

# OPINION: Chinese Checkers is an underrated and superior strategy game

Comparisons with Checkers, Chess, and Go; also a brief discussion of the EPEMC motifs behind the game

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## ABSTRACT

The not-so-ancient game of “Chinese Checkers”<sup>1</sup> is definitely under-rated. This is undoubtedly because it appears to be a child’s game, more like checkers, but not as ancient. The issue with this is that the game has many superior qualities, which will be discussed.

Additionally, because of the origins of the hexagram motif, both in Jewish and Chinese culture, and the general flower of life motif, there are some unique multi-layered meanings to the game which are in fact more ancient than even Go. The game has many superior and under-rated qualities which should be discussed and promoted.

*Keywords: Chinese Checkers - Strategy - Chess - Comparison - Go - Hexagram motif*

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<sup>1</sup> Ironically, it is a German game, and is based upon the Jewish star of David.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_checkers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_checkers)

## Comparison of the Gameplay

The following summary table lists many of the different qualities of Chinese Checkers with the 3 most played strategy board games<sup>2</sup> in the world:

Table 1 :: Game Qualities Comparisons

	Chess	Checkers	Go	Chinese Checkers
Players	2 or 4	2	2	2 to 6
Alliances	None or team play	none	none	horizontal
Opponents	To be nearly destroyed	To be destroyed	To be dominated	To be aided and out-maneuvered
Capture method	Capture and replace	Jump-capture	Capture & surround	Jump; or capture
Fort policy	Castling	Back-line	n/a, "territory"	Leave and occupy
Enemy policy	Stifle, divide n conquer, destroy fast	Stifle, limit, surround, remove, and crush	Surround, out-smart, limit, and mystify	Use, accelerate, limit without being limited by
Theme	Conquer	Crush	Envelope	Outpace
Length of game	2 minutes to hours	~10 - 20 minutes	30 minutes to hours	~20 - 30 minutes

Comparing the games, one could easily conclude that Chess and Go are the superior games in terms of striking the line between a savvy and advanced game, in terms of statesmanship, and martial value. Of course Checkers is the absolute crusher, as it only allows a winner when the opponent is completely wiped from the map. In regular life and in war, a basically horrific situation. In essence, a childish and selfish motive. But it does teach the value of geometric positioning.

By contrast Chinese Checkers is not a martial game at all, but of savvy, ambition, planning, and the use of the zong-heng, or horizontal and vertical. In the vertical plane the **only** way to win is to expeditiously vacate your home position, and for your opponent to do the same. In the horizontal planes, we see that only by conveniently blocking some of the opponents while forming jump alliances with others when things get thick, can we beat our opponent. Therefore, having a salesman or ambassador like demeanor, as well as a cunning and ambitious plan, sometimes ruthless and stifling, and sometimes flowing like water, is essential to victory. This is more useful than a martial only demeanor in the world of business, mergers & acquisitions, diplomacy, sales, and family dynamics.

<sup>2</sup> Chess, in the end comparison isn't much different than its Indian origin, or Shogi, and other chess games, etc.

## Contrasting with polar games

Contrasting Chinese Checkers with checkers is rather simple, as the only thing they have in common is the jumping aspect. In Chinese checkers you can jump backwards anytime and anytime you want you may go backwards or sideways. There are also no forbidden peg-holes.

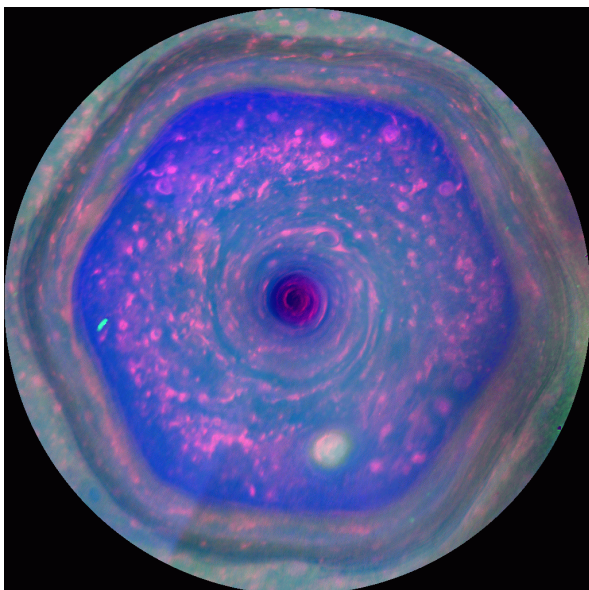
However, contrasting with Go (weiqi) or other Go-like games (like Pente) we see that Chinese Checkers has more advantage of what makes Go special, and few of the limits. For example the board can be used to play a highly advanced form of Go, or Pente, while in reverse a Go board cannot be used to play Chinese Checkers. Moreover there is no zongheng component to Go as it is **always** a two person game. There is not much mystique to Chinese Checkers, but such skill can be applied to the “meta” (talking) portion.

The only game which can compare in subtlety and interest (or intrigue) is the ever changing, timeless classic Chess. Ever since its inception in ancient India, the game has been about internal and territorial politics. Unlike checkers it seeks conquest as quickly as possible, so as to take the king, and if it can be done fast, the more the enemy nation is spared. Meanwhile chess does advocate a Go-like domination of the opponent.

Where can these values be used? Certainly in one form of business, and in war, and in national politics. However, the majority of life requires subtlety and grace, and ambition. Certainly the Chinese Checker game can teach children values which are useful throughout life and have eternal value. And, while it encourages a high IQ superiority, it also encourages a better EQ and the ratio of IQ:EQ must be matched with both geometric positioning and pattern recognition. When the game enters the mid-game, the back-bone strategy tends to break down, and a tough choice of up the middle “short route” must be sacrificed for wider but freer aspirations. It is even possible to enter abandoned home bases, or to sabotage a horizontal opponent to aid a horizontal ally.

## Obvious and Hidden Motifs in the Board

The most blatant motif is the six pointed “star of David” which is easily recognized by most people. However, few know that it is also a world wide, and especially Chinese motif referring most especially to the era of Huangdi - that is a Saturnian era. The hexagon on the southern pole of Saturn is still visible. As the

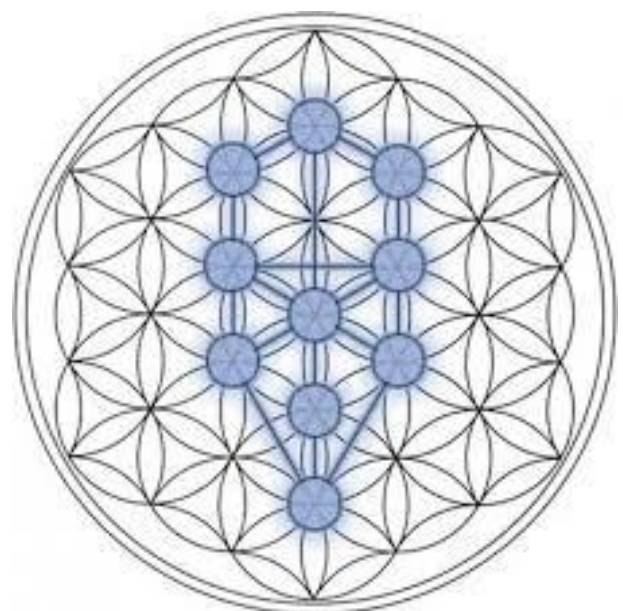
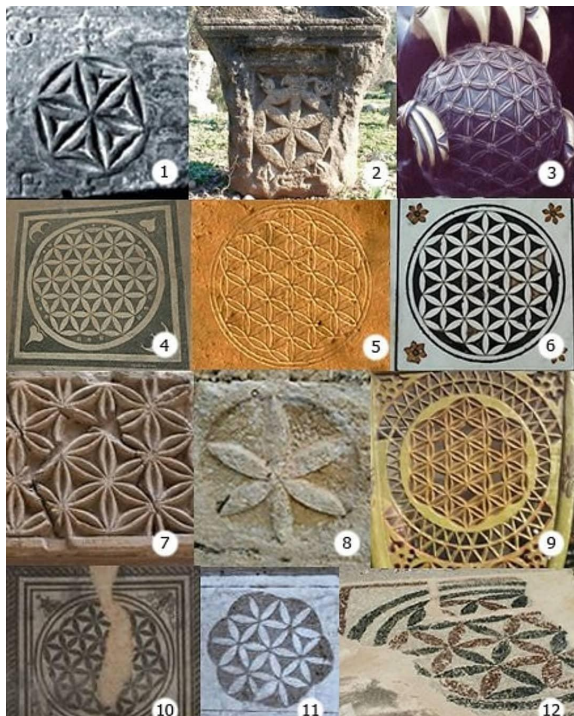


author covered, the Jovian age orbit of Jupiter has been proven, and the high visibility of Saturn, as well (from Egyptian record), however there is no way currently to prove the direct line of sight. However, the star is clearly a reference to the El (Re), or Is-Ra-El, which is after all a Saturnian Creator God. Furthermore the layout is a clear reference to the Flower of Life (fleur-de-li), which is more of a cosmological sphere of hexagrams in China than a flower. (see next page and set of images.

In short, the game could be thought of as a greater reference to a more enlightened age, with more broad values of leadership



and peace through the strength of the mind. Could it be that the geometry of the game perfectly reflects this greater reality because all geometry connects to these early origins? Or is there some grander design which actually makes these shapes holy and sacred, and this comes through in the games?



## Conclusions

The value of this 100+ year old game has been underestimated for too long on account of the typical play in children's settings, and the more or less non-violent nature of the game. But while it is not "exciting" it utilizes more depth and variability in many respects than other similar games.

It also has distinct ties to very ancient motifs and archetypes from more than 5,000 years ago. These geometric patterns are worldwide, but remain hidden in plain sight in China, and also with Jewish culture. Assuming no direct diffusion connection then these motif connections reflect patterned human memories from the bygone ages.

Perhaps these connections to the Creator God have guided the more passive form of game, or created a superior mental framework through use of sacred geometry. But no matter what this misunderstood game will provide excellent value to those who explore its hidden meanings and depths.