

A game of two kings

In addition to the theory that shogi was a wargame, there is also the theory that it was a “game to compete for treasures.” Some of the characters used for the pieces mean “jewels”, “gold,” “silver,” “fragrant wood” and “spice.” The kings of each player are named differently in Japanese (ōshō and gyokushō) but they are of same strength. As a matter of courtesy, older players or those with a higher rank have the ōshō, while younger players and those with a lower rank have the gyokushō.