

# 13

## The color of night

As the ancient people recognized "darkness" in the "black", "black" as the color of "night" must lurk behind our life. Of course even now we often use black to express night. And there is one familiar but forgotten usage of "black" as the color of "night" because it would be expressed in a highly abstract way and its origin is so old. It is the black of the *go* stones.

The stones and board used in the game of *go*. It is said that the game of *go* originated from a tool of astronomy and divination lore in ancient China. All 361 grids on *go* board represents the number of the days of old calendar, the white *go* stones are days and the black ones are night. The game of *go* was a tool in order to understand the calendar. This calendar is not a solar one used now but a lunar one decided by the phases of the moon. In Japan, the moon was familiar among people and the lunar calendar had been commonly used until Meiji Era (1868-1912). Even now in the game of *go* black has an initiative, which originated from the fact that New Year in the old calendar starts at the time of the Rat in the Oriental Zodiac, that is, in the midnight. In addition, in the game of *go*, the white and black stones are put alternately on the board, which reflects the repetition of the day and night. we play *go* without knowing these things, but *go* has such a surprising history.

