

象棋

# Xiangqi



## A Short Insight into the Game of Chinese Chess



German Xiangqi Association (DXB)  
Confucius Institute at the University of Hamburg  
Hamburg Yu Garden  
17-18 Aug. 2013



# 象棋

**Xiangqi is a very popular board game in China exerting an increasing fascination on Non-Asians**



Bronze sculpture in a park



A 'Long Nose' fighting the overwhelming strength of the master-player of Macao



Leisure hour with Xiangqi at the roadside



# 象棋



**Members of the German Team involved in a 'Xiangqi Street Fight' (Karsten Hoffarth, 2-times German champion)**

**Grandmaster Xu Tianhong gives the game of a German player a critical glance**





## The meaning of the name

*Xiangqi = Chinese Chess*

象棋

Xiang = Elephant,  
Ivory

Qi = any board game

### Xiang:

- Elephants were deployed in combat sorties at the Han Dynasty (about 2000 years ago)
- In the old times gaming pieces were often made of ivory



Liubo-Player

Figurine of the Eastern Han Dynasty  
1.-2. Century AD

Two players with 6 pieces each  
King/General and 5 Soldiers  
River  
Decision by capturing the  
adverse General

Using dices introduced a component  
of chance. Related to Backgammon?!

# Liubo

## An archetype board game

Liubo is considered as the ancestor of all  
battle type board games  
The roots are dated back to more than  
2000 years; however the rules got lost



Liubo Board

Han Dynasty 206 BC - 220 AD

# 象棋



. Han Xin: Student of Sun Tzu



Sun Tzu  
Author of the first classic book  
“The Art of War”



## Hypothesis of Prof. David Li:

General Hán Xin invented Xiangqi to train the troops in their ability to look ahead, to plan for contingencies, and to seek the best route of action.

The date of the invention of Xiangqi is 203 B.C.

This “proto-chess”, is an early version of chess, originated in China.



## Xiangqi pieces of the Song Dynasty compared to contemporary pieces

Historical pieces of the Song Dynasty  
960-1126 A.D.



Pieces of today



Red Soldier / Pawn  
(Bing)

Black Soldier / Pawn  
(Zhu)

Red Advisor  
(Shi)

Black Elephant  
(Xiang)

# 象棋



Young girl and Senior enjoying  
a game of Xiangqi

**Xiangqi , serious and cheerful**



European Xiangqi  
competition in London



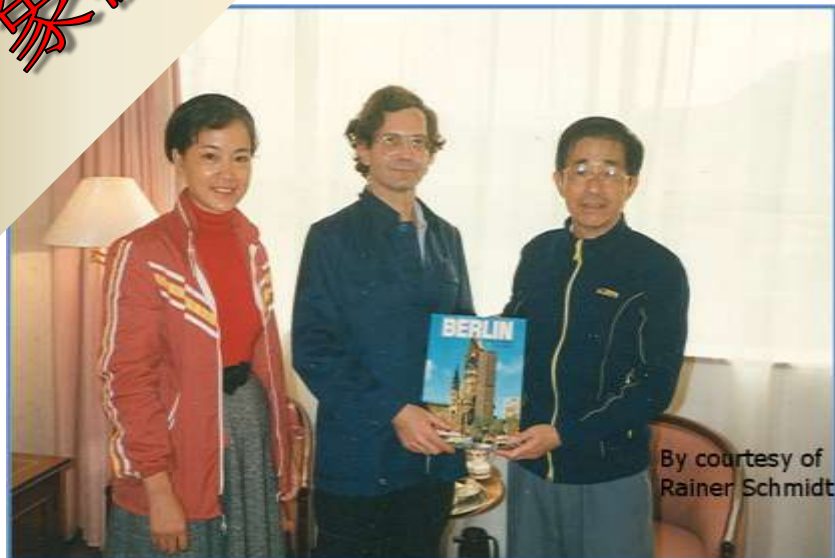


## **Xiangqi – an integral part of Chinese culture**

In ancient China a cultured person had to master four fields of arts:

- playing a musical instrument
- a board game
- calligraphy
- Chinese painting

## Start-Up Xiangqi in Germany



1985 Rainer Schmidt from Berlin translated Xiangqi textbooks from Chinese into German

He formed a group of about 12 German players without any Asian roots

1986 in Xiamen Rainer Schmidt had the first contact of a German with Chen Yuangao, President of the Chinese Xiangqi Association (picture left)

Future steps of cooperation were envisaged

In the following years good relationships to China gained momentum by personal initiatives of German players and the courtesy of the Chinese Xiangqi Association

Several chinese delegations of Xiangqi Grand Masters visited Germany

1987 a competition of Xiangqi and international Chess was organized in Berlin:

The legendary Grandmaster Hu Ronghua played against the wellknown German Chess Grandmaster Dr. Robert Hübner (later No. 3 in the world) (picture right)





## International popularization of Xiangqi

The Chinese Xiangqi Association is making ambitious efforts to attract non-Asian players and to support Xiangqi worldwide

- Presentations and exhibition games with Chinese grandmasters
- Delegate master players to the European Championships
- Invitation of non-Asian players to the World Championships



Grandmaster Xu Yinchuan in London





**1993:**

## **Launching the International Popularization of Xiangqi**

In April 1993 in Beijing the World Xiangqi Federation was founded, aiming clearly for a worldwide popularization of the chinese cultural heritage, Xiangqi.

In contrast to most other countries in 1993 the players in Germany were native germans, with only a few Asian players amongst them.



From the beginning Germany has made serious endeavor to integrate into the international community of Xiangqi

With the time Dr. Michael Naegler, Siegfried Huber and Claus Tempelmann are acting in official functions of the WXF

Here Dr. Michael Naegler and Uwe Frischmuth joining a meeting in 1993



## A Visionary Speech on Popularization

In the 1993 meeting different countries gave their view on popularization of Xiangqi

For Germany Uwe Frischmuth was looking to the future and pointed out:

At the moment China gives a lot of support for the popularization however, the participating countries have to take efforts to act more on their own, e.g. organize tournaments, etc. in their own countries

He ended with:

友谊第一	Friendship first
比赛第二	Competition second



**Uwe Frischmuth giving a position statement for the German Xiangqi Association**

Now, 20 years later, Germany conducted already some European Championships and is likely to be commissioned to organize the “Hanxin Cup 2014”

# The World Championship 1993

## - A Practical Step to Popularization -

76 male and 11 female players from 20 countries were fighting for the championships



World Champion GM Xu Tianhong



Runner-up GM Zhao Guorong  
(World Champion 1991)



Dr. Robert Hübner (Germany), here facing Xu Tianhong, came in on rank 36, being the best non-Asian player (however, few players from Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia might be not of chinese/vietnamese origin)





## A Highlight for the German Xiangqi Team (Beijing 2009)

Chinese Xiangqi Association (CXA) organized a  
NCNV Xiangqi training seminar in Beijing



Xue Zhong, Liu Xiaofang,  
GM Xu Tianhong, WGM Zhang Guofeng



Participants from Germany and Finland

# 象棋

The German Team in front of the institute of board games the location of the „Chinese Xiangqi Association“



Friendly competition with players of Beijing

## The German Team in Chinese Media



Dr. Naegler (Vice President WXF)  
giving a speech at the closing ceremony

TV interviews during World Xiangqi  
Championship  
Xintai, China, September 2009





# 象棋

Premiere-Show at  
Shanghai Super Cup  
December 2009



For the first time European players had  
the honor to be invited to this high  
ranked Xiangqi tournament:  
Jouni Rämö (Fin) vs. Stefan Bradler (Ger)



# Chinese Chess in Germany

- At the beginning German players were prevailing the Xiangqi Scene
- Presently several players with Asian roots are joining the tournaments. Some of them with considerable strength
  - This is beneficial for the progress of Xiangqi skills of the German players

## Tournaments

Every year 4 tournaments are held with the possibility to qualify for the final round of the German championship

Final round + Summer Cup in Berlin

**Venues** Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Hannover, Braunschweig, Giessen, Jena, Lingen, Magdeburg, Nuremberg, Duesseldorf, Leonberg

## **20<sup>th</sup> German Xiangqi Championship and “Hanseatic-Horse Cup 2013” Tournament**

Hamburg, 17-18 Aug.2013

## **Participation in World Championships 2013**

The German team consists of 10 players



Chinese Teahouse Yu Garden is the venue of tournaments in Hamburg





## Pictures from German Tournaments



Prize giving ceremony in July 2011  
(left) Michael Naegler 6-times German  
Champion

Two strong Chinese players  
Pu Fangyao (left) vs Xue Zhong (right)  
at the German Championship 2010



Team-champion 2007 and 2010  
the team of „Stosszahn Franken  
(Frankonian Ivory Tusk)“







## German Xiangqi Team



Uwe Frischmuth  
(Hamburg)  
8th place for NCV  
World Championship  
in Jakarta 2011



Richard Gitter  
(Jena)  
The youngest  
player of DXB  
(11 years old)



Dr. Michael Naegler  
(Lingen)  
President of DXB  
6-times German champion  
WXF NCV-Master



Wu Caifang  
(Berlin)  
Woman player of  
DXB



Jörn Tessen  
(Berlin)  
Vice President of DXB

象棋

# „Zhong-Munich Cup“ European Championship Hamburg, 11-12 September 2010





象棋

## China Master Delegation



Visit of CXA Xiangqi Master delegation  
(Reception at Hamburg City Hall)



Xiangqi Meeting in Friends-House Nuremberg



## Xiangqi Workshop



Xiangqi Workshop in Confucius Institute at the University of Hamburg



Xiangqi Workshop in TU Berlin





## Berliner Sommerpokal 2012



Old-Timers



Visit of CXA Master delegation  
(Event of „Chinese Cultural Year  
2012“ in Germany at Chinese Culture  
Center Berlin)



Xiangqi delegation from Jiangsu and Hangzhou

## Sportaccord Games Beijing 2012



DXB delegation



50-year anniversary of CXA



Xue Zhong vs Wang Tianyi (left)  
(National champion from China)



Dr. Naegler at the Xiangqi-Master Show in  
Tsinghua University (spectator: Mr. Hain  
Verbruggen, President of Sportaccord)





# The DUEL HAMBURG VS. SHANGHAI

## Xiangqi (Chinese Chess)

Yu Garden, Hamburg, 12 Aug.2012



CHINA  
TIME  
2012  
09.08.-25.08.  
HAMBURG



YuYuan  
Tea • Culture 文化 • Food 美食







## 2. Hamburger China-Schach Tage vom 16.-18.Aug. 2013

**Der Deutsche Xiangqi-Bund (DXB) mit dem Konfuzius  
Institut der Universität Hamburg und der  
Spielgemeinschaft Chinaschach von Hamburg von 1989**

**Lädt zur gemeinsamen Veranstaltung ein**

**Ort: Chinesisches Teehaus „Hamburg Yu-Garden“**

**Feldbrunnenstraße 68, 20148 Hamburg**

**[www.chinaschach.de](http://www.chinaschach.de)**



***Deutsche Einzelmeisterschaft - Deutsche Blitzmeisterschaft -  
Deutsche Jugendmeisterschaft  
– Begleitturnier um die Trophäe des „Hansa-Pferd 2013“ –  
Chinesisches Schach für alle!***

**Preisgeld, Urkunde oder Sachpreis für jeden Spieler!!**



***„Spielgemeinschaft Chinaschach von  
Hamburg von 1989“***

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**Zhong-Munich Business (Europe) GmbH**

**Sponsoren:**

## German Championship in Hamburg 2013

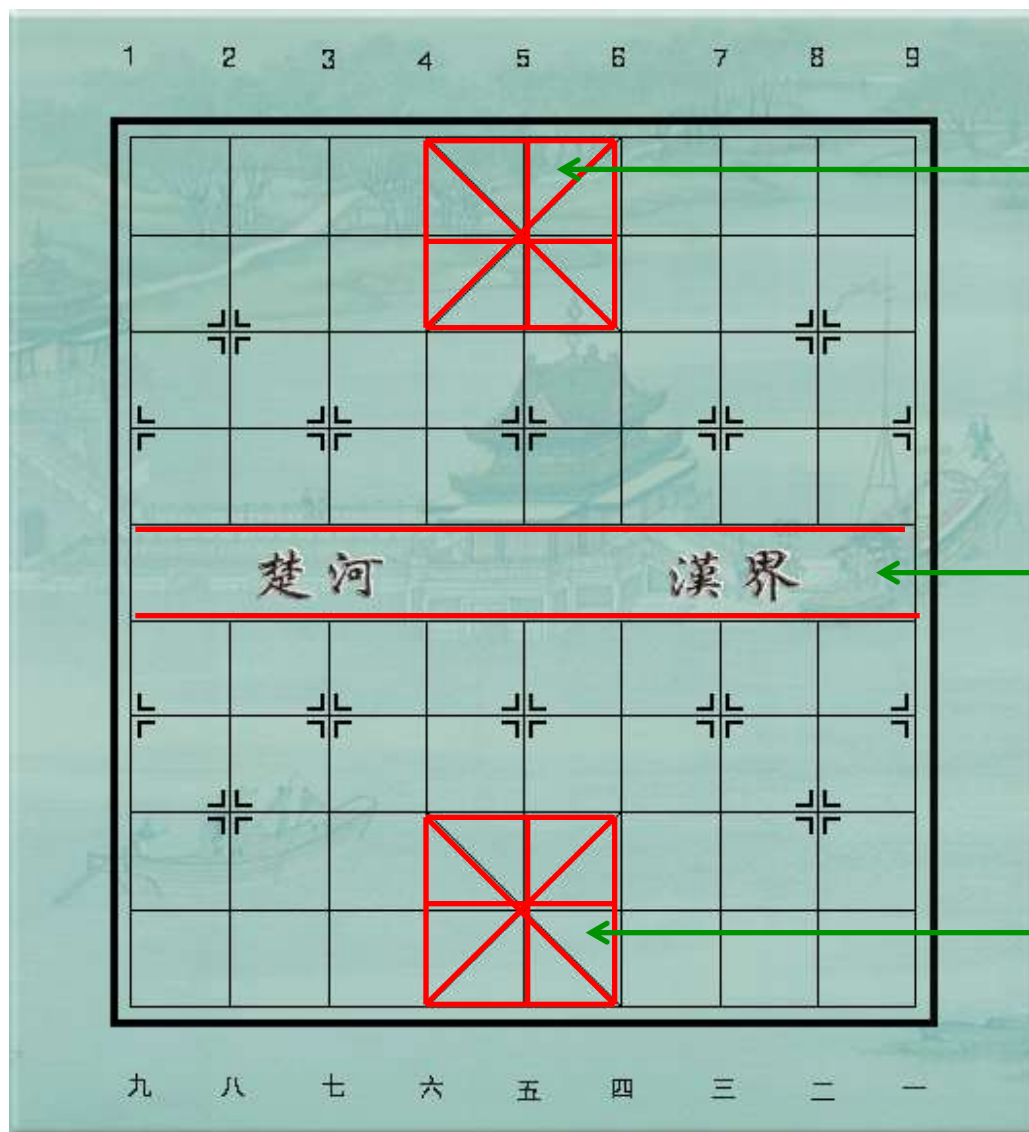


- 6 players were qualified for the final round robin tournament of the German Championship  
Winner was Pu Fangyao and Xue Zhong was the runner-up  
Best non-Asian player was Dr. Michael Naegler ranked fourth
- In a side tournament Weng Hanming captured the trophy „Hanseatic Horse“
- Furthermore 18 youngsters in a separate tournament fought to determine the winner

## The Xiangqi Board

Black Side

Red side







# Xiangqi Pieces and English Nomenclature

(Because this naming is frequently used)

The outer columns are  
presented in simplified  
Chinese characters

将  
士  
象  
马  
车  
炮  
卒



King

Advisor

Elephant

Horse

Rook

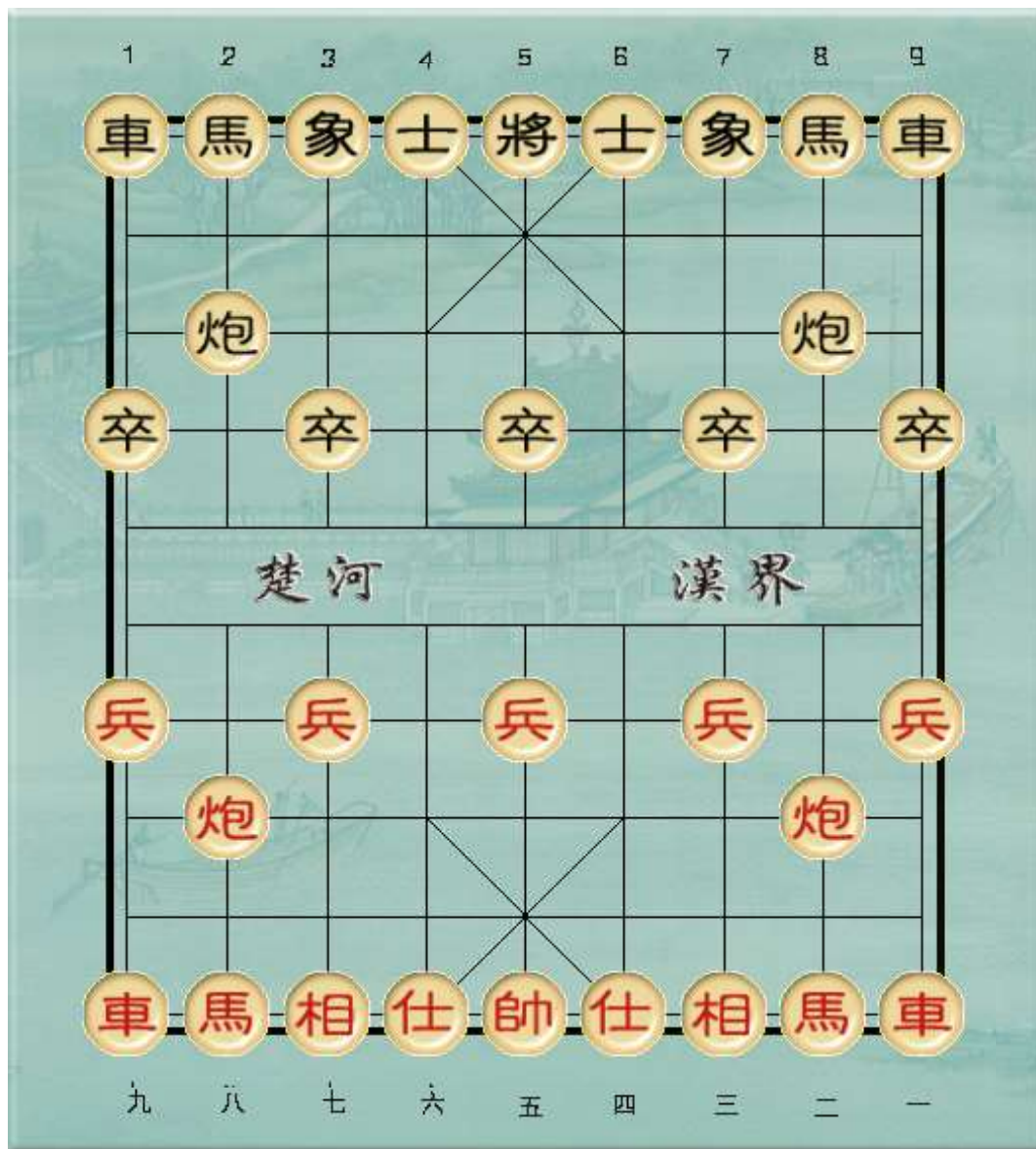
Canon

Pawn



帅  
仕  
相  
马  
车  
炮  
兵

## The Start Set-Up



# 象棋

## Xiangqi Puzzle / Design Puzzle 象棋排局



Heart

Copy from Chinese Xiangqi Paper

象棋报 第 254 期 1994 年 2 月 18 日

These Xiangqi puzzles have a touch of western chess style. They were taken from my booklet „红胜 Red Wins“

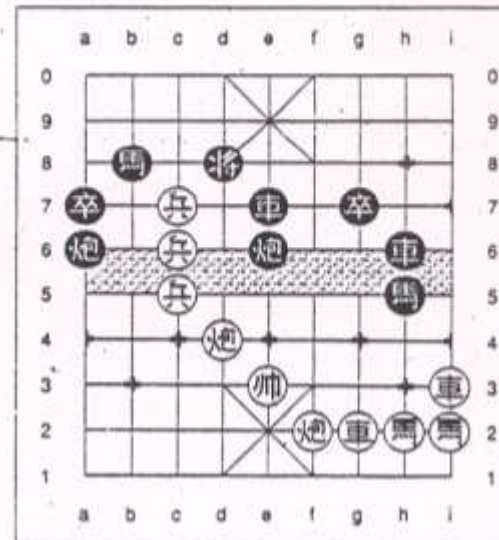
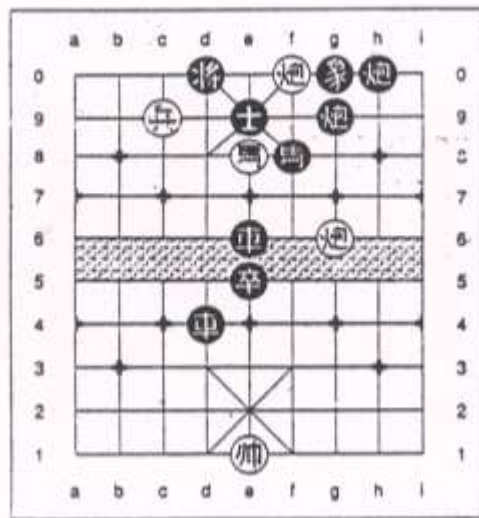
- The left puzzle is a checkmate in 2 moves
- In the right diagram the Xiangqi pieces are arranged in the shape of the character 'Xin' 心 for heart. This puzzle has to be solved in maximum number of 7 moves against any defense.



德国的象棋爱好者很多，高。去年4月间来北京参加第三届世界赛的有12位棋手，还不包括领队、随员和观摩人员，成为26个国家和地区最大的队伍。世界赛后，德国棋风更盛。柏林象棋协会拿出奖金和奖品，在8月间举办了一次公开赛，有5个城市10多名棋手参加，随后又有几个城市接连举办象棋公开赛，最多参赛队伍达8个之多，水平也越来越

德国的象棋事业家和积极分子的干劲令人钦佩。有的人一边学中文，一边编棋书。有一位赖德尔先生只学了几个月象棋，竟编出一本《象棋排局》，这种魄力和钻研精神真令人惊叹！这本适合初学者的排局谱，除二步杀排局外，还有多步杀及中文字型排局等。现辑录二局（见下图），以供欣赏。

• 陈 翊 •





# 象棋

## Xiangqi Puzzle / Design Puzzle

„The Plum Tree is blossoming again“  
(The pieces are arranged in the shape of two blossoms)



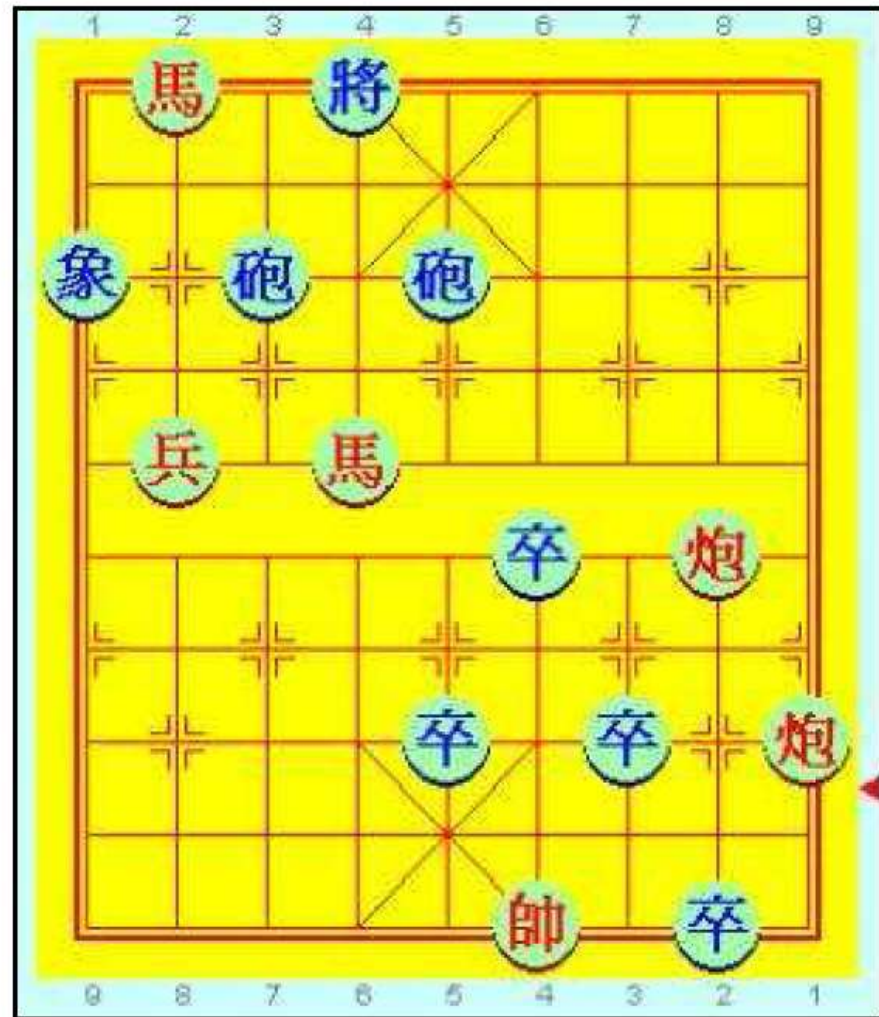
### 象棋排局 “梅开二度”

#### Xiangqi Puzzle:

*"When the Plum Tree is Blossoming again"*

无论黑子如何移动，  
红子只用七步即胜。

Red first, wins in exactly 7 moves  
against any defense of Black



象棋

**To become a master of Xiangqi  
study and practice early !!!**





## Acknowledgement

This presentation is a collection of some aspects of Xiangqi taken from different sources (e.g. Internet). The short glance on the history of Xiangqi is based on discussions with [Rainer Schmidt](#) (1992) and [David Li](#) (2001, 2005). For a deeper insight into the history, the books of [Peter Banaschak](#) (History up to 1640) and [David Li](#) (The Genealogy of Chess) as well as an article from [Rainer Schmidt](#) (1993, Schach Journal, 1) are recommended.

The authors give sincere thanks to [Rene Gralla](#), [Andreas Klein](#), [Peter Sung](#) and others who spent great efforts into the popularization of Xiangqi. The use of their graphical material significantly supported the compilation of this little overview.

This presentation is printed as a Xiangqi booklet on the occasion of World Xiangqi Championship 2013 in Huizhou and the 20-year anniversary of World Xiangqi Federation.

Rudolf Reinders and Xue Zhong

Hamburg, 18 Aug.2013