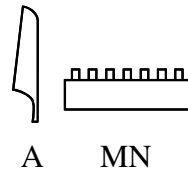


### **The Egyptian Game of *Senet*: a Precursor to the Chinese Game of *Liubo*?**

The ancient Egyptian so-called **Book of the Dead** was really a manual of enlightenment for everyone and of course became something that everyone would wish to carry with them to the grave and beyond to a future life. Like the Chinese, the Egyptians believed in fully enjoying life. They also greatly valued their cultural and family traditions, including bestowing great honor and appreciation on their former leaders and family ancestors. They actualized this in their culture with a highly sophisticated funerary culture that included elaborate tomb structures with nearby mortuary temples where family and national ancestors could be regularly honored with loving ritual expressions. Both Chinese and Egyptians believed in sending a deceased relative into the afterlife fully equipped to enjoy that future life with all possible amenities. This included of course entertainment devices.

We can see this very clearly in the grave goods bestowed on the boy pharaoh Tutankhamen, whose tomb was discovered in relatively undisturbed condition. Accompanying him into the afterlife were a number of toys and four beautiful game boards. The game in question was known in Egypt as Senet and was popular from before the first dynasty, because the first pharaoh of the first dynasty had the glyph for this game board with 7 pawns on top as part of his name, which was pronounced Amen or Mena:



The glyph of the game board means “foundation” and suggests that this game board was the foundation of Egyptian civilization. The prefix pronounced “A” was added to the front of a name as an expression of endearment, a custom that is also popular in parts of China to this day. The word “amen” (AMN) meant “hidden”, “invisible” and was an epithet of Ra (R' the Sun god) in his invisible state. Ironically this "invisible" deity was anthropomorphized in the form of a very visibly ithyphallic deity wearing a crown adorned with very tall feathers and holding up a flail with one hand.



Amen

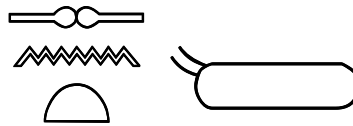
He usually stands on a small wedge-shaped platform glyph that means "truth". A straight rod runs from the truth glyph up behind him and then turns forward and enters

the back of his head (or at least connects to the back of his crown). The solar disc over his crown chakra indicates that this is open, and the tall feathers tell us his vital energy rises to heaven. His upraised left hand is in the mudra of the second chakra, which the Egyptians called the KA, and the flail is a sign of secret breathing techniques. Amen is also an agricultural deity, the flail exoterically being a tool for separating grain from chaff, and he is subtly connected to Osiris, the exoteric Egyptian agricultural deity.



KA

We have here indeed a strange "deity" to represent the founding of classical Egyptian civilization!



SNT

Let us take a closer look at this game of Senet and how it came to be deeply involved with life and death in ancient Egypt. The name of the game is Senet (SNT). The glyphs on the left are the letters SNT. The glyph on the right gives the meaning. The word means to "pass". By extension it is to open, to expand, to pass over or in front of or away from. Another meaning is to copy or to make a likeness of something. (We might theorize that the glyph is a race track, and the 2 marks suggest two runners competing.) In terms of the game it means for your pawns to surpass the pawns of your opponent's pawns in the course of play. A further meaning is that a person wins the game by moving all his pawns across the board and then passing them off the board. This leads to a second meaning of Senet: to transcend. The game came to be an analogy for the passing of one's life and the transcending of this life through death into a higher afterlife. At the same time it was also a kind of meditation on identification with Ra, the Sun god. Ra was more than just the sun in the sky. Ra as a solar disc would be visible during the day and invisible at night. The symbol of the sun freely giving the essential life energies of light and warmth to the earth every day became a metaphor for the Higher Self of an individual. The solar disc ☉ glyph, which incidentally was written the same way in ancient China, represents the universe with the larger circle and the individual person with the dot in the center. The dot is the small self and the big circle is the Higher Self. What you think of as you is your small self. What you think of as not you is your Higher Self.

The goal of classical Egyptian civilization is for a person to realize the unity of these two viewpoints. You are you, and you are also whatever you imagine you are not. When this unification of viewpoints happens, you identify with Ra and become enlightened. This is

reminiscent of the Mayan greeting: I am another you (Yin lakech.) Ra's True Self is invisible; hence, he is called Amen. That is the awareness without boundaries that is unbounded and immortal no matter what the viewpoint of the small or big self might be. The visible is a copy of the invisible. The universe is a copy of me. For Egyptians everything in Egyptian culture hints at this ultimate cosmic game, and the game of Senet is a part of this game of enlightenment -- in spite of the ironic and amusing situation that you have to do your best to beat your opponent. All the panoply of gods are avatars of Amen Ra, various transformations of light that embody various possible archetypes of nature and consciousness. Each god is called a neter (NTR), an aspect of Nature. The word "net" or "NT" represents something that exists, an entity. The letter "r" is a glyph of a mouth, an entrance (or exit), and in a general sense means to reach or to go beyond. So the NTR is an entity that goes beyond itself, and in so doing, becomes an immortal archetype. Amen is the NTR of going beyond all archetypes.

When a person died, the family gave an elaborate funeral with a wake and many offerings. If a family was wealthy or royalty, they erected a tomb in the form of a mastaba, a pyramid with hidden inner and underground chambers, or a hollowed out cave complex, which for the pharaohs often became an elaborate labyrinth. Along with the sarcophagus, tomb furnishings, and grave goods, there were often toys, games, and books. The most popular book (called by Egyptologists the Book of the Dead because it was placed in the tomb) was called by Egyptians "Pert em Hru" (PRT M HRU), a phrase that literally means to come out into the sunshine, but figuratively means to ascend to the status of Ra and live in eternal enlightenment. The book itself reminds the reader that its teachings are not just for the dead, but also for the living. Life does not end with death. It goes on forever as an amazing light show, a cosmic game with endless possible plays to be made.

Here is how the book introduces itself and announces its name:



**Ha' em sethesu s-aakhu**

Begin with exaltations and glorifications



**Peret hayt em Kheret Neteret Aakhut em Amenetet Neferet**

Ascending and descending in the Enlightened Netherworld and the Beautiful Hidden Realm.



**Peret em Hru em kheperu neb[u] mery-f,**

Ascending into the Daylight in any forms that he prefers,



**Heba' er Senet, hemes em Seh.**

Playing at Senet while sitting in a [divination] booth



**Peret em ba'anechy.**

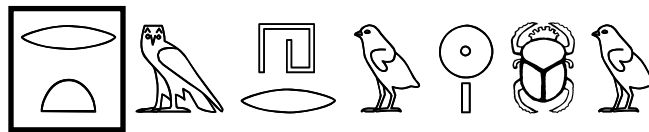
And going forth as a living soul.

(Plate VII, Chapter 17, Rubric; Budge page 27-28.)


The Senet board in my collection, which looks just like the board in the photograph below, is mounted on a wooden box with a drawer that contains the pawns and the throwing sticks. The box has glyphs printed on its side that you can read in the photograph starting from the far left corner of the box.




A Walmart Special Senet Board with Pawns and Throwing Sticks. My board has 5 sticks painted black on one side, plain on the other. The die is a modern alternative. The ancients used knucklebones.



**PRT    M    HR    U            KHPR U**  
**Ascend   in   Sunlight            Form s**

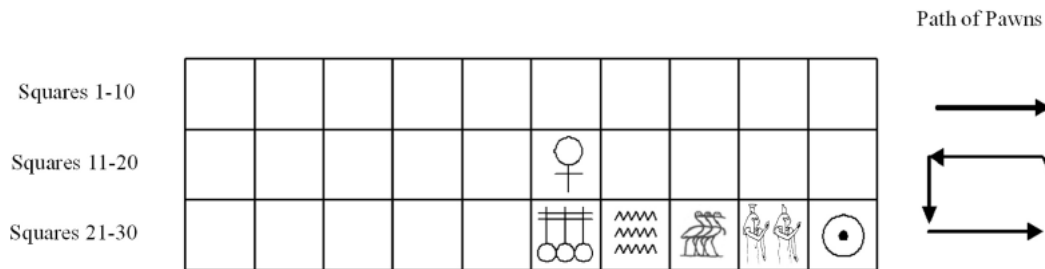
Notice the clever use of the square frame for the glyph PER  that as a noun means a palace or a house. As a verb it means to go forth or to ascend. With the final "t" it becomes a "going" or a journey or an ascension. The walls of the house (or the bounded

square, since the letter P is written as a square: ) limit space, and R is to go beyond that limit. The letter T (a glyph for a loaf of bread) solidifies the action into a completed experience. The solar disc is the semantic element and tells us the source of the light. The dung beetle is the creative energy of the light that can generate physical forms. Here it just means a form, a shape, or an image. The chick glyphs are the letter U or W used as plural endings.

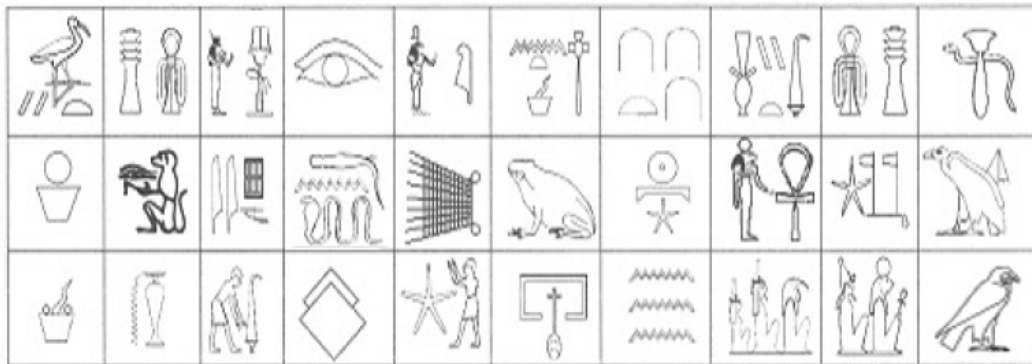


Tutankhamen's fanciest Senet board of wood, ivory, and inlaid with gold  
With throwing sticks and knuckle bones

To see a photo of all four of Tutankhamen's Senet boards with their pawns, throwing sticks, and knucklebone dice as they are on display in the Cairo museum, go to <http://www.lts-orient.ch/lts-eng/nilkreuzfahrt/tutankhamun/tutankhamun.htm>.



A Common Senet Board with 5 or 6 important squares bearing glyphs.  
The path of the pawns is boustrophedon (back and forth from row to row).  
Many Senet boards had no decorations at all.

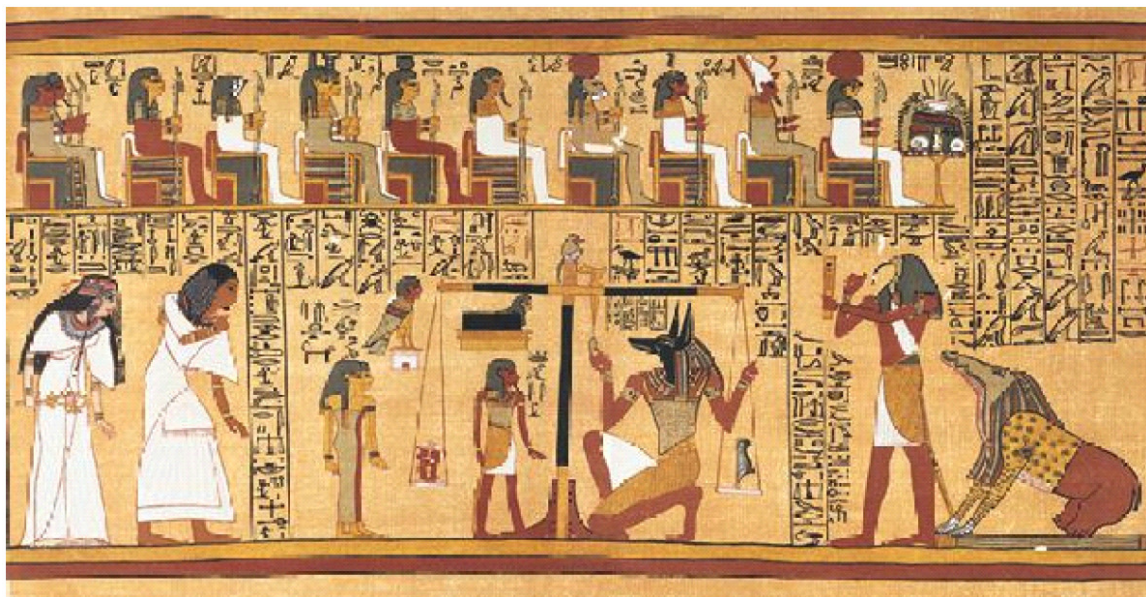


A Tentative Reconstruction of a Senet Board Fully Decorated with Sacred Symbols.





A Conversion of the Reconstructed Game Board into Standard Archetypal NTR Images



The Judgment Scene from the Book of the Dead (Papyrus of Ani)

Note the alternating game board squares on the thrones of the witnessing NTR archetypes.  
 Each of the throne glyphs is also a temple glyph:



Thus each square on the game board is a throne and the temple in which the NTR resides.

Since the game boards were often just plain checkerboard designs or grids of squares with no glyphs or decorations, the board could be used with any agreed-upon layout, and there is evidence that more than one layout of NTR archetypes was used both for the



game and for divination. (The use of the last 5 squares on the game board remained stable throughout history, but the decorative symbols on those squares varied.) I have developed an oracle board for divination that is based on the layout suggested by the Papyrus of Ani tableau of judgment witnessing NTRs, the **Amduat** (a New Kingdom classic), and other sources. A Roman era divination board called the Bembine tablet survives and shows a layout probably used in the Isis temple of Rome. It has Isis as the main theme rather than Ra and Thoth. These game and divination boards are well worth deep study. In future we may unearth more decorated examples that suggest other layouts.

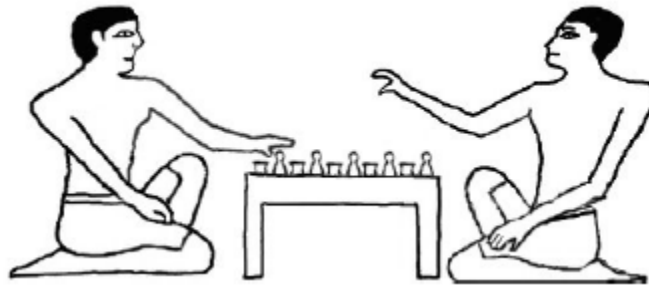


A sample layout of a divination board, with the NTR archetypes fully illustrated. This layout is based on the art in the Papyrus of Ani and is highly symmetrical. Study this layout as you would study a layout of Chinese hexagrams.



Papyrus cartoon of animals playing Senet.

Senet was very popular and could get quite raucous, especially when gambling was involved. Notice that the pawn positions on the board are very different from that shown below, suggesting that there probably were various games that could be played on the board.

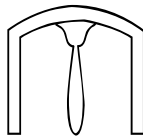


Two men about to begin a game of Senet.



Queen Nefertari divining on a Senet Board as she sits in a little divining booth called a Seh. (Such booths are still erected inside or next to the home during the Jewish holiday of Succot, the Festival of Booths. The Hebrew word Succot (סוכות or סוכות), the plural of סוכה *sukkah*.

Suc[c] סוכ probably derives from Seh a temporary hut or booth made of plant materials. Such huts were often built by farmers to rest out in the fields, but also were used in a ritual sense for meditation and divination.)



The glyph for Seh has the radical for papyrus in the middle, indicating that the ancient ritual booth was made of papyrus. Later the word was extended to mean a council hall or chamber. In a grand temple the pillars were still carved to resemble papyrus, both as a decorative motif and as a reminder of the little papyrus reed divination booth. For divination traditionalists made a little booth of papyrus or reeds tied together.





Ani and his wife divine in a booth by their mastaba tomb. On top of the tomb the couple's souls prepare to fly to their next life together once they decide on a plan. The pot between their bird spirits has incense.



Hunefer alone divines in his booth.

During a game of Senet two players sat opposite each other. When you see one player or a couple sitting on one side of the board, especially when they sit inside a papyrus hut, then you know that the process is divination. Using 5 throwing sticks one could precisely determine a specific square on the board in just a single throw.

To see lots of ancient and modern Senet Boards, visit A Zen Guide to Senet.

<http://zenseeker.net/BoardGames/Senet.htm>

You can also just google Senet or Senet board, select "images", and browse.

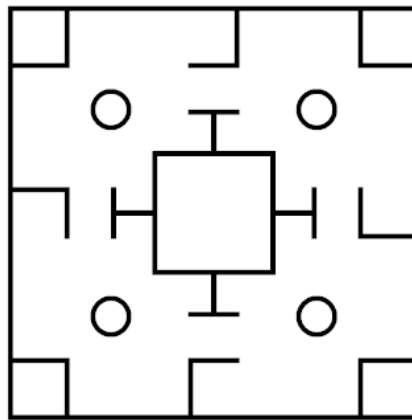
For an excellent brief overview of the history of Senet by the world expert specialist in the study of Senet, Professor Peter Piccione, go to

<http://www.gamesmuseum.uwaterloo.ca/Archives/Piccione/index.html>

Piccione's doctoral dissertation was on the game of Senet, and he has continued this research.

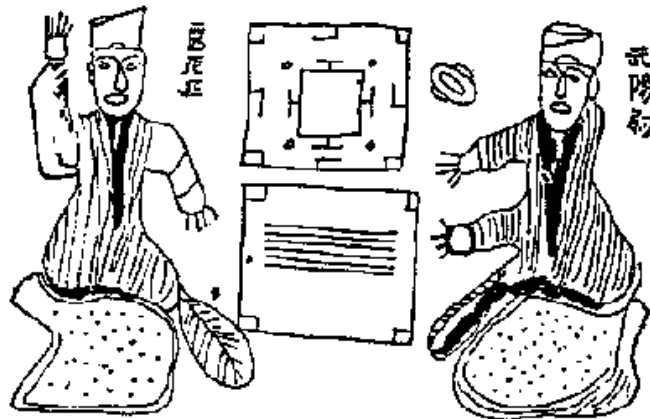
## A Mysterious Ancient Chinese Board Game: Liubo, the Changes, and the Divination Method of the QHJ.

From the Warring States period through the Han dynasty (475 BCE – 220 CE) and perhaps on a lesser scale for about another century after the Han period a board game for two players was very popular in China. The Chinese called it *Liu-bo* 六博 (or 六籥), the Game of Six Sticks. The basic equipment for the game was a square board with a square marked in the center and lines resembling T, L, and V placed at intervals around the space between the central square and the outer edge of the board. There were also knobs, circles, or diagonal lines between the corners of the central square and the smaller V-squares in each corner of the board as a whole.

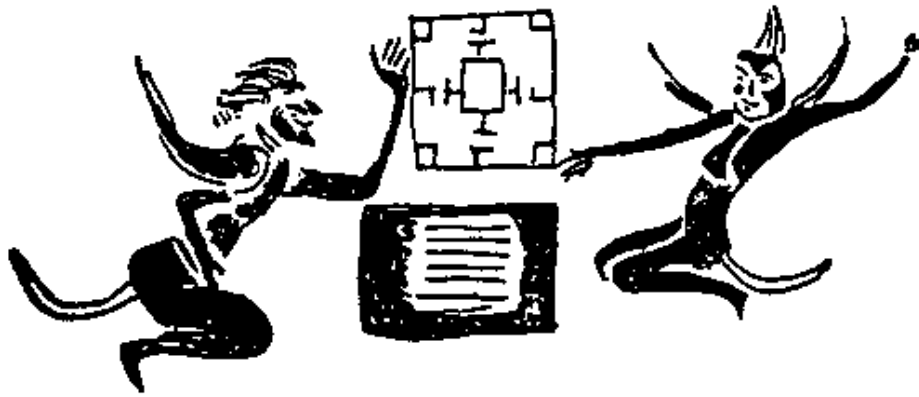


Schematic Diagram of a *Liubo* Game Board

Each player started with a set of six pawns, usually of an oblong shape. One set was white, and the other set was black. Next to the game board would be another small table or an extension of the game board with six wooden or bamboo strips on it. The bamboo strips would be used as dice and also could be used sometimes for consulting an oracle. Some sets included a die with 18 sides numbered from 1 to 16 with two poles, one labeled “win”, and the other labeled “lose”.



Two men excitedly playing the game of *Liu-bo*



Two immortals [or demons?] ecstatically playing the game of *Liu-bo*



Two players sit cross-legged on a low platform and prepare to begin the game. They look like they are doing a hand clapping ritual to start the game. Note the six wooden or bamboo strips placed neatly on one side with each player's tiles lined up on his side of the game board. In the center are two ovoid "fish".



Two players sit Japanese style with the game in progress.  
The player on the left has thrown the sticks,  
and some of the tiles have been moved out onto the board.

Unfortunately no complete set of rules for the game survives. The best we have are some records of when it was played, some historical persons who played, and some comments about the method of play perhaps drawn from a lost work called the *Gubojing* (古博經).

During the Jin dynasty (265–420 AD) Zhang Chen 張湛 described some aspects of the game in his commentary to the **Book of Liezi** 列子:

博法：二人相對坐，向局，局分為十二道，兩頭，當中名為水。用棋十二枚，古法六白、六黑。又用魚二枚，置於水中。其擲采以瓊為之。二人互擲彩行棋，棋行到處即豎之，名為驍棋。即入水食魚，亦名牽魚。每牽一魚獲二籌，翻一魚獲三籌。若已牽兩魚而不勝者，名曰被翻雙魚，彼家獲六籌為大勝也。

“Method of play: two people sit opposite each other facing the board. The board is divided into 12 pathways and two “heads” (starting points, one for each player?) The middle is called the water. Use 12 pawns. The old method is that six are white and six are black. Also use two “fish” placed in the water. They take up a die and toss it for the number of moves. The two players take turns tossing for the numbers and move their pawns. When a pawn reaches the Place, [the player] stands it on end and calls it a fierce (owl) pawn that can then enter the water and eat fish, which is also called pulling fish. Each time someone pulls a fish [out of the water?], he gets two points. Flipping a fish gets three points. If one has already pulled two fish but does not win, that is called “being flipped a pair of fish”. When a player gets six points that is a great win.”

The problem with this passage is that there are many technical terms that the writer does not explain clearly. For example, what are the two “heads”? Presumably one player used



six white pawns, and the other player used six black pawns. Where is the Place? Some assume it is in the central water, but that is not certain. The fierce (*xiao* 驍) pawn seems to be a pun on the pawn that can stand upright, become an “owl” (*xiao* 梟), and then fly about in any direction (?) preying on fish. Apparently the player stood his tile up on end when it became an owl and this was something like the way a checker becomes a king or a pawn in chess becomes a queen. The owl has greater freedom to roam the board and attack opponent pawns. How do you pull a fish out of the water, and what exactly is “flipping” (*fan* 翻) a fish? What is “being flipped a pair of fish”? It sounds like the fish are different from the player pawns.

A much earlier text, the *Zhao Hun* 招魂, a poem from a collection of Poems from the South (*Chu-ci* 楚辭) during the late Warring States period, is devoted to summoning the soul of a deceased person back from the land of the dead, perhaps to participate in his funeral wake. After the funerary feast, the guests begin to play *Liubo*, presumably because the fun will attract the soul to come back. This sounds very reminiscent of the use of the Egyptian board game of Senet in the funerary rites just as the placing of game boards in Han Chinese tombs matches the similar ancient Egyptian custom.

菑蔽象碁，有六籜些。  
分曹並進，適相迫些。  
成梟而牟，呼五白些。

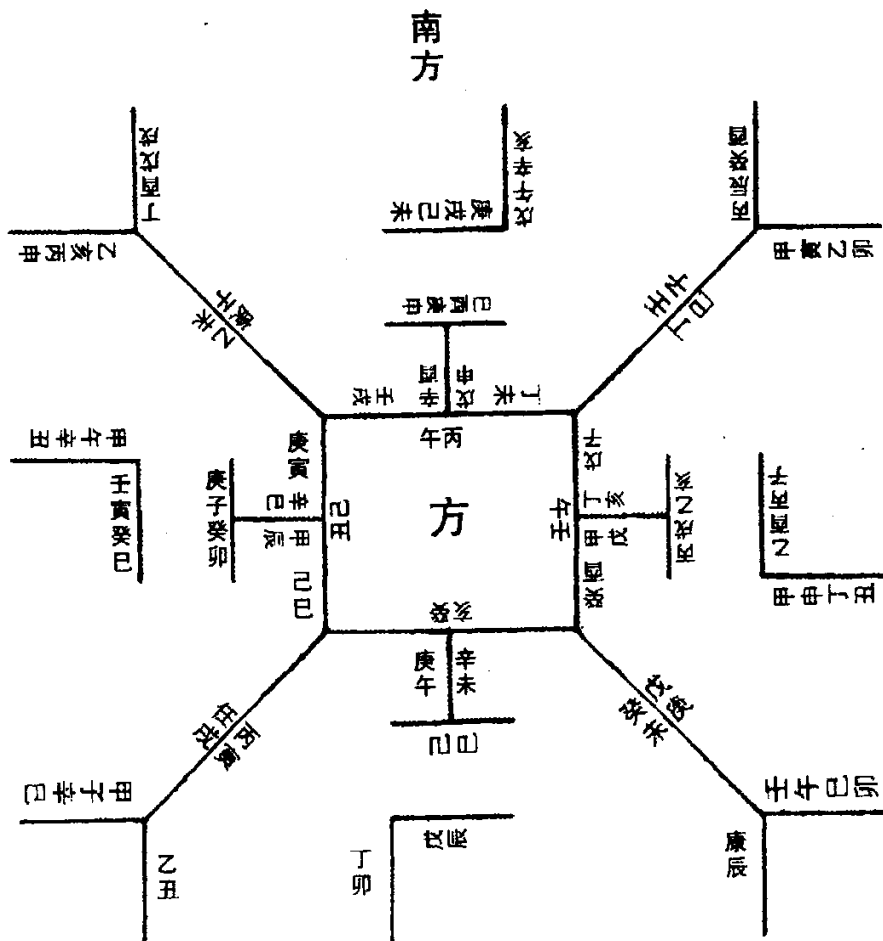
Then with *kun-bi* sticks and ivory pawns they have a game of *Liubo*;  
Two [players] take their sides and advance, threatening each other.  
One becomes an owl and doubles [his score] shouting ‘five whites!’



Two players with sticks and tiles laid out ready to begin play.  
Note the two round “fish” in the middle of the board.

This passage tells us that sometimes the sticks were not made of bamboo, because *kun-bi* is wood from another kind of plant, possibly strips of the castor oil plant (*kun-ma* 蓖麻). Pawns could be made of ivory, bone, metal, and so on. Another technical term comes in here: “becoming an owl”. This apparently is a power upgrade to a tile that occurs under certain circumstances. “Five whites” hints at a rule that may be connected to the owner of the “owled” tile, either in his favor or to his dismay if it is a counter move by the opponent.

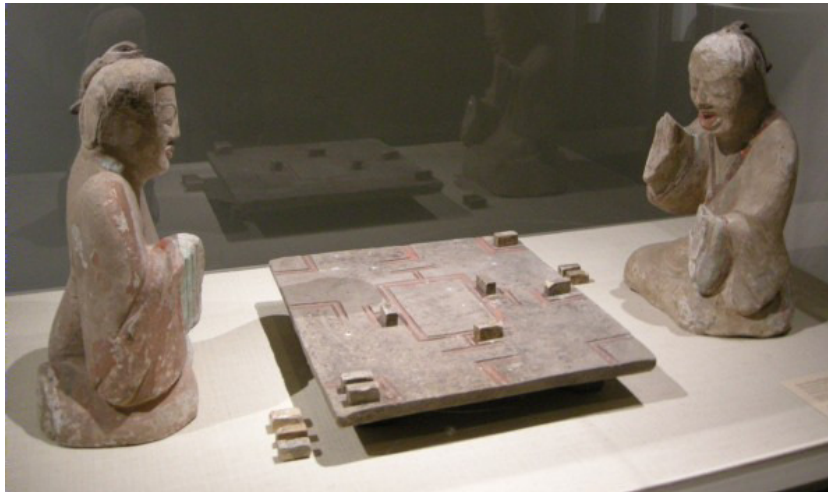
The role of game boards in funerary rites and placing of them in tombs is indicative that the game was something more than just a fond amusement to take with you to the next life. There was a spiritual and divinatory aspect to the game. In the case of *Senet* it was the relation of the game board to the calendar and of the divination board to the weighing of the heart ceremony of the Book of the Dead along with the oracular use of the board. In the case of *Liubo* the game related closely to the Book of Changes. The six throwing sticks could be used to generate one of 64 hexagrams on a single throw. The board could be easily divided into spaces for the 64 hexagrams, and boards survive that have the cycle of 60 combinations of heavenly stems and earthly branches (*tian-gan di-zhi* 天干地支) written on the surface of the board.



A *Liubo* board with the 60 stems and branches

Another phenomenon that further strengthens the case is the existence of a number of Han dynasty bronze mirrors that have a stylized *Liubo* board diagram on the back, suggesting the power of the oracle to help a person see himself or herself more clearly.

A number of scholars have attempted to reconstruct the play of the Liu-bo game. Professor L.S. Yang of Harvard investigated the problem, and more recently Jean-Louis Cazaux has published on the Internet his study of the game and his reconstruction. (For his article and many excellent pictures see <http://history.chess.free.fr/liubo.htm>. For his reconstructed rules of the game, see <http://history.chess.free.fr/liubo-rules.htm>. Another great site with photos, related texts, and archaeological sources of the artifacts is <http://babelstone.blogspot.com/2009/05/lost-game-of-liubo-part-1-funerary.html>.)



A *Liubo* game in progress. Source : [Wikimedia \(CC BY/SA by Sailko\)](#)

The man on the left looks like he has captured one more pawn than his flustered opponent.

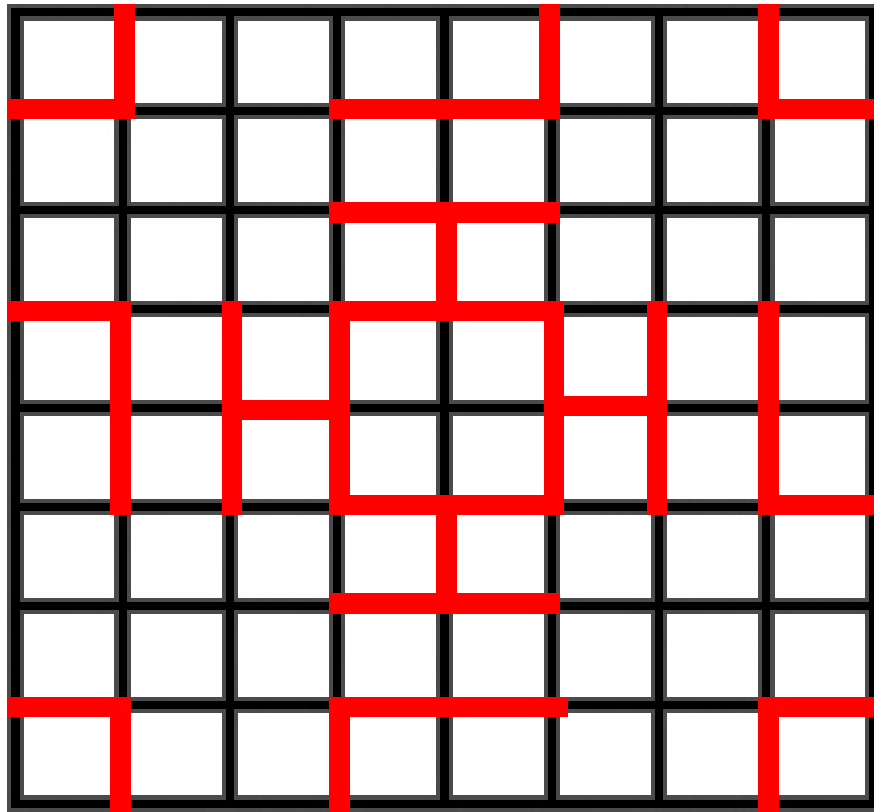
### A Comparison of *Senet* and *Liubo*

Let us now compare *Senet* and *Liubo* as games and as oracles and see whether there are any connections.

- Both are board games.
- Although we do not have exact rules for either game, they both involved throwing sticks used as dice and pawns that moved about the board in a racing game. Both games seem to have involved the capture of opponent pawns and ways of disadvantaging them during the course of play.
- Both boards could be used as calendars. The *Senet* Game Board encoded both the solar and the lunar month. The *Liubo* board distributed around the region outside of the central water square (made of 4 small squares) the 60 combinations of stems and branches used for Chinese calendars (presumably also mapping them to the hexagrams). The central square with its two fish contained the final four hexagrams to complete the sixty-four. Thus a *Liubo* calendar board contains the Chinese traditional *ganzhi* cyclical calendar that equals exactly two months (or *Senet* Board circuits) in the Egyptian solar calendar. The difference is that the Chinese cycle went on and on like the Mayan Tzolkin, whereas the Egyptians eventually tuned their cycles of 30 days to the real cycles of the sun and moon. Here is the cycle of

the stems and branches.


1. 甲子	11. 甲戌	21. 甲申	31. 甲午	41. 甲辰	51. 甲寅
2. 乙丑	12. 乙亥	22. 乙酉	32. 乙未	42. 乙巳	52. 乙卯
3. 丙寅	13. 丙子	23. 丙戌	33. 丙申	43. 丙午	53. 丙辰
4. 丁卯	14. 丁丑	24. 丁亥	34. 丁酉	44. 丁未	54. 丁巳
5. 戊辰	15. 戊寅	25. 戊子	35. 戊戌	45. 戊申	55. 戊午
6. 己巳	16. 己卯	26. 己丑	36. 己亥	46. 己酉	56. 己未
7. 庚午	17. 庚辰	27. 庚寅	37. 庚子	47. 庚戌	57. 庚申
8. 辛未	18. 辛巳	28. 辛卯	38. 辛丑	48. 辛亥	58. 辛酉
9. 壬申	19. 壬午	29. 壬辰	39. 壬寅	49. 壬子	59. 壬戌
10. 癸酉	20. 癸未	30. 癸巳	40. 癸卯	50. 癸丑	60. 癸亥




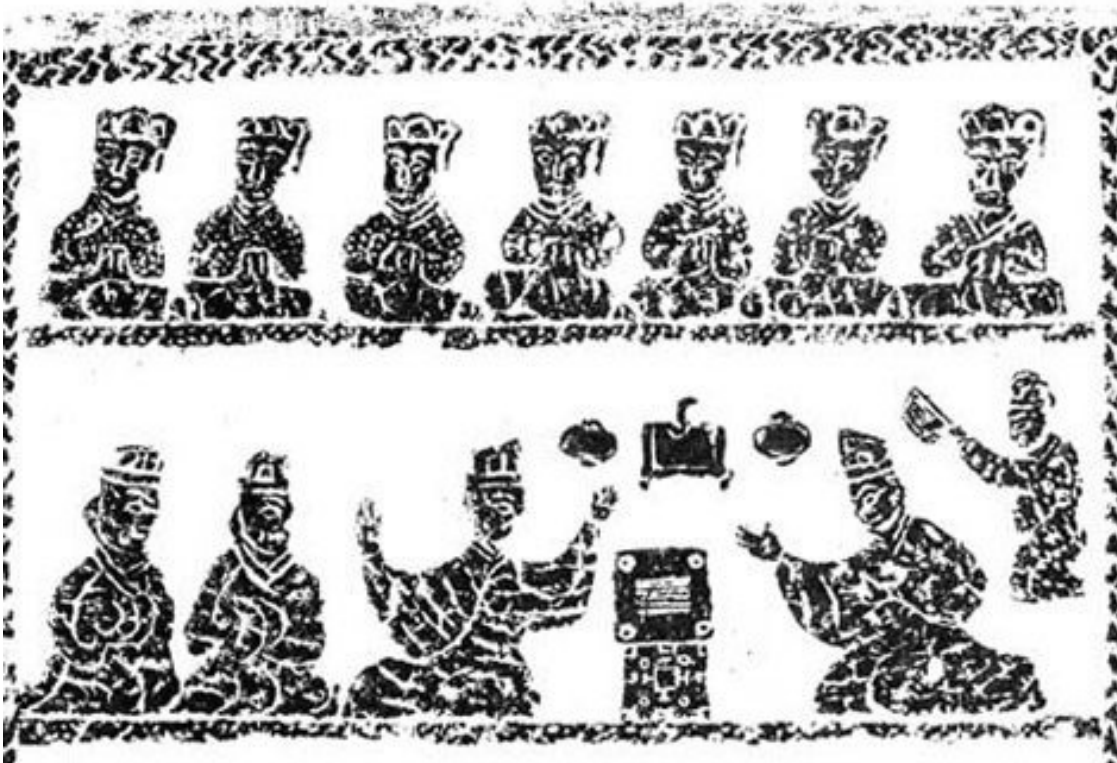
A *Liubo* Board overlaid on an  $8 \times 8 = 64$ -square hexagram board. Counting the layers from the center outward we find 4, 12, 20, and 28 squares. The outer three layers sum to 60 squares, or 30 for each player's side. The central 4 can represent the four seasons. Two fish (*yin* and *yang*) are put in the central square.

- Both boards tended to embody abstractions of content that expressed the essential message of the culture, but were stylized into a simple format with square houses over which the pawns moved. In the case of *Senet* the pawns moved through the adventure of life according to a calendar. The pathway of the pawns was to become



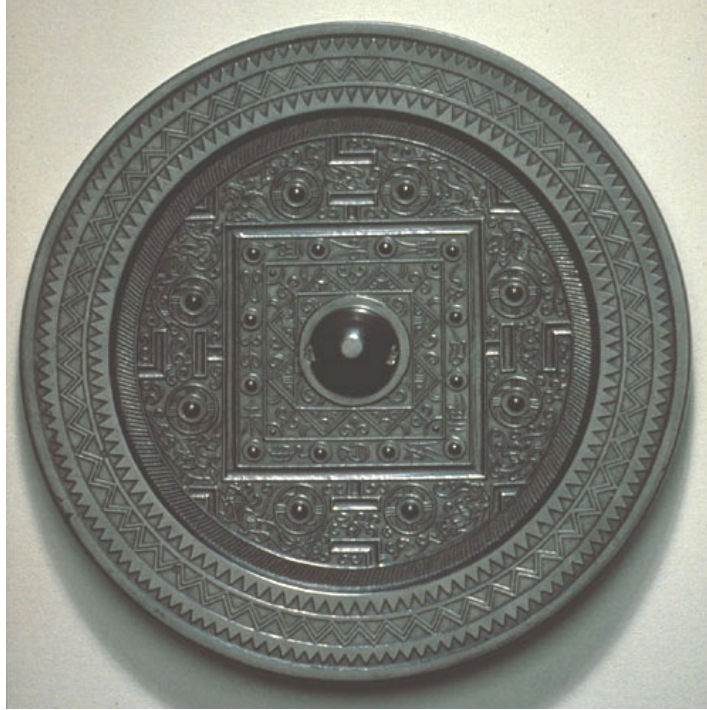
Horus the Elder, personification of **Wat** , the Way of the NTR (R' as the Horus-Ra the One and the Thirty combined and Horus-Ra as AMN -- the board itself and beyond the board, in the end it seems you transcend the relative world of the board. The board represented the entire Weighing of the Heart moment in eternity. In the case of *Liubo* the pawns moved through the pathway of the *Dao* 道, the Way of the Natural Cosmos as symbolized by the hexagrams of the Book of Changes.

- Players in both China and Egypt seemed to be aware of the underlying cosmological symbolism of the boards and the playing pieces. They probably knew by heart the cosmic significance of moves on the board.
- The full moon formed the center piece of the *Senet* Game Board, and the Heart in the balance of the Scale of Justice at the center of the universe formed the center piece of the Oracle Board layout. The center piece of the *Liubo* board was the *Taiji*  with two fish and expressed the balanced state of all the hexagrams that formed the grid.
- In Egypt Hathor functioned as a mirror for Ra, and this gave him his power. The Chinese *Liubo* board was often cast into the backs of bronze mirrors to remind people that the game board was a mirror of the cosmos and a way in which a person could see a true reflection of self.



This game of *Liubo* has an ensemble of players and onlookers that vaguely resembles the *Senet* Oracle Board layout.

The *Liubo* Oracle Game Board is the Cosmic Balance while a crowd of 10 onlookers witness the proceedings. Compare this to the Papyrus of Ani Judgment Scene.



Example of a Han TLV mirror

The small nipples in the square are the 12 months of a year or the 12 earthly branches.

The larger nipples in the outer region are the 8 trigrams.

The *Taiji* knob in the middle has a hole through it for suspending it with a lanyard.

- Egypt possessed an earlier version of the **Book of Changes** in the form of a binary code, and by tradition it came from the beginning of creation at the center of the country in Khemenu, Home of the Ogdoad (eight primordial neter archetypes) and under the guidance of *Tekhy (Taiji)*, the balance point, who was also known as Baba and other names in his baboon guise. The system consisted of 64 phases of the Lunar Eye of Horus, the Ogdoad, the four sons of Horus, and Men-Mut (the invisible cosmic solar lovers who could also be interpreted as Thoth and Maat the cosmic lunar lovers). The total comes to 78. The Egyptians used this binary system for their weights and measures in everyday life. The *Liubo* board has the eight trigrams distributed abstractly around the outer path and encoded by the L's in the middle edges and V's in the corners, and then the four T shapes for the four cardinal directions. In the middle were the two fish. The throw of the sticks could generate any one of the sixty-four hexagrams, and we can fill in the board with an 8x8 grid to make the hexagram positions visible and end up with a total of 78 items on the board. This binary code was central to Chinese thought and permeated all her art and technology.



Square grid of the 64 hexagrams  
Shao Yong's Layout in Binary Number Sequence

- The expression for the 64 hexagrams in Chinese traditionally is *Ba-ba liu-shi-si gua* (八八六十四卦), which happens to exactly spell the name of Thoth in his transcendental identity as a game-and-prank-playing baboon and indicates that the 64 hexagrams belong to him. Baba the baboon usually sits right in the middle on top of the Scale of Justice balancing the heart and truth.
- Both boards had a subtle symbolism of water in the middle. Texts tell us that “water” filled the central square of the *Liubo* board and from there the owl could “pull” fish, traditional Chinese symbols of abundance and also symbols of *yin* and *yang*. We have evidence of a pun on the term “owl”. In the History of Jin general Xie Ai (謝艾 whose name means “Thanks to the yarrow straws”) reads the omen of an owl roosting among his flag standards before a battle as: “*Xiao* (a fierce one) is to waylay an enemy. In *Liubo* the one who gets the owl wins. Now an owl hoots among the battle flags – that is an omen of defeating the enemy.” 梟，邀也，六博得梟者勝。今梟鳴牙中，克敵之兆。 He then went on to defeat his enemy. Another word that matches the pun between the owl in *Liubo* and a fierce opponent is 消 (to dissolve). Perhaps the real secret to *Liubo* is that *xiao* means to dissolve all difficulties and distinctions by centering in the *Taiji* and moving with the *Dao*. Water filled the central row of the *Senet* Oracle Board, because that row was where the magical boat of Ra-Osiris moved between Heaven and Earth in the mysterious Astral Realm of Wizardry. The boat image punned on the word for meditation, the core teaching of the **Litany of Ra**.

The above section on *Liubo* and *Senet* is selected and adapted from my book, **The Senet Tarot of Ancient Egypt**, Vol. 1.