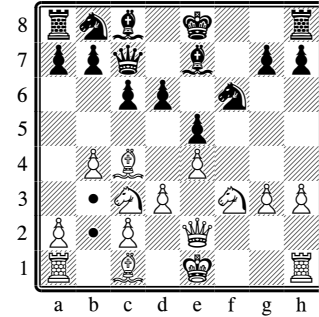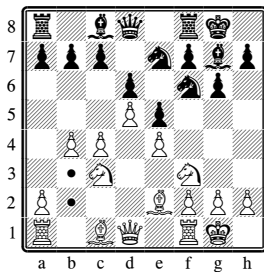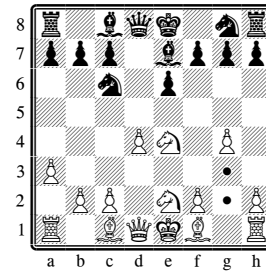# CHESS STRATEGY AND TACTICS

THE BAYONET

The year was 1575 at the court of King Philip II, and Leonardo Di Bona pushed forward the knight's pawn to b4 (as shown in the diagram) against his renowned opponent, Ruy Lopez, and went on to win the game. In chess, such a knight's pawn move, launching a flank attack, is sometimes called *the bayonet*. In early warfare with muskets, a call to "fix bayonets!" was a signal for extending reach in close-contact fighting, and in chess too it is most effective when the center is under control, preventing enemy guns from operating in an open field. In military tactics, a *bayonet charge* was used over short distances to overrun enemy strong points or break up enemy troop formations; also in chess, the bayonet is a charge disrupting the opponent's pawns and pieces, but must *take care not to launch a flank attack too early.* Di Bona's push, above, could have been punished by d5! with advantage to Black, according to the rule of his great successor, Wilhelm Steinitz:
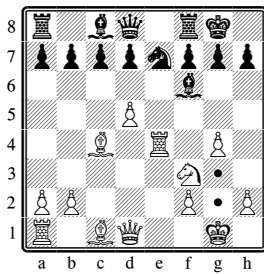
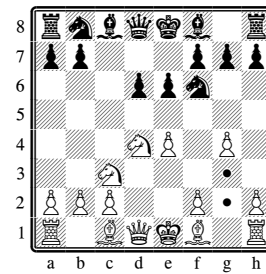*Meet a premature attack on the flank with a counterattack in the center!*

The Bayonet Attack against the King's Indian Defense. Note that the center is under control. Here, the pawn has nothing to attack moving forward, but instead supports the c pawn's expansion.

Alekhine played g4 against Euwe in the seventh game of their 1935 world championship match. Euwe responded with b6 and went on to lose the game. Lasker was in the audience and muttered that Alekhine had gone too far and that Black should play e5!

A bayonet attack in an open game against Black's castle. White threatens to expand further, attacking the bishop with a gain of tempo. Still, better would be d6 to first disrupt Black's development, since White's own castle is weakened here.

The dangerous Keres Attack against the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian Defense. Black could response in the center with e5, but the key to such a backward d pawn is Be6, which White could prevent with Bb5+. Black instead responds h6 to slow the attack.