small end game 'ko.'*

The other interesting application of Tibetan rules is move 199. Under Japanese territory-only rules, Black would have to capture by reducing his territory, but this costs nothing for White with Chinese/Tibetan rules because he gets his stone back when the *dame* are being filled and Black would need an extra move to capture. So when it comes time for White to take the *ko*, Black runs out of threats and must start filling *dame* to kill White and keep two eye spaces. In other words, unlike in Japanese go, filling the *ko* earns a point, so 199 has the value of a full move.

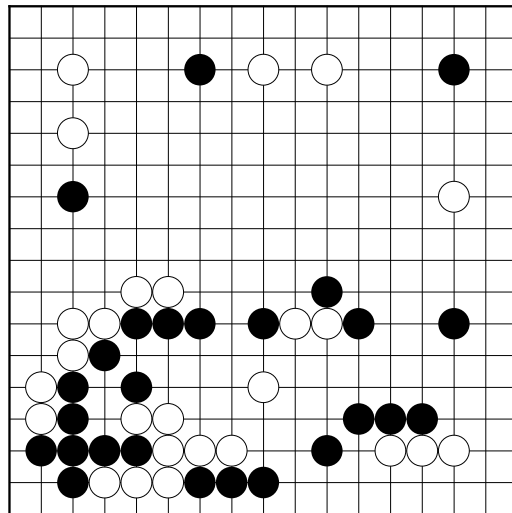
In Japanese-style, the game record ends with 117. You are invited to work out the remainder of the long *ko*, if it was fought out.

## II. Another Important Rule in Lhasa-style Go

Another important rule that I was told about in Lhasa was not discussed in the Chinese and Japanese reports—that a move has to be played within one intersection of a previous move, with a knight's move being OK.

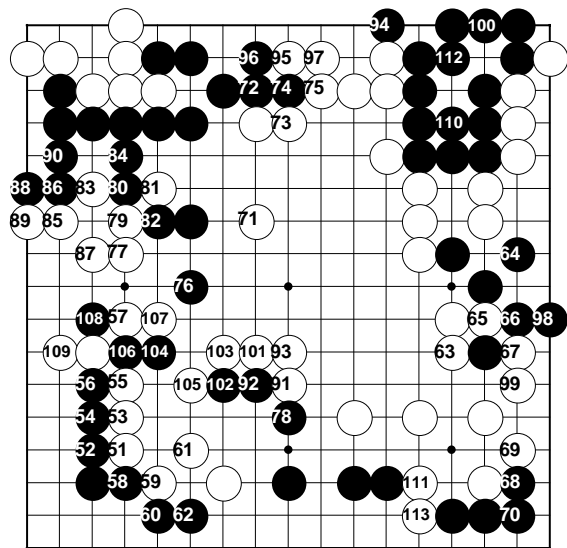
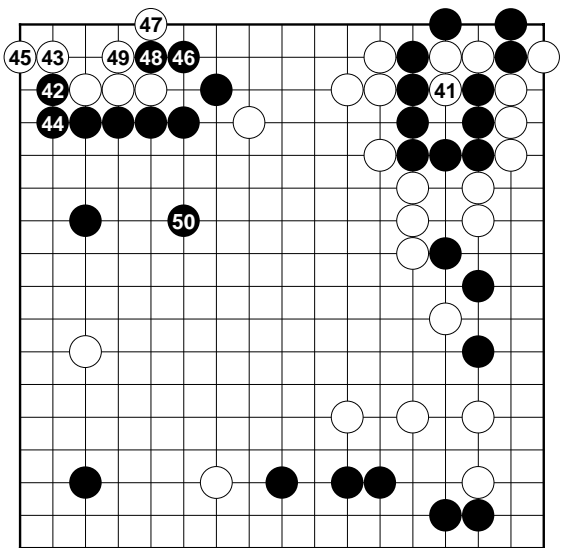
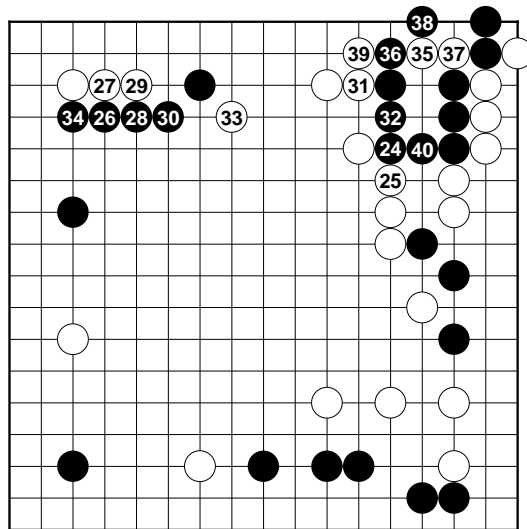
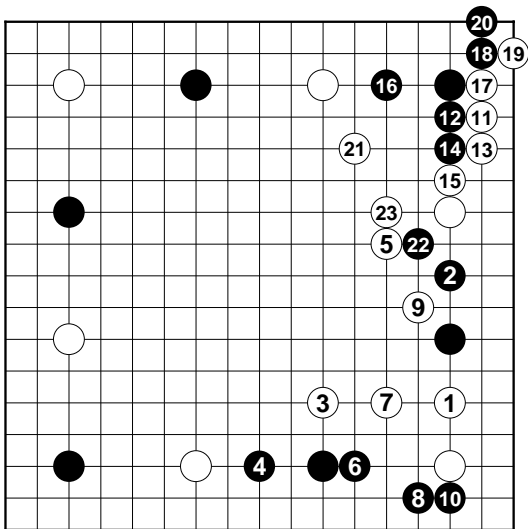
On the other hand, in both professional games, there were no moves that violated this principle.

Also following this principle is an old game that Fairbairn transcribed from a photograph by Heinrich Harrer in *Lost Lhasa*, which he discussed in his first article and I commented on in mine:



As I discussed, to our eyes, the game may seem 'primitive,' but may make much more sense when the one-intersection rule is taken into account. The Tibetan players I showed it to said 'all the great players who could interpret it are dead now.'

Of course, in the professional games, the strategies may have dictated moves that imitated the Lhasa rule.



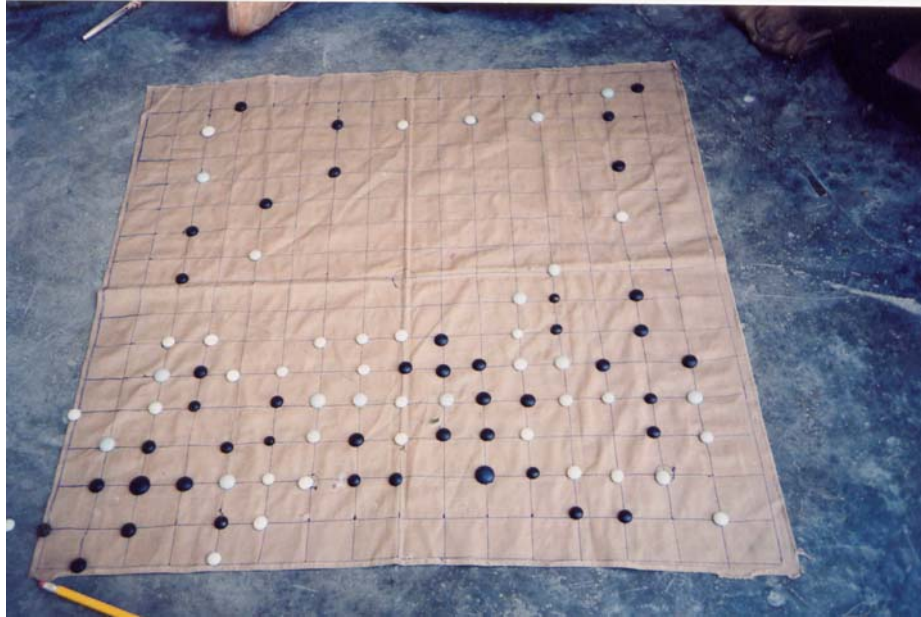
This is the ceremonial game a prince of Sikkim played in Japan in 1959 that was said to have been played with Tibetan rules. The original report erroneously said that the prince learned the games and rules from the ‘daughter’ of the Dalai Lama, but perhaps a brother was meant. In any case, presumably the teaching was done in Lhasa.

The game seems to have been played according to the one-intersection precepts except for one of the prince’s moves (50), which is why I suggested in my original article that compromise rules might have been in effect. I can also suggest that it was an unnoticed error that couldn’t be taken back in a ceremonial game once the prince’s fingers left the stone. This kind of error would create embarrassment and perhaps



it—and therefore the rule—would not have been mentioned by any reporter or commentator. Otherwise, with all these other Tibetan games in mind, the lapse seems inexplicable, unless, of course, that rule was not in effect and all plays were made according to strategic considerations.

Note how 40 is a clever, group-saving move under Tibetan rules. As in the professional Yunnan game, White cannot kill the group after capturing three stones.



As a last example that illustrates the one-intersection rule, I recovered a lost photo I made at the mid-point of the only game I was able to play with Tibetan rules. This was with another prince of the once-ruling family of Sikkim, who had been living and working in Lhasa for many years after his country, which lies to the south of Tibet, was absorbed by India. I don't remember how he was related to the prince who played in Japan, although I think the subject must have come up, but with no notable results, since I was researching Fairbairn's original article at the time.

In any case, this leaves open a question that I hadn't thought about until I read Fairbairn's report on the conference—was this rule really only for Lhasa, where Tibetan go is dying out with the older generation? As mentioned in my article, the prince told me how his father entertained and played Muslim traders from Xinjiang Province, far to the west, and how they gave or received presents in lieu of direct gambling.

Perhaps shedding further light on questions surrounding the one-intersection rule is a video filmed by the Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library. Using *Quick Time*, (which can be downloaded for free) it can be seen at:

[http://www.thdl.org/avarch/mediaflowcat/titles\\_browse.php?transcript=all&media=all&presfilter=0&series=98&submit=View+Titles](http://www.thdl.org/avarch/mediaflowcat/titles_browse.php?transcript=all&media=all&presfilter=0&series=98&submit=View+Titles) In it, Ma Guang Yuan, an elderly Muslim and life-long resident of Lhasa explained go, but disappointingly, he spoke only about Chinese-style go, and it was obvious that this was what he played since his demonstration board was 19x19. He made only two references to Tibetan go, and these were about the different-sized boards and the putting down of the initial 12 stones.

Also, when I played some young Muslims in Lhasa back in the 90s, they always played Chinese-style.

These questions on the rules had not become apparent to me when I was in Tibet in 2005 and was concentrating on a still-uncompleted book on Gesar, and, in any case, the prince I had played was unavailable, so I did not pursue further research.

At the time I played this game, I was about a 4-*kyu* and I played White after the dice roll. The prince hadn't explained the 20-point penalty for losing four corners when we began, so they seemed small to me at the time and this was how I lost.

### III. Spiritual Advancement on Tibetan Go Boards?

Discussions with John Fairbairn and Korean researcher Kim Dalsu stimulated thought about why there would be such a rule that from an existing stone, each move must be within one intersection, or one intersection and a diagonal, like a knights move in chess. At the time of my first trip, I assumed that, as with the old Chinese method of putting two stones each on opposite corner star points, early fighting was stimulated, which eliminated the necessity of dealing with complicated openings such as those developed in Japan after they began starting on empty boards around the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD.

Also, what were the reasons for the 20-point penalty for losing all four corners and the gain of 5 points for taking the center intersection? The Sikkimise prince that I played in the game that concludes the last section, whose time was very limited and whose translator was not a go player, may have considered these rules merely as tradition from an unknown source since he did not elaborate on why they were in effect and only mentioned them as an aside. I will try to ask him, but communications may have to wait until I or someone else can go to Lhasa (my friend Sonam Chogyal is in Canada). Any comments from readers will be welcome.

Pending further research, I would like to offer a possible explanation for these rules. Looking at the games in the last section, I think it can be seen that the one-intersection rule seems to produce a ‘race’ towards the center point, which, in China is sometimes marked by a *Yin-Yang* sign, and in Tibet, is marked by a *Vajra*—their sign of Enlightenment and the opportunity not to be reborn—or, as on the Prince’s board, a symbolic circle representing the *Vajra*.



My culturally-oriented explanation can begin with what I was once told by a diplomat visiting the Chinese Go Association, where I was interviewing a number of player-officials for the American Go Association

in 1985 He told me how early Russian go players were seeking state sponsorship similar to what was given to chess players. They explained to reluctant Cold War-era Communist leaders (who were probably suspicious of a Chinese-Japanese game) that they should support go-playing because 'all the pieces were equal.' Therefore, they argued, it should be adopted by the Soviets since it is even more appealing to Socialist ideals than chess. Apocryphal or not, this suggests the process that allowed go to survive for so long in China and now in the West—it was absorbed by the various historical cultural milieus as being something 'good' to do. (See my *Origins* article for more details of this process).

However, the traditional arguments that frontier areas tend to preserve older traditions, such as the original forms of games of dominant cultures that they adopted, does not seem to hold up with Tibetan go. Even if go came, as many Tibetans claim, from Buddhist Mongolia, where traditional games also started with twelve larger stones (although the rules are not known), undoubtedly the original source was China, which traditionally started with four stones and had no other rules than simple capture and territorial principles that we are familiar with. So the question is, why did the Mongolians and Tibetans change the game from its original form?

In the early 90s, in the main article, I wrote:

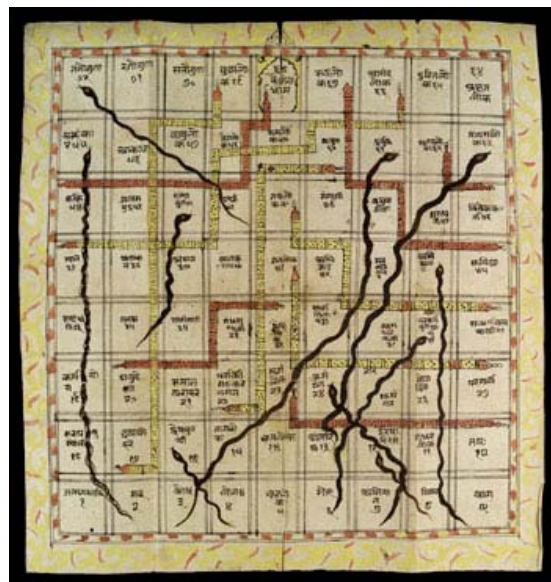
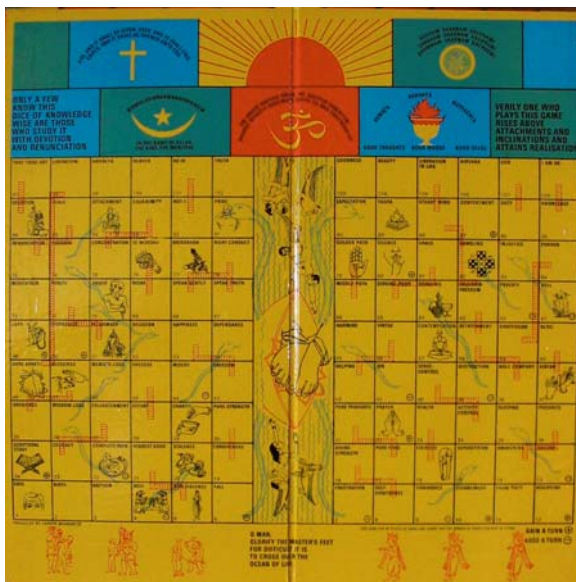
*[Besides in Buddhism] . . . 12 starting stones also have significance in the Bon system. The year has 12 months and the (square) city of Olmolungring—equivalent to the Buddhist Shambala or Shangri-la—has 12 palaces. The board thus becomes a miniature representation of Time moving around a square Earth, in the manner of square-board [race] games throughout the world.*

But there seems to be more involved. As detailed in the main article, Tibetan go was mainly played by the aristocracy while Buddhists, particularly the dominate Yellow Hat sect, have been antagonistic because it wasted time better devoted to spiritual matters. Also, it has traditionally been known as a Bon activity. So, in view of the probably Buddhist idea of making a non-killing rule in what is sometimes a 'killing game,' perhaps someone cleverly tried to modify the game in other ways to make it more acceptable for at least for the aristocracy to play. Or,

perhaps it just evolved in line with Buddhist (or transformed-Bon) beliefs in Tibet or in Mongolia, which inherited its Buddhism from Tibet.

As mentioned, looking at the forms of the games in the first sections of this appendix, because of the one-intersection rule, one sees a gradual advancement towards the center. Thus, perhaps Tibetan go might be seen as a 'race' for 'spiritual advancement' in more ways than we Western go players are generally accustomed to think about the game.

Beginning with a one-dimensional analogy, it is curious to see these rules in terms of the game of snakes and ladders, which is a dice- and chance-driven race game towards Salvation at the top of the board. This was an indulgence that Buddhist monks were allowed to play, slithering down snakes that represented vices, and clambering up ladders towards virtue. These pictures are from <http://www.24hourmuseum.org.uk> and [http://punto.ru/talks/img/snakes\\_and\\_ladders\\_board.jpg](http://punto.ru/talks/img/snakes_and_ladders_board.jpg):



As Andrew Topsfield wrote in 'The Indian Game of Snakes and Ladders' (*Artibus Asiae*; Vol. 46, No. 3; 1985 pp. 203-226):

*All . . . versions are fundamentally similar. In each case the player embarks on a kind of Pilgrim's Progress, in which, according to the throw of a die (or dice) or cowries, his piece ascends from the lower squares, inscribed with the names of hellish states and earthly vices, to the higher, representing more advanced spiritual states and heavenly realms, and thus ultimately to the winning square, the abode of the supreme Deity or*

*final Liberation. On the way the player's piece may undergo rapid promotion or demotion by means of the ladders and snakes incorporated in the design of the board.*

Called the game of heaven and hell in India, the Tibetans tend to think of the various stages as re-births, making for a much 'longer' game, so it is sometimes called the game of liberation, with several Buddha- or Boddhisatva-hood squares occupying the top of the board, which are reached after a long series of re-incarnations.

Thus, ascending to the center of the go board at 'the top of the world,' should possibly merit some reward (+ 5 points), just as losing one's way in the lower depths should result in some kind of serious penalty (– 20 points). Note that it was explained that way to me—the 20 points does not register as a gain for the other player.

The question naturally occurs why only five points are awarded for the center, but the possibility of cultural adaptation becomes even clearer if the ideas about one-intersection moves, the 'ko' rule, and the situation of the *Vajra* sign are combined with the concept of Mt. Meru, (or Mt. Sumeru—'Magnificent Mount Meru'—in Tibetan). This is what we would call a 'mythical mountain,' which lies at the core of the Tibetan world-view. It is identified with the real Mt. Kailash in Western Tibet which is the object of pilgrimages by Tibetan Buddhists and Indian Hindus, Jains and other religions.

The layout of Samye, the first Tibetan Buddhist monastery, built by King Trisong Detsen (reigned 742-798) and presided over by the Buddhist master Padmasambhava, closely follows that concept of this universe, and I propose that Tibetan rules of go can be better understood with this knowledge.

The abstract of J.M. Malville's article 'Mt. Meru and Tibetan Buddhism' (in the 1986 meeting of the American Astronomical Society) can serve as an outline of the history of this belief-system:

*. . . [Regarding] this conventional model of the Tibetan macrocosm [as] described in the Abidharma and Kalakara Tantra . . . There is some evidence that a major paradigm shift in the Buddhist world occurred in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD eschewing absolutes and advocating non-geocentrism, the rotation of the earth, the infinity of space and the multiplicity of worlds. The primary evidence for such an astronomical revolution is found in the writings of Nagarjuna, the founder of Madhyamikan Buddhism practiced in*

*Tibet. Many modern Tibetans have, however, retained the Mt. Meru cosmos and its flat earth. The Buddhist ritual of the mandala offering integrates [this] astronomical model into religious practice and has accentuated the conflict within the Tibetan community between cosmologies.*

Among many available articles on how Meru is immersed into Tibetan thought, perhaps the easiest to quote from is I. W. Mabbett's 'The Symbolism of Mt. Meru' (*History of Religions*, 1983; Vol. 23, No. 1; pp. 64-83). Further research would, I think, reveal even more exact details, but for the purposes of this article, I think this is sufficient to stimulate further thought.

Mabbett starts out by paraphrasing M. Eliade's classic work, *The Myth of the Eternal Return, or Cosmos and History*.

*M. Eliade has demonstrated vividly the pervasiveness of the myth of the cosmic mountain which stands at the center of the universe, constituting a framework or coordinate system for a total cosmography. With it, layers of symbolism are mutually superimposed, for it is no mere static point: it is bedded in the mythology of ascent into the sacred and the quest for the center.*

Mabbett continues:

*In Asia, it is, of course, Mt. Meru that bears this rich load of accumulated myth and aspiration . . . [but it is] all too commonly believed to be derived from the ziggurats of Babylon, whose seven tiers represented . . . [among other things] the seven stages by which the human personality is enmeshed in the world of matter; at its top is the door of God.*

*. . . Meru in its incorporation into India [and Tibet] had to be adapted to the earth and world symbolism of indigenous tradition. . . . [For researcher] F. D. K. Bosch, it was essential to recognize that Meru was not some impersonal map reading but a vital force, full of vegetal energy: indeed, it was interchangeably identical with the tree of life, or the cosmic lotus which, for him, constituted the supreme organizing principle of Indian religious symbolism. . . .*

*Whatever its historical origins, Mt. Meru became much more than a feature on a cosmographic map. A map is a misleading metaphor, for a*



*map is two-dimensional. Meru rose up in a third dimension, in doing so, it pierced the heavens, in piercing the heavens, it transcended time as well as space, in transcending time it became a . . . magical tool for the rupture of plane. This is evident in the many layers of symbolism that exchange Meru for the cosmic man, for the temple at the center of the universe, for the office of kingship, for the stupa, for the mandala, and for the internal ascent undertaken by the tantric mystic . . . [the rise through the body's Meru of the sleeping serpent Kundalini, awakened by meditation and rising from the base of the spine to the top of the head, resulting in the mating of Shiva and Sakti and the liberation of the worshiper from the bondage of samsara]. . . Meru is not, we must recognize, a place 'out there,' so to speak. It is 'in here.' . .*

To paraphrase Mabbett further, in India, Meru existed in many versions. It was a 'vertical shaft'—a tree, a mountain, the body from head to toe, of *Purusa*, the universal Man who united macrocosm with microcosm, gods with men, timelessness with time. It encompassed not only the 'world' in terms of its continents and waters, but also its revolving suns, moons, stars and sense of eternity. It also could contain the superstructure of demons, souls, monsters, men, kings, gods, and their spiritual descents and ascents from the underworld that lies beneath Meru, up to and beyond the world of thought, nothingness, and the absence of consciousness.

No matter how fanciful, this was an attempt to understand the phenomenal, physical and metaphysical worlds by mapping their structures. Meru was there when the world was created and, as a frame of reference for everything else, it will only be destroyed when the world ends and a new age begins—thus, it is the coordination system for outer and inner space. These ideas were carried, in many versions, far and wide by the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism into the furthestmost regions of Asia.

However, the Tibetans carried these thoughts about Mt. Meru one step further, as they did with many other aspects of Indian Buddhism. Sumeru was localized because it was still in the 'material world' of *samsara*—Enlightenment was one step above this because it ended rebirth if this was desired. Thus, perhaps, achieving the feat of 'climbing' it within the *samsara* of a go game would not have been as worthwhile as it might seem. However, losing one's 'presence' or 'being' in the four corners and thus figuratively ending up 'under' Mt. Sumeru in the snake



and ladder-type Hell at the ‘bottom of the board’ would still retain its importance.

As for the board and its starting lay-out, an elaboration on the symbolism that the go board may have afforded Tibetan Buddhism and vice-versa can be put forward by again employing Mabbitt. He suggested that the symbolism of temple architecture weaves together the themes of the world mountain and the *axis mundi* in the *pancayatana* design. This is a central Meru-shrine with four smaller shrines around it representing the four buttress mountains that distil the energies of the four cardinal directions. This design is notable in India at Deogarh, in Cambodia at Angkor Wat, and in Tibet at Samye, Tibet’s first monastery that was built by Padmasambhava and a fellow Buddhist master from India. (It can also be noted that the four directions are the names of the four quadrants of Chinese go boards).

We also get closer to the idea of how the go board could have been incorporated into the religious system in Tibet when we consider the forms of the *stupas* that dot its countryside with their square bases and rising, world tree-like centers like in this one from [www.tibettalk.com](http://www.tibettalk.com).



Thus, there is the common pious thought that Mt. Kailash is ‘square’—and incidentally, out of respect for its holiness, it is the only significant unclimbed mountain in the world. (However, as described in the main article, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, after losing a game of go to Bonpo

Naro Bön-chung, the Buddhist 'saint' Milarepa won a great sorcery battle by riding the first rays of the morning sun to its top and thus establishing Buddhism as the dominant faith in Tibet).



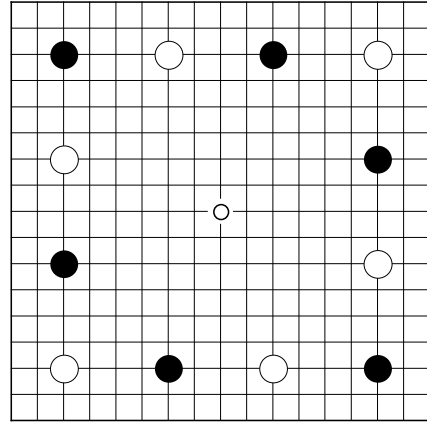
Mabbett continued by quoting Heinrich Zimmer's *The Art of India*:

*'The great [Meru] form is to be thought of as precipitated from on high. It unfolds from an invisible point above the summit, pouring out of that immaterial center (bindu), from which the evolution of the universe as consciousness proceeds, and coming down through spheres of subtle mind stuff to the compact world of visible-tangible forms.'*

And Mabbett concludes,

*As a language of culture, the Meru-centered cosmology spread wherever indigenous notions of sacred space, cosmic centrality, and rupture of plane lent themselves to the adoption of it as a vehicle of high culture.*

Thus, there are multitudes of common Meru *mandalas* adorning temples and homes of Asia. The mountain is surrounded by the four quarters, the continents and the seas, and often interspersed are the deities of the stars, sun, moon and planets, along with, among other things, the twelve houses of the zodiac.



In conclusion, perhaps now we can more fully understand the layout of the Tibetan go boards. Consider how this typical description of the Samye monastery gives rise to the idea of the analogy to the initial twelve-stone layout of the Tibetan go boards. (It is taken from <http://www.travelchinaguide.com>)

*The whole construction of the temple is very grandiose and complicated. It replicates the universe described in the sutras exactly. The central world Mount Meru is represented by the majestic Wuzi Hall. The Sun and Moon chapels stand in the north and south as the sun and moon in the universe. Four larger halls and eight smaller halls are distributed around all sides of the central hall, symbolizing the four large continents and eight small ones. In the four corners lie the Red, White, Black and Green Pagodas guarding the Dharma like the Heavenly Kings. A circular wall surrounds the temple as if marking the periphery of the world. The layout of Samye resembles the Mandala of Esoteric Buddhism.*



Note the similar symbolism in this Vaishravana (Namthöse) mandala from the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD depicting one of the four guardian gods (who live on the Sumeru's lower slopes and are kept busy fighting demons). In it, we can see the importance of the center and the possible adaptation of the Chinese go board into the Sumeru belief-system

On the Tibetan go boards, as in Samye, the suns and moons seem to be dispersed evenly between the four directions before the beginning of a game. Once play commences, the game starts to become 'cosmic' with the slow growth of the 'reborn' black and white stones, which are also the colors of the first humans in the Tibetan system. Gradually, two necessary 'souls' are formed that sustain life in both the Chinese and Tibetan philosophic-religious systems, and in go, where they are called two 'eyes' in, Japan and two 'lungs' in China.

Thus, from outside the circle that surrounds the model of the Meru universe (or perhaps inside 'where the microcosm meets the macrocosm' as is said about Meru, mandalas and go), we as players watch and help the groups of stones struggle upwards while enmeshed in the world of matter, held back by the one-intersection rule, but encouraged by the 'ko' rule which allows them to better survive in their ever-upward striving quest.

#### IV. A Note on Sikkimese Go

Since this appendix was written, a translation in a private communication by John Fairbairn of part of An Yeong-l's *Dasi sseu-neun Hanguk Badug-sa (A New History of Baduk-sa in Korea)* confirmed all but a few of the Tibetan rules. The author discussed Sikkimese go after finding and playing with J.K. Rechung, an elderly aristocrat who used to play with the King.

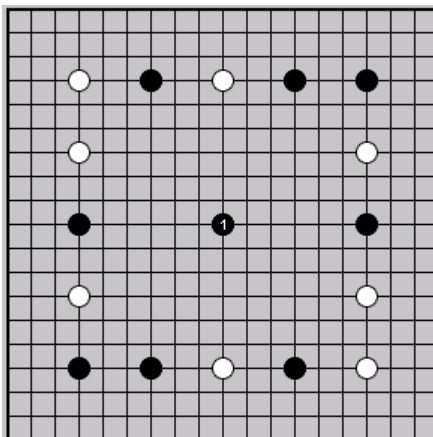
One rule that An did not mention was the one-intersection move. This suggests that it is confined to the Lhasa area, since the Sikkimese prince who I played had lived there for a long time, and this is where Buddhist Yellow Hat influence is extreme.

In place of the Tibetan result of combinations of stones, White was played by Rechung, the most elderly of the two players who, therefore, played first. However, the form of a handicap was not discussed when it was discovered that the Sikkimese was much weaker.

As in traditional Chinese go, An found that there was a 'thinking time' allowed when Rechung upturned a stone with its flat side up.

Another difference from Lhasa-style was that control of the center 'gained' 20 points and capture of four corners 'gained' 30, instead of the Tibetan respective 'gain' of 5 points and 'loss' of 20. (However, this phrasing could have been the result of the multiple translations that were necessary).

The author also made some conjectures about the possibility that Tibetan missionaries may have introduced go into Korea at an early age, thus accounting for some of the oddities of sunjang baduk, with its similar opening board layout.





Note that Black's 'ritualistic first move' must be in the center.  
Fairbairn discusses the traditional Korean form at  
<http://www.msoworld.com/mindzine/news/orient/go/history/sunjang.html>

*Edwinna Williams and Nima Dorjee were extremely helpful in elucidating some of the finer points about Mt. Sumeru and Tibetan mandalas.*